



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 23 July 2019 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:35 P.M., 23 July 2019). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

### CONTENTS

<b>ANSWERS</b>	<b>7</b>	■ Heating: Rural Areas	14
<b>ATTORNEY GENERAL</b>	<b>7</b>	■ Housing: Electricity	15
■ Attorney General: Ethnic Groups	7	■ Housing: Insulation	16
■ Attorney General: Working Hours	7	■ Insolvency	17
<b>BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY</b>	<b>8</b>	■ Manufacturing Industries	17
■ Avara Avlon Pharma Services: Insolvency	8	■ New Businesses	20
■ Boilers: Standards	8	■ Research: Expenditure	20
■ Carbon Emissions: EU Countries	9	■ Research: Finance	20
■ Clean Growth Ministerial Group	10	■ Research: Investment	21
■ Companies House: Fraud	10	■ Seabed: Mining	21
■ Design of UK Funding Schemes for European and International Collaboration Review	11	■ UK Seabed Resources: Pacific Ocean	21
■ Directors: Personation	11	■ Waste Heat Recovery	22
■ District Heating	12	■ Wind Power	22
■ Electricity	12	<b>CABINET OFFICE</b>	<b>23</b>
■ Energy: EU Grants and Loans	13	■ Cabinet Office: Credit Unions	23
■ Environment Protection: Employment	13	■ Constituencies	23
■ Heat Trust	13	■ Emergencies: Planning	23
		■ Huawei: 5G	24
		■ Members: Correspondence	24
		<b>DEFENCE</b>	<b>24</b>
		■ Armed Forces Covenant: Veterans	24
		■ Armed Forces: Pay	25
		■ Defence Fire and Rescue Service	25

■ Defence Fire and Rescue Service: Serco	25	■ Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education	40
■ Defence Medical Services: Training	26	■ Post-18 Education and Funding Review	40
■ Defence: Procurement	26	■ Private Education: Overseas Aid	41
■ Ministry of Defence: Disclosure of Information	27	■ Pupils: Incontinence	41
■ Ministry of Defence: Ethnic Groups	28	■ Schools: Admissions	42
■ Reserve Forces and Cadets Association	28	■ Sex and Relationship Education	42
■ Veterans UK: Fylde	29	■ Sex and Relationship Education: Primary Education	43
■ War Pensions	29	■ Special Educational Needs: Barnsley	44
■ War Pensions: Post-traumatic Stress Disorder	29	■ Special Educational Needs: Hearing Impairment	45
DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT	30	■ Universities: Sexual Offences	46
■ Gambling: Young People	30	ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS	46
■ Loneliness	30	■ Agriculture: Environment Protection	46
■ Loneliness: Scotland and Wales	32	■ Agriculture: Subsidies	47
EDUCATION	32	■ Animal Experiments	47
■ Adoption: Finance	32	■ Floods: House Insurance	48
■ Adult Education: Qualifications	33	■ Food: Allowances	48
■ Children: Day Care	33	■ Horses: Animal Welfare	49
■ Children: Food Poverty	34	■ Nature Conservation: North Cornwall	49
■ Citizenship: Education	35	■ Plastics: EU Law	50
■ Department for Education: Working Hours	36	[■ Plastics: Recycling	50
■ Further Education	36	■ Rural Areas: Public Transport	50
■ Further Education: Fees and Charges	37	■ Sheep Meat: UK Trade with EU	51
■ Higher Education: Admissions	38	■ Sheep: Transmissible Encephalopathies	53
■ Holiday Activities and Food Research Fund	38		
■ National Retraining Scheme	39		

EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION	53	■ Cancer: Integrated Care Systems	63
■ Brexit	53	■ Cervical Cancer: Research	63
■ Finance: British Overseas Territories	53	■ Clinical Commissioning Groups: Standards	64
■ Gibraltar	54	■ Cystic Fibrosis: Drugs	64
■ UK Trade with EU: Employment	54	■ Dementia	65
FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE	55	■ Drugs: Storage	65
■ British Indian Ocean Territory: Sovereignty	55	■ Genetics: Screening	66
■ China: Ethnic Groups	55	■ Health Services: Technology	66
■ China: State Visits	55	■ Heart Diseases and Strokes: Females	67
■ Eritrea: Yemen	57	■ HIV Infection: Drugs	68
■ Hezbollah and Islamic Resistance Support Organization	58	■ HIV Infection: Greater London	69
■ Hong Kong: Extradition	58	■ Medical Treatments	69
■ Iran: Baha'i Faith	58	■ NHS: Drugs	70
■ Khaleda Zia	59	■ Radiotherapy: Staffordshire	71
■ Norfolk Island: Foreign Relations	59	■ Rehabilitation Centres: County Durham	71
■ North Macedonia: NATO	59	■ Sophie Holman	72
■ Sub-Saharan Africa: English Language	60	■ Synacthen: Prices	72
HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	60	HOME OFFICE	73
■ 5G: Health Hazards	60	■ Hemp: Licensing	73
[■ Accident and Emergency Departments: Nottinghamshire	61	■ Police: Mental Health	73
■ Audiology and Hearing Aids	61	■ Police: Mental Health Services	73
■ Calea: Parenteral Nutrition	61	■ Sleeping Rough	74
■ Cancer: Children and Young People	62	■ Terrorism: British Nationals Abroad	74
■ Cancer: Cornwall	62	HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT	75
■ Cancer: Diagnosis	62	■ Buildings: Insulation	75
		■ Council House Transfers	76
		■ Council Tax Reduction Schemes	77
		■ Disabled Facilities Grants	77

■ Ground Rent	77	■ Occupied Territories: Health Services	89
■ Hate Crime: Sikhs	78	■ Overseas Aid	90
■ High Rise Flats: Fire Prevention	79	■ Syria: Politics and Government	90
■ High Rise Flats: Insulation	81	INTERNATIONAL TRADE	91
■ Housing: Repairs and Maintenance	81	■ Arms Trade	91
■ Local Government: Translation Services	82	■ Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership	91
■ Private Rented Housing: Energy	82	■ Defence and Security Organisation	92
■ Temporary Accommodation	82	■ Trade Agreements	92
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT	83	■ Trade Agreements: Trade Unions	93
■ Afghanistan and Pakistan: Poliomyelitis	83	■ Trade Agreements: Wales	93
■ British Overseas Territories: Environment Protection	83	JUSTICE	94
■ Dalal Mughrabi and Omar Abu Laila	84	■ County Courts: Lambeth	94
■ Democratic Republic of Congo: Ebola	84	■ Courts: Sales	94
■ Department for International Development: Ethnic Groups	85	■ Cremation	95
■ Department for International Development: Working Hours	85	■ Dangerous Driving	95
■ Developing Countries: Education	86	■ European Arrest Warrants	96
■ Developing Countries: Nutrition	86	■ Ministry of Justice: Reviews	96
■ Gaza: Health Professions	87	■ Offenders: Electronic Tagging	97
■ Gaza: Health Services	87	■ Offenders: Foreign Nationals	97
■ Humanitarian Aid	88	■ Offenders: Homelessness	97
■ Ilois: Resettlement	88	■ Prisoners: Childbirth	98
■ International Assistance	89	■ Prisoners: Employment	98
■ Montserrat: Legislatures	89	■ Prisons: Education	99
		■ Prisons: Mental Health Services	102
		■ Secure Accommodation	102
		■ Segregation of Prisoners	103
		■ Social Security Benefits: Appeals	103
		■ Television: Licensing	104

■ Universal Credit: Appeals	104	■ Public Sector: Redundancy Pay	116
■ Universal Credit: Disability	104	■ Social Services: VAT	116
■ Wakefield Prison: Pepper Gas	105	■ Treasury: Credit Unions	116
NORTHERN IRELAND	105	■ Treasury: Ethnic Groups	117
■ Loughs Agency: Finance	105	■ UK Trade with EU	117
■ Tourism Ireland: Finance	105	■ VAT: Business	117
SCOTLAND	106	WALES	118
■ NHS: Drugs	106	■ Wales Office: Ethnic Groups	118
■ Public Expenditure: Scotland	106	WOMEN AND EQUALITIES	118
TRANSPORT	107	■ Assistance Animals	118
■ A422: Farthinghoe	107	■ Civil Partnership Act 2004 (Amendment) (Sibling Couples) Bill [HL]	120
■ Aviation: Carbon Emissions	108	■ Civil Partnerships: Heterosexuality	120
■ Aviation: Safety	108	■ Employment: Disability	120
■ Bus Services	108	■ Equal Pay	121
■ Electric Vehicles: Charging Points	109	■ Gender Recognition: Children	121
■ Electric Vehicles: Grants	109	■ Government Equalities Office: Written Questions	122
■ Heathrow Airport: Exhaust Emissions	110	■ Human Papillomavirus: Vaccination	122
■ Motor Vehicles: Children	111	WORK AND PENSIONS	122
■ Motorcycles	111	■ Amazon: Industrial Health and Safety	122
■ Parking: Disability	112	■ Children: Day Care	123
■ Railways: Surveys	112	■ Children: Maintenance	123
■ Transport for Wales: Bristol	112	■ Employment and Support Allowance	124
■ Transport: Infrastructure	113	■ Employment: Autism	124
TREASURY	114	■ Pension Credit: Dementia	126
■ Child Tax Credit	114	■ Pensions: Consumer Information	126
■ Employment: Taxation	114	■ Social Security Benefits	127
■ EU External Trade: Import Controls	114		
■ Minimum Wage and Work Experience	115		
■ Motor Vehicles: Excise Duties	115		
■ Non-domestic Rates	115		

■ Social Security Benefits: Disability	127	[ EDUCATION	142
■ Social Security Benefits: Forms	129	■ Correction	142
■ Social Security Benefits: Medical Examinations	129	■ Higher Education Student Finance	143
■ Unemployment	129	HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	148
■ Universal Credit	130	■ Advancing our Health: Prevention in the 2020s	148
■ Universal Credit: Disability	131	■ Consultation on Pensions for NHS Clinicians	149
■ Universal Credit: Domestic Abuse	131	HOME OFFICE	150
■ Universal Credit: Northern Ireland	132	■ Consultation on the introduction of statutory guidance to the police for firearms licensing	150
<b>MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS</b>	<b>133</b>	■ Immigration	151
EDUCATION	133	■ Revision of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 ('PACE') Codes of Practice C and H	153
■ Department for Education: Apprentices	133	■ Terrorism	154
■ Institute for Apprenticeships: Apprentices	133	HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT	155
<b>WRITTEN STATEMENTS</b>	<b>135</b>	■ Local government update	155
BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY	135	JUSTICE	157
■ Business Update	135	■ Appointment to the Prison Service Pay Review Body	157
■ Consumer Update	136	TRANSPORT	157
■ Energy Update	138	■ Annual Update on Crossrail 2019	157
■ Government Chemist Review 2018	141		
DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT	142		
■ Media Matters	142		

**Notes:**

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

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

## ANSWERS

### ATTORNEY GENERAL

#### ■ Attorney General: Ethnic Groups

**Seema Malhotra:**

[\[279042\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many BAME staff are employed at (a) grade 7, (b) grade 5 and (c) grade 3 in his Department.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The recording of ethnicity is the responsibility of the individual to input via employee self-service. Due to small numbers of staff at each of the requested grades, we have grouped these together in our response below.

Including those on temporary promotion at the grades requested, there are 16 members of staff in scope. Of these, only five have input their ethnicity details onto the HR system. Of these, none have self-identified as being from an ethnic minority background.

AGO supports the Civil Service vision of being recognised as the UK's most inclusive employer. AGO has two diversity champions and a Diversity & Inclusion Strategy in place that is reviewed by the Executive Board every six months.

AGO is an employer which promotes equality and aims to reflect the diversity of the society in which we live. It is committed to maximising the skills and potential of all its staff. It welcomes applications from all suitably qualified persons irrespective of disability, ethnic origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, marital status or religion/belief. It also implements blind recruitment to minimise the impact of unconscious bias.

#### ■ Attorney General: Working Hours

**Jon Trickett:**

[\[278364\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how much time off in lieu has been taken by staff in his Department in each of the last five years.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The Attorney General's Office offers a flexi time policy to support time off in lieu on an individual basis. Flexi time is individually agreed with line managers to maintain working hours in line with the Working Time Regulations 1998. As there is no central record of working hours, the Attorney General's Office has no accurate way to estimate the amount of time off in lieu taken by staff in each of the last five years without disproportionate cost.

**BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY****■ Avara Avlon Pharma Services: Insolvency**

**Jessica Morden:** [\[277691\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with AstraZeneca about the collapse of Avara Avlon and enhanced redundancy pay for employees.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

My rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State has had no discussions with AstraZeneca. This is a commercial matter which BEIS have been monitoring for some time, however we have not sought to intervene while staff consultation and the administration process are underway.

AstraZeneca announced yesterday that they have set aside funding of up to £12m, to be administered independently, to make sure their former employees at the Avlon site receive full severance should the ongoing administration of the site not generate enough funds to cover redundancy costs.

**Jessica Morden:** [\[277692\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with Avara about the collapse of Avara Avlon and the enhanced redundancy pay for employees.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

My rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State has had no discussions with Avara. This is a commercial matter which BEIS have been monitoring for some time, however we have not sought to intervene while staff consultation and the administration process are underway.

AstraZeneca announced yesterday that they have set aside funding of up to £12m, to be administered independently, to make sure their former employees at the Avlon site receive full severance should the ongoing administration of the site not generate enough funds to cover redundancy costs.

**■ Boilers: Standards**

**Dr David Drew:** [\[277631\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 9 July 2019 to Question 272120, if he will make an assessment of the compatibility of his statement that the BRE has not changed the assessment with the BRE's statement in its 7 February 2018 article that There is therefore an increased risk that boilers will in fact be non-compliant.

**Chris Skidmore:**

BEIS discussed the matter with BRE following release of their paper of February 2018. BRE do not agree with the interpretation of their paper that boilers sold in



England do not meet the efficiency standards set by Government, and they have confirmed that they have never held this view.

**Dr David Drew:** [\[277632\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 11 June 2019 to Question 258964, how the variable features of a household heating system described in that Answer affect the efficiency of the boiler rather than the heating system.

**Chris Skidmore:**

Condensing boiler efficiency is affected by water return temperature to the boiler. The design, efficacy and maintenance of the heat distribution system can impact this temperature. I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 25th June 2019 to Question [266061](#) for further details.

**Dr David Drew:** [\[278339\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to his Answer of 9 July 2019 to Question 272120, what assessment he has made of the accuracy of the statement in BRE's paper of 7 February 2018, that there is therefore an increased risk that boilers will in fact be non-compliant.

**Chris Skidmore:**

BEIS discussed the matter with BRE following release of their paper of February 2018. BRE do not agree with the interpretation of their paper that boilers sold in England do not meet the efficiency standards set by Government, and they have confirmed that they have never held this view.

**Dr David Drew:** [\[278341\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he had made of the number of new models of boilers introduced since October 2017 that have been tested for compliance with the new boiler plus regulations.

**Chris Skidmore:**

We have not made an estimate of the number of new models of boilers introduced since October 2017.

## ■ Carbon Emissions: EU Countries

**Dr David Drew:** [\[278338\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 15 July 2019 to Question 275103 on Carbon Emissions: EU Countries, what dates have been set as targets for net zero emissions by (a) Finland, (b) Denmark, (c) Germany and (d) Portugal.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The UK was the first major economy to legislate for a net zero target. The action we are taking in setting this target will continue our proud tradition of climate leadership.

Finland, Denmark, Germany and Portugal have all set out aspirations or proposals to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions or net zero carbon emissions by 2050. However, none has yet enshrined such a commitment in law.

Finland has stated its intention to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2035. Denmark has set out an intention to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 in its climate plan 'Together for a Greener Future'. Germany is currently debating a draft climate law which proposes a target for net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Portugal has approved a roadmap to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

### ■ Clean Growth Ministerial Group

**Matthew Pennycook:**

[\[277800\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 4 July 2019 to Question 271544, on what dates the Inter-Ministerial Group on Environment and Clean Growth (a) was created and (b) has met between that date and 16 April 2018.

**Chris Skidmore:**

*[Holding answer 22 July 2019]:* The Inter-Ministerial Group on Environment and Clean Growth was established in early 2018 following the publication of the Clean Growth Strategy. Between early 2018 and 16 April 2018 the group met in February 2018.

Prior to its current formulation as the Inter-Ministerial Group on Environment and Clean Growth, the Inter-Ministerial Group on Clean Growth met a number of times.

Departments meet outside this group to discuss clean growth, decarbonisation and wider environmental policy on a regular basis, at both official and ministerial level.

### ■ Companies House: Fraud

**Jonathan Edwards:**

[\[278464\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many incidences of fraudulent use of addresses through Companies House there have been in (a) Wales and (b) the UK in each of the last five years.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

*[Holding answer 22 July 2019]:* Companies House cannot confirm how many incidences of fraudulent use of addresses through Companies House there have been in (a) Wales and (b) the UK in each of the last five years.

Companies House registers a number of types of address: companies registered office addresses, the service addresses and usual residential addresses of directors and persons with significant control (although residential addresses are not made publicly available), subscribers and certain shareholders addresses, and single alternative inspection addresses for company registers.

If Companies House receives a complaint alleging that address information has been fraudulently filed with it, the law provides certain administrative and court remedies. This covers situations where information is invalid or ineffective, delivered without the authority of the company or factually inaccurate or derived from something factually inaccurate or forged. There is also a provision to allow Companies House to remove an address which has been used as a company's registered office where she is satisfied that a company is not authorised to use that address.

However, Companies House cannot identify which of these are due solely to cases of fraud.

### ■ Design of UK Funding Schemes for European and International Collaboration Review

**Paul Blomfield:** [\[278976\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Written Statement of 26 March 2019, HCWS1449, whether the interim findings of the Adrian Smith Review on the design of UK funding schemes for international collaboration, innovation and curiosity-driven blue-skies research will be published before Parliament rises on 25 July 2019.

**Chris Skidmore:**

Sir Adrian's interim findings will be presented to BEIS ministers in the Summer of 2019. We do not anticipate that this will be before Parliament rises.

The Review will be published by BEIS in due course.

### ■ Directors: Personation

**Jonathan Edwards:** [\[278465\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many incidences of directors using fictitious names through Companies House there have been in (a) Wales and (b) the UK in each of the last five years.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

*[Holding answer 22 July 2019]:*

Companies House cannot provide this information as it is not captured. The Registrar of Companies has no current powers to verify or validate the identities of directors.

The Government published a consultation on Corporate Transparency and Register Reform on 5 May and this will remain open until 5 August. This seeks to enhance the role of Companies House in increasing the transparency of UK corporate entities and it does contain proposals that would give Companies House greater power to verify the identity of those setting up corporate entities.

**Jonathan Edwards:** [\[278466\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what records his Department holds on cases of identity theft affecting company directors because their home addresses and dates of birth were disclosed through Companies House.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

*[Holding answer 22 July 2019]:* While the Department does not hold such information, Companies House does record complaints where identity theft is alleged to have resulted from the public availability of information on the Company Register.

## ■ District Heating

**Dr Rupa Huq:** [\[277236\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to publish the public consultation on proposals for the regulation of district heating networks.

**Chris Skidmore:**

Heat networks are an important part of the Clean Growth Strategy and we expect them to play an important role in the long-term decarbonisation of heat. We are committed to this within a framework that protects consumers and supports market growth.

In December 2018, the Government set out our intention to introduce regulation of heat networks and published our priorities for the sector – protecting consumers; building investment and maximising the decarbonisation benefits of heat networks. This built on recommendations by The Competition and Market Authority.

We expect to consult on more detailed policy proposals later this year. Any subsequent legislation would be introduced when Parliamentary time allows.

## ■ Electricity

**Bim Afolami:** [\[276589\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate his Department has made of the (a) level of demand for electricity and (b) electricity generation capacity there will be in the UK in the next five years.

**Chris Skidmore:**

As part of the annual Capacity Market process National Grid: Electricity System Operator (NG:ESO) produce an Electricity Capacity Report (ECR), which makes a 5-year ahead assessment of peak demand for electricity.

This is publicly available information and can be found here:

<https://www.emrdeliverybody.com/Capacity%20Markets%20Document%20Library/Electricity%20Capacity%20Report%202019.pdf>.

## ■ Energy: EU Grants and Loans

**Chuka Umunna:** [\[278495\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, which parts of the Government's plan for Connecting Facility Energy funding in the event that the UK leaving the EU without a deal (a) have and (b) have not been implemented.

**Chris Skidmore:**

*[Holding answer 22 July 2019]:* In the event of the UK leaving the EU without a deal, the Government has guaranteed Connecting Europe Facility funding due to UK organisations, in line with the Technical Notice. BEIS and other delivery organisations have well-developed contingency plans to implement this guarantee, if required. I refer the hon Member to the technical notices published by the Government on the guarantee, and the funds covered by it, for further details.

## ■ Environment Protection: Employment

**Dr Alan Whitehead:** [\[277596\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the oral contribution of the Minister for Energy and Clean Growth on 16 July 2019, what information his Department holds on the functions of those 400,000 green jobs.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The Office for National Statistics publishes data on the low carbon economy in the UK, including direct and indirect activity, employees and turnover. Information on green jobs is publicly available in their report, 'Low Carbon and Renewables Energy Economy, UK: 2017', published on 31 January 2019.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/bulletins/finalestimates/2017>

**Dr Alan Whitehead:** [\[277598\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the oral contribution of the Minister for Energy and Clean Growth on 16 July 2019, what information his Department holds on the types of jobs that will be included in the two million additional green jobs that potentially will be available by 2030.

**Chris Skidmore:**

This information is publicly available here: <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/uk-energy-prices-and-bills-2017-report-supporting-research/>.

## ■ Heat Trust

**Janet Daby:** [\[279152\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has written to all suppliers of heat networks asking them to sign up to the Heat Trust.

**Chris Skidmore:**

I can confirm that my rt. hon. Friend the Minister of State for Energy and Clean Growth (Claire Perry) wrote to heat network suppliers in April 2019, reaffirming our intention to regulate the heat network sector in light of recommendations from the Competition and Markets Authority. In her letter, she encouraged all owners or operators of heat networks not currently signed up to the voluntary Heat Trust to do so in order to improve their consumers' experiences and build on existing good practice ahead of regulation. She also asked them to consider the role the Energy Ombudsman may provide in addressing disputes between consumers and companies. The letter is also publicly available on the Government website.

( <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/open-letter-to-heat-network-operators-about-consumer-protection-standards> )

**■ Heating: Rural Areas****Steve Double:****[277211]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the effect of the heat strategy on the (a) upfront costs of installing new technologies and (b) the costs of energy efficiency upgrades for rural (i) homeowners, (ii) landlords and (iii) businesses.

**Chris Skidmore:**

I have committed to publishing a Heat Policy Roadmap in 2020 which will set out the programme of work required to enable key strategic decisions in the first part of the 2020s over the future of low-carbon heating. BEIS officials will be working closely with stakeholders, and will be considering the impacts of different technologies on different segments of the market as they develop its content.

**Steve Double:****[277212]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the Government's heat strategy will include proposals to remove the fuel cost element of the Energy Performance Certificate for rural (i) homeowners and (ii) landlords living off the gas grid.

**Chris Skidmore:**

I have committed to publishing a Heat Policy Roadmap in 2020 which will set out the programme of work required to enable key strategic decisions in the first part of the 2020s over the future of low-carbon heating. BEIS officials will be working closely with stakeholders as they develop its content.

Following a commitment in the Clean Growth Strategy, we launched a Call for Evidence on Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs), which closed in October 2018 with 229 responses which we are currently analysing. In the Call for Evidence we asked for views on the current EPC cost rating and the results will inform our views on future EPC policy.

**Steve Double:**

[\[277213\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the Government's heat strategy include a comparative assessment of the costs associated with improving an Energy Performance Certificate between (a) rural homeowners and landlords that are off the gas grid and (b) homeowners and landlords are on the gas grid.

**Chris Skidmore:**

I have committed to publishing a Heat Policy Roadmap in in 2020 which will set out the programme of work required to enable key strategic decisions in the first part of the 2020s over the future of low-carbon heating. BEIS officials will be working closely with stakeholders as they develop its content.

The annual running costs of a Band C rated home are £650 lower than the average Band E rated home. This is why we set out our aspiration in the Clean Growth Strategy that as many homes as possible should be EPC C Band C by 2035 where practical, cost effective and affordable. We estimate that between £35 - 65 billion of investment will need to be mobilised to meet that aspiration.

There is not one 'silver bullet' policy that will drive uptake of energy efficiency amongst homeowners and so we are committed to building a vibrant and sustainable market through introducing a suite of mutually supporting policies and measures. These include a £5 million innovation fund to help mortgage lenders develop innovative green mortgage products in support of home energy efficiency and a £10m innovation fund to reduce the cost of whole house retrofit. Low income and vulnerable households are also supported in making energy efficiency improvements under the reformed Energy Company Obligation (ECO) scheme. ECO is worth £640m a year and has already installed 2.5 million measures since 2013.

## ■ Housing: Electricity

**Dr Sarah Wollaston:**

[\[277717\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made on the cost effectiveness of installing three-phase electricity supplies in (a) new and (b) existing homes.

**Chris Skidmore:**

*[Holding answer 22 July 2019]:* Electricity connections and upgrades for new and existing homes are a matter for distribution network operators (DNOs) overseen by the independent regulator, Ofgem. Under the Distribution Connection and Use of System Agreement, DNOs are required to offer customers the most efficient solution to meet their requirements. In doing so, DNOs assess whether a single or three-phase supply would be appropriate.

**Dr Sarah Wollaston:**

[\[277718\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made on the feasibility on subsidising the cost of upgrading single-

phase electricity suppliers to three-phase electricity suppliers to support people to make their homes carbon neutral.

**Chris Skidmore:**

*[Holding answer 22 July 2019]:* Network operators are responsible for ensuring the reliable supply of electricity and the Ofgem RII0-2 price control framework ensures network operators invest efficiently to provide continued safe and reliable services. In doing so they will need to balance the expected reductions in demand due to improvements in home energy efficiency against projected increases in demand from charging requirements of electric vehicles and the increased installation of heat pumps.

■ **Housing: Insulation**

**Dr David Drew:**

[\[277628\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what information he holds on the number of UK households that have installed (a) additional and (b) replacement loft insulation in each year since 2011-12.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The table below presents the number of loft insulations per year delivered through major Government schemes since April 2011. These include an estimate of the lofts insulated using DIY material provide as part of the Carbon Emissions Reduction Target up to December 2012. The total number of insulated lofts will be higher through DIY measures which are not recorded by BEIS.

It is not possible for BEIS to disaggregate loft insulation measures for all schemes between additional and replacement loft insulations.

**Loft insulation measures per year (thousands)**

YEAR	TOTAL MEASURES
2011-12	1,243
2012-13	1,413
2013-14	130
2014-15	217
2015-16	75
2016-17	59
2017-18	36
2018-19	37
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,209</b>



## ■ Insolvency

**Steve McCabe:**

[\[278351\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to prevent insolvency; and what assessment he has made of the disparity in insolvency rates between (a) regions of England and Wales and (b) men and women.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

*[Holding answer 22 July 2019]:* The Government is committed to helping people make good financial decisions, establishing the Money and Pensions Service to provide free support and guidance on all aspects of people's financial lives. It has increased funding for the provision of debt advice in each of the past two years rising to almost £56million this year in England, which will deliver 560,000 debt advice sessions.

Where individuals do get into problem debt the government has announced it will deliver its manifesto commitment for a Breathing Space scheme, which will protect debtors from creditor action, help them get professional advice on their debt problems, and enable them to find an appropriate and sustainable debt solution.

The regional personal insolvency rate increased in 2018, driven mainly by individual voluntary arrangements (IVAs), with all regions following the national trend.

Historically, males had a higher rate of insolvencies per 10,000 adults than females, but the gender gap noticeably narrowed from 2009 onwards and, by 2014, females began to have higher insolvency rates than males. This change coincided with a decline in the number of bankruptcies (where males have a higher rate of insolvency), the introduction and growth in the number of debt relief orders (where the rate for women is higher), and the narrowing and subsequent reversal of the gender gap for IVAs.

The latest data providing a breakdown of individual insolvencies can be found in Individual Insolvencies by Location, Age and Gender, England and Wales, 2018; released on 17th July 2019 on the GOV.UK website.

## ■ Manufacturing Industries

**Chi Onwurah:**

[\[278995\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the consequences of the October 31 deadline for the UK leaving the EU on (a) stockpiling and (b) cashflows in the manufacturing sector.

**Chi Onwurah:**

[\[278996\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the adequacy manufacturing businesses' preparations for the UK leaving the EU without an agreement.

**Chi Onwurah:** [\[278997\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to support UK manufacturers prepare for the possibility of the UK leaving the EU without an agreement.

**Chi Onwurah:** [\[278998\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to ensure access to warehousing for manufacturers in the event of the UK leaving the EU without a deal on 31 October 2019.

**Andrew Stephenson:**

On 28th November 2018, the Government laid before Parliament the document entitled, "EU Exit: Long-term economic analysis" which was intended to facilitate parliamentary scrutiny ahead of the Meaningful Vote on the final deal. The purpose of this analysis was to illustrate high level impacts on the UK from different EU Exit scenarios. It included associated costs for five broad sector groups across the economy, including manufactured goods, which together cover the majority of the UK economy and all traded goods and services.

We understand the impact that continued uncertainty has on firms and the disruption in the event of no deal and continue to discuss the situation with manufacturers and industry bodies, including Make UK. We are also aware that factories are stockpiling essential parts to try to minimise disruption in a no deal scenario, and we acknowledge that this has an impact on costs. The best way to deliver the certainty that our manufacturers need is to agree a deal that delivers on our commitment to leaving the European Union.

The Government is committed to leaving the European Union in a way that underpins prosperity and avoids unnecessary disruption for people and businesses across the UK and therefore has been preparing to minimise any disruption in the event of no deal. Since the extension was agreed, departments have advanced their no deal preparations so that we are ready to implement necessary work in the lead-up to 31 October if needed.

HMRC has written three times to over 145,000 VAT-registered UK businesses who currently trade only with the EU, setting out the actions they need to take, and the changes they need to be prepared for in the event of no deal.

We have advised hundreds of ports, traders, pharmaceutical firms and other organisations that use the borders about potential disruption, so that they can engage proactively with their supply chains. We have published a leaflet for SMEs, that contains advice on actions to take, provides sources of support, and outlines the changes that may affect businesses when the UK leaves the EU.

The Government recognises that the manufacturing sector remains a vital contributor to the economy of the UK, driving innovation, exports, job creation, and productivity growth and we are committed to supporting the sector as the UK exits Europe. Through our modern Industrial Strategy and Made Smarter – our key national

industrial digitalisation programme – we are building an economy fit for the future. As the 9th largest global manufacturing economy, we are, and will continue to be, a major manufacturing nation.

**Chi Onwurah:**

[\[278999\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with the manufacturing sector on preparing for the UK leaving the EU without a deal.

**Andrew Stephenson:**

On 28th November 2018, the Government laid before Parliament the document entitled, “EU Exit: Long-term economic analysis” which was intended to facilitate parliamentary scrutiny ahead of the Meaningful Vote on the final deal. The purpose of this analysis was to illustrate high level impacts on the UK from different EU Exit scenarios. It included associated costs for five broad sector groups across the economy, including manufactured goods, which together cover the majority of the UK economy and all traded goods and services.

We understand the impact that continued uncertainty has on firms and the disruption in the event of no deal and continue to discuss the situation with manufacturers and industry bodies, including Make UK. We are also aware that factories are stockpiling essential parts to try to minimise disruption in a no deal scenario, and we acknowledge that this has an impact on costs. The best way to deliver the certainty that our manufacturers need is to agree a deal that delivers on our commitment to leaving the European Union.

The Government is committed to leaving the European Union in a way that underpins prosperity and avoids unnecessary disruption for people and businesses across the UK and therefore has been preparing to minimise any disruption in the event of no deal. Since the extension was agreed, departments have advanced their no deal preparations so that we are ready to implement necessary work in the lead-up to 31 October if needed.

HMRC has written three times to over 145,000 VAT-registered UK businesses who currently trade only with the EU, setting out the actions they need to take, and the changes they need to be prepared for in the event of no deal.

We have advised hundreds of ports, traders, pharmaceutical firms and other organisations that use the borders about potential disruption, so that they can engage proactively with their supply chains. We have published a leaflet for SMEs, that contains advice on actions to take, provides sources of support, and outlines the changes that may affect businesses when the UK leaves the EU.

The Government recognises that the manufacturing sector remains a vital contributor to the economy of the UK, driving innovation, exports, job creation, and productivity growth and we are committed to supporting the sector as the UK exits Europe. Through our modern Industrial Strategy and Made Smarter – our key national industrial digitalisation programme – we are building an economy fit for the future. As

the 9th largest global manufacturing economy, we are, and will continue to be, a major manufacturing nation.

## ■ New Businesses

**Chris Ruane:** [\[278917\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent estimate he has made of the average time it takes for a new business to become fully operational in the UK.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The World Bank Doing Business 2019 report measures the ease of starting a business. This involves measuring procedures, time, cost and paid-in minimum capital to start a limited liability company for men and women.

The average time taken for a new business in the UK to complete all the procedures required to become operational is 18 days.

*Source:*

*World Bank, Doing Business 2019, <https://www.doingbusiness.org/en/reports/global-reports/doing-business-2019>*

## ■ Research: Expenditure

**Chi Onwurah:** [\[279006\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the accuracy of (a) public and (b) private sector R&D spend figures; and if he will make a statement.

**Chris Skidmore:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave her on 22nd July 2019 to Question [278489](#).

## ■ Research: Finance

**Paul Blomfield:** [\[278977\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with the European Commission on whether funding for research partners in UK-led research consortia would be provided by (a) the UK or (b) the EU if the UK chooses to associate to the next EU Framework Programme as a third country.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The next EU Framework Programme, Horizon Europe, is still being negotiated through the EU Institutions and we are currently working with them to develop the Programme. There are a number of elements of this package yet to be agreed, including the provisions on third country association and the Programme budget. These elements need to be finalised before we can make an informed decision on future UK participation. We look forward to constructive discussions with the Commission in due course.

We have made clear that regardless of EU exit, we look forward to continuing our relationship in research and innovation. The Government is committed to continuing to back UK researchers and innovators by supporting measures to enable world-class collaborative research, including support for small businesses.

■ **Research: Investment**

**Chi Onwurah:** [\[279005\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of (a) the UK and (b) other EU countries in translating public sector investment in R&D into private sector investment in R&D; and if he will make a statement.

**Chris Skidmore:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave her on 22nd July 2019 to Question [278489](#).

■ **Seabed: Mining**

**Caroline Lucas:** [\[278460\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make it his policy to end UK Government sponsorship of deep sea mining exploration licences; and if he will make a statement.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The UK Government sponsored two 15 year deep sea mining exploration licences. The licence holder has contracts of exploration with the UN's International Seabed Authority (ISA) which obliges them to undertake a plan of work. We have not received any further applications for exploration licences and do not expect to be granting any further exploration licences at this time.

There are no plans to vary the Government's policy towards deep-sea mining at this time. The UK Government will continue to deploy its expertise and influence at an international level to ensure sufficient scientific evidence about the potential impact on deep-sea ecosystems and enforceable environmental standards is established.

■ **UK Seabed Resources: Pacific Ocean**

**Caroline Lucas:** [\[278458\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer on 5 February 2019 to Question 213318 on UK Seabed Resources: Pacific Ocean, if he will publish the domestic licenses granted by the Government for the Clarion-Clipperton Fracture Zone.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is still consulting interested parties on whether to make the domestic deep-sea mining exploration

licences, granted by the Government in the Clarion-Clipperton Fracture Zone, publicly available.

## ■ Waste Heat Recovery

**Dr David Drew:** [\[277629\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 15 July 2019 to Question 274432 on Waste Heat Recovery, in what ways the entries for certain flue gas heat recovery systems have not been calculated in full accordance with the standard BRE methodology.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The reasons that entries for products from two manufacturers have not been calculated in full accordance with the standard BRE methodology are specific to each product. They have been communicated to the relevant companies.

**Dr David Drew:** [\[277630\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to his Answer of 15 July 2019 to Question 274430 and with reference to paragraph two of the Building Research Establishment (BRE) document FGHRs Data Processing Changes Relating to Canetis GasSaver GS2 Data Record held in Products Characteristics Database, dated October 2018, if he will require the BRE to publish the method used to assess that technology.

**Chris Skidmore:**

This paragraph refers to a pre-processing (averaging) method that has been used by the Buildings Research Establishment (BRE) where raw test data cannot be entered directly into its methodology for assessing Flue Gas Heat Recovery Systems (FGHRs). BRE intends to publish a document that describes the averaging method shortly.

The methodology used by BRE for assessing FGHRs for the Product Characteristics Database is published already at the following URL: [https://www.ncm-pcdb.org.uk/sap/filelibrary/pdf/calculation\\_methodology/SAP\\_2009/FGHRs\\_calculation\\_method\\_28\\_10\\_10.pdf](https://www.ncm-pcdb.org.uk/sap/filelibrary/pdf/calculation_methodology/SAP_2009/FGHRs_calculation_method_28_10_10.pdf).

## ■ Wind Power

**Dr Alan Whitehead:** [\[277597\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the oral contribution of the Minister of State for Energy and Clean Growth of 16 July 2019, Official Report, column 693 and his statement that there is no point in trying to impose green technology on local communities if they are not in support of that for the future, what recent assessment he has made of level of community support for onshore wind.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the role of local authorities in assessing both the suitability of areas for onshore wind development and whether onshore wind proposals have the support of the local community.

**CABINET OFFICE**■ **Cabinet Office: Credit Unions****Gareth Thomas:**[\[279360\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 9 July 2019 to Question 271324, for what reasons his Department does not offer a payroll deduction service to enable employees to join a credit union; and if he will make a statement.

**Kevin Foster:**

Cabinet Office does not offer a general payroll deduction facility. The Cabinet Office is currently investigating various financial wellbeing options which may benefit our employees. This includes providers who offer a payroll deduction service. We are planning to introduce financial wellbeing as part of our wider benefits package to employees later this year.

■ **Constituencies****Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[278961\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, when he plans to bring forward legislative proposals on the recommendations of the boundary review.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Government is working on the Order in Council to implement the recommendations in the final reports of the four Boundary Commissions.

The High Court of Northern Ireland has now issued its judgment in relation to the judicial review against the Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland's final proposals. The period within which an appeal may be made by either party has not yet expired. The Government will consider the outcome of these proceedings in deciding the timetable for laying the draft Order in Council before Parliament in due course, where it will be debated and there will be a vote in both Houses in the usual way.

■ **Emergencies: Planning****Simon Hart:**[\[278950\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what civil contingency plans are in place in the event that the UK does not leave the EU; and if he will publish those plans.

**Mr David Lidington:**

The UK Government has a responsibility to plan for, respond to and recover from a wide variety of challenges and events. As such Government departments work with

partners in the public and private sectors to develop and test contingency plans for such challenges.

It is the Government's policy to leave the EU with a deal. As a responsible Government we have been planning, and continue to prepare for all eventualities associated with the UK leaving the EU. This includes managing the impacts of a no deal Brexit if they arise.

#### ■ Huawei: 5G

**Jo Platt:** [\[279146\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 17 July 2019 to Question 276281 on Huawei: 5G, if he will meet with operators to raise cybersecurity CNI standards.

**Mr David Lidington:**

As stated in my answer to Question 276281 of 16 July, regular meetings take place between telecommunications operators and HM Government officials from the National Cyber Security Centre, Cabinet Office and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

#### ■ Members: Correspondence

**Chris Ruane:** [\[278915\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether there is a protocol in place to inform Members when Departments change (a) correspondence, (b) secretarial and (c) ministerial e-mail addresses.

**Mr David Lidington:**

It is the responsibility of every Department to inform Members of changes to correspondence, secretarial or ministerial e-mail addresses.

Contact details for each Department are made available on GOV.UK.

The List of Ministerial Responsibilities also contains Department's contact email addresses. An update to the document is expected in the summer.

## DEFENCE

#### ■ Armed Forces Covenant: Veterans

**Gerald Jones:** [\[279111\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment she has made of the compatibility of outsourcing veteran services with the Armed Forces Covenant.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

No decisions have been taken on whether to outsource any services as part of the Future Service Delivery Contract (FSDC). Such a decision would be taken only if that provided the best outcome for the Ministry of Defence, the serving and former



Service personnel affected and the taxpayer. The outcome of the FSDC will be fully in line with the Military Covenant, as it will modernise and continue to improve the high-quality services our veterans deserve.

#### ■ **Armed Forces: Pay**

**Luke Pollard:** [\[277300\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether she plans to publish the results of the armed forces pay review before the 2019 summer recess.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

I announced the 2019 pay award for the Armed Forces on Monday 22 July 2019 (HCWS1770).

**Attachments:**

1. Armed Forces' Pay Review Body Report 2019 [Hansard Extract Monday 22 July 2019, HCWS 1770.docx]

#### ■ **Defence Fire and Rescue Service**

**Nia Griffith:** [\[278933\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to Written Statement of 18 July 2019 on Defence Fire and Rescue Project, HCWS1758, for what reasons her Department decided that that project will improve safety for firefighter personnel.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The Defence Fire and Rescue Project contract introduces additional investment into the Defence Fire and Rescue capability which will contribute to improvements in safety for both firefighters and the wider defence population. This includes the introduction of new types of firefighting vehicles and technology that limits the exposure of firefighters to high hazard areas; additional breathing apparatus simulators; easier access to training in a greater range of locations; more training scenarios in simulators and a greater focus on prevention and protection.

#### ■ **Defence Fire and Rescue Service: Serco**

**Nia Griffith:** [\[278932\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the Written Statement of 18 July 2019 on Defence Fire and Rescue Project, HCWS1758, what the total cost was to his Department of the legal challenge from Serco Ltd.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The total cost of Serco's legal challenge to the Defence Fire and Rescue procurement process is expected to be less than £11 million. The majority of this is the cost of the financial settlement mutually agreed with Serco, the details of which were set out in my statement of 18 July 2019 (HCWS1758).

**Attachments:**

1. Defence Fire and Rescue Project [Hansard Extract 18 July 2019, HCWS 1758.docx]

## ■ Defence Medical Services: Training

**Ben Lake:**

[\[278578\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what his Department's policy is on participation of military surgeons in overseas training exercises involving animals that have been shot or otherwise injured with offensive weapons for the purpose of that exercise.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The Ministry of Defence takes very seriously its obligation to provide the best possible medical treatment for Service personnel wounded on operational service. The quality of care delivered by the Defence Medical Services (DMS) is directly related to the thoroughness with which we prepare our deployed surgical teams for the sorts of serious injuries they will encounter.

This training is delivered through a range of different courses and exercises, many of which employ complex simulation models such as programmable mannequins. However, simulators are currently unable to replace all trauma training. Even the most sophisticated of them are not technologically advanced enough to respond physiologically to complex surgical procedures. At present, the only means for our surgical teams to get the necessary training in the control of real-time internal haemorrhage from combat injury is through live tissue training (LTT).

Up to twice a year, members of the DMS attend surgical training exercises in Denmark, during which live but fully anaesthetised pigs are given bullet and blast wounds which are then treated in real-time exercises by surgical teams. The animals are unconscious during the entire exercise, and feel no pain. They are attended at all times by veterinary staff, who may withdraw them at any time for any reason, and the animals are humanely put down at the end of the training procedures without recovering consciousness.

The DMS have collaborated on a number of research programmes into simulator technology, and constantly monitors the latest developments, especially where they might in future offer an alternative means of delivering this specialised but vital training.

## ■ Defence: Procurement

**Gerald Jones:**

[\[279107\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when her Department will announce the preferred bidder for the Future Service Delivery Contract.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

Bids for this contract have only just been received and have not yet been evaluated. Depending how fully they meet the Department's requirements, we provisionally envisage announcing the preferred bidder in December 2019.

**Gerald Jones:** [\[279108\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the Future Service Delivery Contract will include the (a) War Pension Scheme, (b) Armed Forces Compensation Scheme and (c) Medals Office.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

These functions are being Market Tested as options as part of the Future Service Delivery Contract competition. No decision to outsource them has been taken. They would be outsourced only if that provided best outcome for the Ministry of Defence, the serving and former Service personnel affected and the taxpayer.

#### ■ Ministry of Defence: Disclosure of Information

**Gerald Jones:** [\[279112\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many subject access requests have been made to her Department in each of the last four quarters.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The number of subject access requests reported, by financial year (FY), are given below:

FY 2018-19, Quarter 2 - 8,205

FY 2018-19, Quarter 3 - 7,890

FY 2018-19, Quarter 4 - 10,548

FY 2019-20, Quarter 1 - Total number not yet collated and verified. I will write to the hon. Member with this data shortly.

**Gerald Jones:** [\[279113\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many subject access requests made to her Department in each of the last four quarters were complied with within the 28-day time limit.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The number of subject access requests answered within 28 days of receipt by Financial Year (FY), are given below.

FY 2018-19, Quarter 2 - 5,265

FY 2018-19, Quarter 3 - 5,061

FY 2018-19, Quarter 4 - 6,907

FY 2019-20, Quarter 1 - Total number not held as this reporting period has not closed yet. I will write to the hon. Member with this data shortly.

## ■ Ministry of Defence: Ethnic Groups

**Seema Malhotra:** [\[279045\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many BAME staff are employed at (a) grade 7, (b) grade 5 and (c) grade 3 in her Department.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The number of civilian Full Time Equivalent BAME staff employed in the Ministry of Defence (MOD) as at 30 June 2019 is as follows:

### PAID GRADE/MOD EQUIVALENT BAME HEADCOUNT

Grade 7/B2	65
Grade 5/SCS1	5
Grade 3/SCS3	~

In line with Departmental policy figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and tilde ('~') represents a number lower than five and greater than zero. Includes MOD Main Top Level Budgetary Areas (TLBs) only. Excludes Trading funds, Defence Equipment and Support Bespoke Trading Entity, Executive Agency, Royal Fleet Auxiliary and Locally engaged civilians (LECs).

Full details relating to the numbers of BAME staff employed in the MOD can be found in the Civilian personnel diversity publication on Gov.uk at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/mod-diversity-dashboard-2019>

## ■ Reserve Forces and Cadets Association

**James Gray:** [\[278902\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if she will publish the terms of the review of the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association undertaken by Mr Rob Sullivan.

**James Gray:** [\[278903\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the timeframe is for the publication of the review on Reserve Forces and Cadets Association.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The agreed Terms of Reference for the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association Review is attached. This document covers the planned timeframe for publication of the review, which is expected by the end of November 2019.

#### Attachments:

1. Terms of Reference [RFCA Review TORs (PQ).docx]

**James Gray:** [\[278904\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent discussions she has had with the Chairman of the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association on the contribution that associations make to the defence of the realm; and if she will make a statement.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

As part of the review into the Reserve Forces and Cadets Associations (RFCAs) is currently under way, Ministry of Defence officials are in regular conversation with the Chairman of the Council of RFCAs and key staff at all thirteen RFCAs across the country. The review is looking into the functions carried out by the RFCAs and their contribution to Defence outputs, their efficiency and efficacy of delivery and corporate governance, and potential new tasks the RFCAs may be best placed to deliver on behalf of Defence.

#### ■ **Veterans UK: Fylde**

**Gerald Jones:** [\[279110\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment her Department has made of the potential effect on the delivery of veteran services of the closure of Tomlinson House, Norcross.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

In line with the Better Defence Estate Strategy, the Department is currently considering how best to make the most efficient and cost-effective use of its property in the North West, including the Norcross site. The delivery of veterans' services will not be affected.

#### ■ **War Pensions**

**Ruth Smeeth:** [\[277790\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the (a) average and (b) longest time taken is for his Department to process war pensions in the latest period for which data is available.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The information requested is published within the annual National Statistics on awards under the War Pension Scheme. The latest information, as at 31 March 2019, can be found on the Gov.uk website at this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/war-pension-recipients-index>

#### ■ **War Pensions: Post-traumatic Stress Disorder**

**Ruth Smeeth:** [\[277791\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many and what proportion of veterans with PTSD have been refused a war pension since 2010.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

Information on the total number of veterans medically diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is not held.

However, between 1 January 2010 and 31 March 2019 an estimated 6,730 veterans have claimed compensation for PTSD under the War Pension Scheme, of which 1,320 (19.5%) were unsuccessful.

**DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ **Gambling: Young People****Anneliese Dodds:**[\[278590\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to prevent UK sports teams engaging in promotional work with the gambling industry aimed at young people under 18 years-old in other countries.

**Mims Davies:**

The Government has no Current plans to legislate on this issue. The Government is proud of our sports teams global appeal and we want this to continue to grow. At the same time our clubs and sporting organisations must ensure that they are responsible when it comes to their relationship with gambling partners both in the UK and abroad.

The Government expects operators which are licensed by the Gambling Commission to obey the law in other jurisdictions in which they operate. It is first and foremost for the relevant authorities in other jurisdictions to investigate any alleged breaches of their laws.

Operators licensed by the Gambling Commission are required to report any regulatory investigation or finding into their activities in any other jurisdiction. This lets the Commission assess their suitability to hold a licence.

■ **Loneliness****Jim Shannon:**[\[277736\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how many times the cross-government ministerial group on loneliness has met since the publication of the loneliness strategy.

**Mims Davies:**

The cross-government ministerial group has met twice since the launch of the strategy last year, meeting in December 2018 and March 2019, in addition to regular correspondence and updates, most recently in July 2019. Further meetings are planned in the future.

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[277737\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether his Department has met the Loneliness Action Group to discuss the implementation of the loneliness strategy.

**Mims Davies:**

To help ensure effective implementation of the loneliness strategy, 'A connected society - A strategy for tackling loneliness' and to progress wider work on loneliness, Government Officials from the tackling loneliness team regularly engage with the Loneliness Action Group, convened by the British Red Cross and Co-op.

Officials have presented on implementation of the strategy at the two meetings of the Loneliness Action Group which have taken place since the strategy's publication, in November 2018 and February 2019. The Minister for Loneliness and officials also spoke at the Loneliness Action Group conference, 'From Policy to Action: Where Next for Loneliness?' on 21 May 2019.

Officials also conduct regular discussions with representatives from the British Red Cross and Co-op partnership.

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[277738\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department has taken to set a quantitative target for reducing loneliness.

**Mims Davies:**

The government's loneliness strategy, 'A connected society - A strategy for tackling loneliness', recognises that, while increasingly we understand the impact of loneliness, there is less certainty about its drivers and what works to tackle it. As a result, the strategy did not set a quantitative target for change. Rather it sets out the government's commitment to establishing a clearer picture of the prevalence of loneliness, through a new national measure and by developing the evidence base on what works. It commits government to publishing annual progress reports that provide an update on the implementation of the policies set out in the strategy, as well as the development of additional policies. As government reviews its approach, and further learning is generated, government will explore the possibility – and suitability – of setting a quantitative target for change. This is not likely to be possible for some years, as it will take time for sufficient data and learning to be available. The government's first annual report on tackling loneliness, expected to be published later this year, will provide an update on this.

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[277739\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what progress his Department has made on the commitment in the loneliness strategy to (a) include loneliness in the guidance for the family test and (b) embed consideration of loneliness and relationships throughout the policy-making process.

**Mims Davies:**

As announced in last year's loneliness strategy, 'A connected society - A strategy for tackling loneliness', Government's intention is to embed consideration of loneliness and relationships throughout the policy-making process. Government is exploring various mechanisms for doing this and an update on progress will be provided in the first annual report on tackling loneliness, expected to be published later this year.

The guidance for the Family Test is currently being refreshed and consideration of loneliness is included in the draft text. The updated guidance is due to be published later this year.

**■ Loneliness: Scotland and Wales****Jim Shannon:**[\[277735\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions his Department has had with devolved Administrations in (a) Wales and (b) Scotland on policies to tackle loneliness.

**Mims Davies:**

Government Officials from the tackling loneliness team have conducted regular discussions with the devolved administrations of Scotland and Wales every 6 weeks throughout the course of 2018 and 2019. The last meeting took place on 19 June 2019, the next meeting is scheduled for 1 August 2019.

**EDUCATION****■ Adoption: Finance****Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:**[\[279068\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department plans to respond to the recommendations in the all-party Parliamentary group on adoption and permanence's report entitled Investing in Families, published 16 July 2019.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

There are no plans for the department to formally respond to the recommendations in the All-Party Parliamentary Group on adoption and permanence's report entitled 'Investing in Families' at this time.

We welcome the fact that the report shows how thousands of children have had their lives transformed by therapeutic support provided by the Adoption Support Fund as they settle in to their new homes. The government has spent more than £124 million through the fund which has benefitted more than 44,500 families.

The report has helpfully identified a number of areas for improvement in the delivery of the Adoption Support Fund that will be considered carefully over the coming months and be incorporated into our Spending Review plans.



**■ Adult Education: Qualifications**

**Seema Malhotra:** [\[279038\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the proportion of adults without qualifications in (a) London and (b) Hounslow Borough.

**Anne Milton:**

The latest estimates of the proportion of adults without qualifications come from the Office for National Statistics Labour Force Survey data for the period January 2018 to December 2018. In Hounslow, 6.0% of adults aged between 16 and 64 had no qualifications, compared with 6.6% for London as a whole.

**■ Children: Day Care**

**Tulip Siddiq:** [\[277241\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what comparative assessment he has made of the opening and closing rates of childcare settings in (a) wealthy areas and (b) disadvantaged areas.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

I refer the hon. Member for Hampstead and Kilburn to the answer I gave on 16 July 2019 to Question [276259](#).

**Tulip Siddiq:** [\[277242\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the Early Years Alliance Minds Matter survey, published 2018; and what steps his Department is taking to reduce the stress and workload burden in the childcare sector.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

Following the publication of the Minds Matter survey, the department awarded a Voluntary and Community Sector grant to the Early Years Alliance, to undertake further work to identify specific causes of paperwork and administration burdens in the sector. This was the main source of stress reported in the survey. Early Years Alliance have conducted a series of focus groups and an online survey. An advisory group comprising sector representatives, membership organisations, Ofsted and department officials is now considering the feedback from the project and next steps.

**Stephen Twigg:** [\[278895\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he has taken to increase the accessibility of childcare in Merseyside.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

The government provides the following childcare support to parents and foster parents:

- 15 hours of free childcare a week for disadvantaged 2 year olds. This applies to all families in receipt of Universal Credit, with an annual net earned income equivalent to - or less than - £15,400. It also applies to families in receipt of benefits that

currently entitle them to free school meals and those receiving working tax credits (with an annual gross household income of no more than £16,190). Equally, it applies to children entitled to certain benefits or support for a disability or special educational need and looked after children and certain children who have been in care, including those who have been adopted.

- 15 hours of free childcare a week for all 3 year olds and 4 year olds, worth around £2,500 a year on average.
- 30 hours of free childcare a week for working parents of 3 year olds and 4 year olds with working parents. 30 hours of free childcare is available to families where both parents are working (or where the sole parent is working in a lone parent family) and where each parent earns a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at national minimum wage or living wage. This also includes self-employed parents.
- Help with up to 70% of childcare costs for people on low incomes through working tax credits. In April 2016, this help increased to up to 85% through Universal Credit, subject to a monthly limit of £646 for one child or £1108 for 2 or more children.
- Tax-free childcare, for which 1.5 million families who have childcare costs will be eligible. For every £8 parents pay into an online account, the government will pay £2 – up to a maximum contribution of £2,000 per child each year, for children aged under 12. Parents of disabled children will receive extra support (worth up to £4,000 per child, each year and until their child is 17).
- Childcare vouchers provided through some employers, allowing parents to save money by paying for childcare from their pre-tax salary. This scheme is closed to new applicants from October 2018.
- Shared Parental Leave, giving parents the chance to share up to 50 weeks' leave and up to 37 weeks' parental pay in the first year following their child's birth or adoption.

It is the responsibility of the local authority to ensure that every child that is eligible for the 15 hours and 30 hours of free childcare is able to access a place. Local authorities also have a statutory duty to provide parents with information, advice and guidance on their websites about how these childcare offers can be accessed locally.

## ■ Children: Food Poverty

**Stephen Twigg:**

[\[278892\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department has made an estimate of the number of children who are at risk of experiencing hunger during the school summer holidays in 2019.

**Stephen Twigg:**

[\[278893\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what support her Department is providing to families with children who are at risk of experiencing hunger during the school summer holidays in 2019.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

The information requested is not held centrally.

In 2018, the department announced a programme of work to explore ways of supporting disadvantaged families during school holidays. We received 94 applications for funding from organisations across the country, for a share of £2 million.

The 2018 programme saw charities and community groups provide meals and activities such as football, play sessions, and cooking classes for more than 18,000 children across the country. Building on this, the department has quadrupled funding and strengthened the programme to encourage coordination in local communities, so that even more disadvantaged children can benefit from the programme. Applications were invited from organisations to act as coordinators in a specific local authority area. The 2019 programme received 92 applications and selected 11 locations for funding, including at least one in each of the 9 regions of England. This summer, around 50,000 disadvantaged children will be offered free meals and activities over the upcoming summer holidays, funded by £9.1 million.

The purpose of this programme is to allow us to gather more evidence about the scale of the issue, the most effective ways of tackling it, and the costs and delivery challenges associated with doing so. As a result, the department will be able to make an evidence based decision about whether and how we should intervene in the longer term.

**■ Citizenship: Education****Stella Creasy:**[\[278987\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has plans to make citizenship education a priority subject for teacher training.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department is committed to ensuring that teaching remains an attractive profession and that graduates can access high quality teacher training across all subjects. That's why in January the Department launched the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategy. Designed collaboratively with the sector, the centrepiece of the strategy is the Early Career Framework (ECF) which will underpin a fully-funded, two-year support package for new teachers, providing them with the early career support enjoyed by other top professionals.

The Government offers student finance for all tuition fee funded citizenship teacher training courses, including a tuition fee loan which means that trainee teachers do not need to pay fees upfront. Citizenship trainee teachers can also apply for a maintenance loan to support their living costs. Those considering citizenship Initial Teacher Training (ITT) are eligible for one to one support from Teacher Training Advisers, to guide them through their journey into teaching. They can access this support by registering with Get into Teaching.

For some subjects, the Department provide bursaries to incentivise applications. The Department has had to take difficult decisions about where to focus this bursaries budget. As schools enter more pupils for English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects, it is expected that there will be more demand for specialist teachers in these subjects. The Department has therefore focused the bursaries budget on EBacc subjects to secure as many applicants as possible in the subjects where schools are likely to devote the most teaching time.

## ■ Department for Education: Working Hours

**Jon Trickett:**

[\[278368\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much time off in lieu has been taken by staff in his Department in each of the last five years.

**Anne Milton:**

The information requested is not held centrally.

In the department, a voluntary 'flexi-scheme' is available to all employees who are responsible for ensuring their hours of attendance are recorded accurately. Managers are responsible for ensuring that employees are not working excessive hours. If an employee accrues extra hours they may, with the agreement of their manager, take time off. Managers and employees have an obligation to ensure that working patterns are in accordance with the working time regulations.

The department is committed to the wellbeing of its staff and around 90% of our senior civil servants have received Wellbeing Confident Leader training. The department has mental health first aiders, fair treatment ambassadors and a wellbeing network who all work to help prioritise staff wellbeing at work.

## ■ Further Education

**Rosie Duffield:**

[\[279134\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential merits in extending consumer protection law to cover further education courses.

**Anne Milton:**

An assessment of the potential merits of extending consumer protection law to cover further education (FE) courses has not been made. However, the government promotes high quality FE within a regulatory framework, that aims to protect the rights of learners accessing FE courses.

FE college corporations operate as independent charities and are subject to robust accountability arrangements for the public funding they receive. Ofsted inspects and publicly reports on the quality of education within FE providers. The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) allocates significant annual funding to providers of education and skills training for young people and adults. ESFA holds providers to account for their performance to ensure they consistently raise standards.

The FE Choices learner satisfaction survey 2017-18 captures learners' experiences of their college or training organisation. The most recent survey was published by the department on 19 July and reports that 82% of learners were 'likely' or 'extremely likely' to recommend their learning provider to friends or family.

FE providers must also ensure that complaint handling processes and practices are accessible, clear and fair to learners.

## ■ Further Education: Fees and Charges

**Gordon Marsden:** [\[278910\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent discussions he has had with the office for students on registration fees for further education colleges.

**Gordon Marsden:** [\[278912\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the effect of the office for students registration fees on the financial viability of further education colleges.

**Gordon Marsden:** [\[278913\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of the introduction of a separate office for students registration fee banding for stand alone further education colleges.

**Chris Skidmore:**

All providers are being treated equitably.

We consulted with all providers, including further education (FE) colleges, twice, on the introduction of registration fees (from December 2016 until March 2017, and from October 2017 until December 2017). The Office for Students (OfS) separately consulted on the model for deciding how student numbers should be determined to inform the fee levels. It published the outcomes of this consultation in October 2018. Following the consultation processes, a number of additional bands were added for smaller providers compared with the original proposal. The costs for a very small provider have decreased from the second phase of the consultation, where a provider with 0-50 full-time equivalent student numbers, the lowest band, was proposed to pay £18,200. Providers with full-time equivalent student numbers of no more than 25 will now pay £12,300, and providers with more than 25 but no more than 50 (full time equivalent) will pay £15,350.

We also considered the impact of fees more widely and published an impact assessment in March 2019. The impact assessment considered higher education providers – including FE colleges – taxpayers, the government and students. The impact assessment report stated:

'We have ... analysed Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) college accounts data for 120 FE colleges with Higher Education Funding Council for England funded learners, that have applied to register and found that FE colleges would be paying on average 0.2% of their total income in registration fees. This ranges from 0.05% to

1.3% of total income but with just one provider paying more than 1%. ... these proportions are very small and highly unlikely to impede competition in the higher education market.'

We have committed to a full review of registration fees after 2 years, when the impact of the fees on all providers will be clearer.

I meet regularly with the Chair and officials from the OfS to discuss a wide range of issues, including the financial health of all parts of the higher education sector, which is kept under constant review by the OfS.

## ■ Higher Education: Admissions

**Paul Farrelly:**

[\[278922\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of requiring universities in England to use contextual admissions tools to widen participation in higher education.

**Chris Skidmore:**

Widening access and participation in higher education is a priority for this government. This means that everyone with the capability to succeed in higher education should have the opportunity to participate, regardless of their background or where they grew up.

We have made real progress in ensuring universities are open to all, with record rates of disadvantaged 18 year olds in higher education. However, we are aware that more needs to be done to ensure that background isn't a barrier to realising potential in higher education.

Many higher education providers are already using contextual admissions, to support widening access, and the government supports this.

It's important that higher education providers use good quality and meaningful data to identify disadvantage and under-representation. We encourage institutions to use a range of measures to identify disadvantage and under-representation, including individual-level indicators, area data (such as POLAR, Index of Multiple Deprivation or ACORN), school data, intersectional data such as the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service's (UCAS) Multiple Equality Measure and participation in outreach activities. The department is continuing to work with the Office for Students, UCAS and sector representatives to further explore how we can support universities to improve and enhance access to data.

## ■ Holiday Activities and Food Research Fund

**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:**

[\[279069\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 16 July 2019 to Question 276204, on the Holiday Activities and Food Research Fund, what funding organisations that unsuccessfully bid for funding from that fund can apply for to feed children.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

The purpose of the Holiday Activities and Food Research Fund is to allow us to gather more evidence about the number of disadvantaged children at risk of going hungry during the school holidays, the most effective ways of tackling this, and the costs and burdens associated with doing so. As a result, we will be able to make an evidence-based decision about whether and how we should intervene in the longer term.

The 2019 programme follows a successful £2 million programme in the summer of 2018, which saw charities and community groups provide meals and activities such as football, play sessions and cooking classes for more than 18,000 children across the country. To build on that, we have more than quadrupled the funding for 2019 so that even more disadvantaged children can benefit. This summer around 50,000 disadvantaged children will be offered free meals and activities over the upcoming summer holidays with funding of £9.1 million.

This programme of work will help us to continue to research how it can best support children eligible for free school meals during the holidays and to test a new model under which local co-ordinators oversee and fund clubs in their areas.

**■ National Retraining Scheme****Gordon Marsden:**[\[278909\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the get help to retrain scheme, whether the digital service will include the assessment of adults' (a) qualifications and (b) skills.

**Anne Milton:**

Get Help to Retrain is the first of a series of products that will make up the full National Retraining Scheme (NRS). We are expecting the NRS to evolve and grow as we learn better what best works.

With support from qualified National Careers Service advisers, the service will support adults to understand which skills they have from their current role and which further skills would be required for a potential new, better job.

In addition, the service helps people to find training opportunities that may help the user to bridge the skills gap to a new role, initially consisting of training currently available and later including more bespoke offerings. It will also direct users to local job opportunities that could be within their reach.

**Gordon Marsden:**[\[278911\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of the roll-out of the Get Help to Retrain scheme (a) in the Liverpool City Region and (b) to all eligible adults in England by 2020.

**Anne Milton:**

In October 2018, the government announced a £100 million initial commitment to continue to test, learn and develop the National Retraining Scheme. This has allowed

us to start delivering the first parts of the scheme in the Liverpool City Region. Get Help to Retrain will be expanded to more people and more areas throughout the testing phase before being made available to all eligible adults in England in 2020. In addition to this, we are continuing to develop new products in parallel to the testing of Get Help to Retrain, which will collectively make up the complete service.

## ■ Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[277700\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 23 April 2019 to Question 243385 on Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education, whether the material and training for schools will include (a) testing for sexually transmitted infections (STIs), (b) the potential effects of STIs on those who contract them, (c) the treatment of STIs and (d) how STIs are transmitted; and if he will make a statement.

**Nick Gibb:**

Teaching about sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV and Aids is included in the current statutory sex and relationships education guidance, which was published in 2000. Schools already teach these topics, often as part of their science curriculum and personal, social, health, and economic education.

In teaching about STIs under the new guidance on relationships education, relationships and sex education and health education, schools are free to decide which resources to use and the Department trusts headteachers to make those decisions. The guidance is clear that schools should draw on medically accurate information and set this in the broader context of the subjects as a whole.

The Department is committed to supporting schools to teach the new subjects to a high standard. The Department is working with subject experts to ensure schools are supported to improve their practice, including providing easy access to high-quality teaching materials across the requirements for the new subjects.

## ■ Post-18 Education and Funding Review

**Tony Lloyd:**

[\[277649\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has formally responded to the letter on the implementation of the recommendations of the Augar Review signed by 203 College Principals.

**Anne Milton:**

I can confirm that we have received the letter from my hon. Friend, the Member for Witney, Robert Courts, and 203 College Principals and I am responding to this letter. My hon. Friend, the Member for Witney, Robert Courts, and 203 College Principals shall receive their response shortly.



## ■ Private Education: Overseas Aid

**Chi Onwurah:**

[\[279002\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of Official Development Assistance allocated to his Department is spent on independent schools; and what other programmes are funded by that Assistance.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

The department's estimated Official Development Assistance (ODA) spend in 2018 was £20 million, which also included a £5 million contribution to the Association of Commonwealth Universities' scholarship endowment fund. This spend was announced last April and exclusively funds master's level scholarships for citizens of ODA-eligible Commonwealth countries.

This estimate of spending on ODA primarily relates to the provision of education of child and unaccompanied child asylum seekers in the 12 months after they make an asylum claim in the UK. The department estimates how much of the wider core schools funding for England is allocated due to having these children on schools' rolls. The estimate does not include any spending on independent schools.

## ■ Pupils: Incontinence

**Mike Kane:**

[\[279070\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what information his Department holds on the number of pupils who experience bowel and bladder problems; and what steps his Department is taking to ensure that the needs of those pupils are met.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

The information requested regarding the number of pupils who experience bowel and bladder problems is not held centrally. However, the government is committed to ensuring that pupils with medical conditions are properly supported at school so that they have full access to education.

In 2014, the government introduced a new duty on schools to support pupils with all medical conditions, and has published statutory guidance on this for schools and others. The guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>.

The guidance does not specify which medical conditions should be supported in schools. Instead, it focuses on how to meet the needs of each individual child and the impact of their medical condition on school life.

Schools also have duties under the Equality Act (2010) to make reasonable adjustments and not to discriminate against disabled children, including those with long-term health conditions such as bowel and bladder conditions, in relation to their access to education and associated services. Schools must make reasonable adjustments to their practices, procedures and policies to ensure that they are not putting those with long term health problems at a disadvantage.

**■ Schools: Admissions**

**Paul Farrelly:** [\[278923\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent steps he has taken to widen access to the highest performing schools in England and Wales.

**Nick Gibb:**

86% of schools in England are good or outstanding.

The Department has committed £7 billion to create new school places between 2015 and 2021, the vast majority of which are being created in the best existing schools or through good new schools. The Department is on track to create 1 million places this decade, the largest increase in school capacity in at least two generations.

Of the mainstream free schools approved between 2014 and 2017, 86% have been in areas where there was a need for more school places. 84% of free schools with inspection reports published by the end of May are rated good or outstanding.

98% of grammar schools are also good or outstanding and the Department wants more disadvantaged pupils to be able to access a place at them. That is why it has made £100 million available through the Selective Schools Expansion Fund to create additional places, where needed, in selective schools that commit to a plan to improve access for disadvantaged children. In 2018 the Department announced 16 selective schools to be funded to expand, and it launched a second bidding round in 2019.

Education is a devolved matter and it is for the Welsh national assembly to decide on education in Wales.

**■ Sex and Relationship Education**

**Caroline Lucas:** [\[277695\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the number of schools that will obtain funding from his Department's £6 million fund for training on relationships and sex education; what assessment he has made of the adequacy of this fund to support primary and secondary school teachers to provide LGBT-inclusive teaching; and if he will make a statement.

**Caroline Lucas:** [\[277696\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has made an estimate of the cost to his Department of making relationships education, sex and relationships education and health education a subject-specialism teacher training course; and if he will make a statement.

**Caroline Lucas:** [\[277698\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will discuss with the Chancellor of the Exchequer increasing funding for relationships and sex education in schools in the spending review.

**Caroline Lucas:**

[277699]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if the Government will ensure that subject leads at every school receive in-person, inclusive training on relationships and sex education.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department is committed to supporting schools to deliver high quality teaching of relationships education, relationships and sex education and health education. The Department has previously announced £6 million, in this financial year, for the development of a programme of support for schools – the funding will not be distributed to individual schools. Further funding beyond the next financial year is a matter of the forthcoming Spending Review.

The Department's programme of support will focus on tools that improve schools' practice, such as an implementation guide and targeted support, training materials and resources that teachers need to teach the new subjects. The Department is currently working with lead teachers, non-specialist teachers and schools to develop training materials that are suited to their needs.

The Department also encourages schools to start teaching the subjects from September 2019, so that schools can improve methods and share good practice ahead of compulsory teaching from September 2020.

The Department has also published guides that set out clearly the nature and content of the subjects, as well as articulate parents' rights and their involvement in the curriculum. The Department has also previously published FAQs to bust myths on the subjects. This is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education-faqs>.

## ■ Sex and Relationship Education: Primary Education

**Caroline Lucas:**

[277697]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to ensure that his Department's supplementary guidance on teaching relationships education in primary schools is inclusive of LGBT people; and if he will make a statement.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department enables and strongly encourages primary schools, when teaching about different types of family within relationships education, to include families with same sex parents. The statutory guidance states that all pupils should receive teaching on lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) relationships during their school years. Secondary schools will be expected to include LGBT relationships in their teaching.

The Department is working closely with schools on a package of support for effective implementation of these subjects. The Department will ensure that all of the materials supporting implementation of the new subjects are inclusive, and fully recognise the

need to disseminate the good practice in teaching about LGBT relationships that is seen in large numbers of our schools.

#### ■ **Special Educational Needs: Barnsley**

**Stephanie Peacock:** [\[277812\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding for special educational needs his Department has allocated from the public purse to schools in Barnsley in each year since 2010.

**Stephanie Peacock:** [\[277813\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding for special educational needs his Department has allocated from the public purse to schools in South Yorkshire in each year since 2010.

#### **Nadhim Zahawi:**

Local authorities are required, through their local school funding formulae, to provide schools with sufficient funds to enable schools to meet the additional cost of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), up to the value of £6,000. This funding comes from the schools block of the Dedicated Schools Grant.

When the costs of additional support required for a pupil with SEND exceed £6,000, the local authority should also allocate additional top up funding to cover the excess costs. This top-up funding, and funding for special schools, comes from the local authority's high needs budget. In December 2018, we announced an additional £250 million in high needs funding across the current financial year and the next. Barnsley council is receiving £23.2 million for high needs this year, including its share of the £250 million, which amounted to £1.1 million.

In 2013, the schools and high needs budgets within the Dedicated Schools Grant were created. As the Dedicated Schools Grant includes other budgets such as the early years budget, the department is unable to provide comparable figures before 2013-14.

The schools and high needs allocations for the Yorkshire and the Humber and Barnsley regions since 2013-14 are set out in the below tables:

#### **Yorkshire and the Humber**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>SCHOOLS FUNDING AMOUNT</b>	<b>HIGH NEEDS FUNDING AMOUNT</b>
<b>2013-14</b>	£3.1 billion	£412.8 million
<b>2014-15</b>	£3.1 billion	£430.7 million
<b>2015-16</b>	£3.2 billion	£436.2 million
<b>2016-17</b>	£3.3 billion	£442.1 million
<b>2017-18</b>	£3.3 billion	£476.3 million

YEAR	SCHOOLS FUNDING AMOUNT	HIGH NEEDS FUNDING AMOUNT
2018-19	£3.4 billion	£512.6 million
2019-20	£3.5 billion	£531.9 million

  

YEAR	SCHOOLS FUNDING AMOUNT	HIGH NEEDS FUNDING AMOUNT
2013-14	£127.1 million	£17.4 million
2014-15	£126.9 million	£18.4 million
2015-16	£132.07 million	£18.4 million
2016-17	£133.7 million	£18.9 million
2017-18	£137.4 million	£21.5 million
2018-19	£142.9 million	£22.2 million
2019-20	£148.8 million	£23.2 million

### ■ Special Educational Needs: Hearing Impairment

**Tom Brake:**

[\[277613\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of teachers of the deaf in teaching deaf children.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

We do not hold information centrally on effectiveness of teachers of the deaf and the quality of support that they provide to deaf children and their families.

In order to teach a class of pupils with hearing impairment, a teacher must hold a mandatory qualification in addition to qualified teacher status.

Ofsted, through its inspection of individual schools, considers the extent to which the education that they provide meets the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and disabilities. Inspectors will consider the quality of teaching provided to improve learning for pupils, including those with hearing impairments, which may include support provided by teachers of the deaf.

**Tom Brake:**

[\[277614\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of the number of teachers of the deaf to ensure deaf children are supported in financial year (a) 2019-20, (b) 2020-2021 and (c) 2021-2022.

**Nick Gibb:**

The information is not held centrally. It is up to local authorities to work with the schools in their area to identify the nature of specialist support services they commission, according to the needs of schools in their area.

**Universities: Sexual Offences****Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[278962\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the number of sexual offences committed on university campuses in each of the last three years.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The department does not collect information on the number of sexual offences committed on university campuses. The responsibility for this, and for meeting legal obligations, lies with individual higher education (HE) providers.

The government expects HE providers to keep records of incidents disclosed to them and act swiftly to investigate and address them. It is important to recognise that under-reporting is common and HE providers should continue to break down barriers to reporting by ensuring that students and staff feel safe and are able to disclose sexual misconduct.

The government takes all forms of sexual harassment extremely seriously. Therefore, the government is working closely with Universities UK (UUK) and the Office for Students (OfS) to support work to address sexual harassment and other forms of discrimination in HE institutions. This includes implementation of the UUK's sexual violence and harassment taskforce's recommendations on handling of reports and disclosures, as well as enabling accurate data to be captured to determine the scale of the problem and track year on-year trends.

The government expects HE providers to take these recommendations seriously. Furthermore, the government has tasked the OfS to support this work. The OfS have invested £2.45 million in projects tackling sexual harassment, including supporting the development and improvement of reporting procedures.

**ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS****Agriculture: Environment Protection****Layla Moran:**[\[277287\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department has taken to help the agricultural sector create new jobs in environmental land management.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

Through our proposed reforms and the policies set out in the Agriculture Bill we will increase demand and therefore employment opportunities for those who have these skills by financially supporting farmers who undertake environmental works. We

regularly discuss these reforms with farmers and the educational and advisory services that serve farming; including the Food and Drink Sector Council who are specifically looking at the workforce, skills and jobs we want to see in the future.

## ■ Agriculture: Subsidies

**Layla Moran:**

[\[277285\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to incentivise sustainable agricultural practices through the Environmental Land Management scheme.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) will be underpinned by the principle of payment of public money for public goods such as: clean air; clean and plentiful water; thriving plants and wildlife; reduced risk of harm from environmental hazards such as flooding and drought; enhanced beauty, heritage and engagement for the natural environment and mitigating and adapting to climate change. As the detail of the ELMS is developed, Defra will be exploring with stakeholders where sustainable farming practices can contribute to the delivery of these public goods.

**Layla Moran:**

[\[277288\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that its Environmental Land Management scheme is developed as part of the Government's overall strategy to reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

The Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) will be designed to significantly contribute to the goals of the 25 Year Environment Plan and other initiatives such as net zero carbon emissions by 2050. The ELMS team will work with farmers, land managers, environmental bodies, non-governmental organisations and other stakeholders to test and trial new and innovative approaches to deliver environmental outcomes, including the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture and the removal of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

## ■ Animal Experiments

**Kerry McCarthy:**

[\[278930\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to ensure that there is no duplication of animal testing for chemical registrations in the event that the UK leaves the EU without an agreement.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

We are determined that there should be no need for any additional animal testing for a chemical that has already been registered to EU Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) if the UK leaves the EU without a deal. In such a scenario, the UK system that we will put in place (UK REACH) will

retain the 'last resort principle' – that companies can only use animal testing as a last resort.

We have also ensured that under UK REACH the information requirements would be the same as under EU REACH. Businesses will therefore be able to confirm their registrations by submitting the same technical information that was required by EU REACH.

## ■ Floods: House Insurance

**Toby Perkins:** [\[277165\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate the Government has made of the increase in building and contents insurance premiums as a result of the increase in claims for flood damage; and what assessment he has made of the value for money to customers of those increases.

**Toby Perkins:** [\[277166\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions the Government has had with the insurance industry on the increase in building and contents insurance premiums due to the increase in claims for flood damage.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

The Government has not made estimates of increased premiums. Insurance companies are private businesses that take into account a range of factors when setting their premiums and excess in household insurance policies.

Flood Re was launched in April 2016 and is designed to improve the availability and affordability of household insurance policies for people living in high flood risk areas.

The premiums under Flood Re are set in legislation and vary by the council tax band of the property and have a fixed excess per claim. In January 2019 these were reduced for the majority of council tax bands.

## ■ Food: Allowances

**Paul Farrelly:** [\[278920\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of giving people a monthly allowance to spend on fresh, healthy and locally sourced food in a bid to (a) tackle obesity and (b) support the farming industry.

**David Rutley:**

There are existing schemes that support the consumption of healthy food. For example, the Healthy Start scheme provides vouchers for lower income families which can be used to buy, or be put towards the cost of, fruit, vegetables, milk and infant formula.

In addition, Defra has commissioned its lead non-executive director, Henry Dimbleby, to lead an independent review to develop a series of recommendations that will help



shape a national food strategy. It will cover the entire food chain from field to fork, building on work already underway in the Agriculture Bill, the Environment Bill, the Fisheries Bill and the Childhood Obesity Plan. This will help ensure that our food system delivers healthy and affordable food and is built upon a resilient and sustainable agriculture sector.

## ■ Horses: Animal Welfare

**Sir Greg Knight:**

[\[278918\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will undertake a review of the effectiveness of prosecutions under the Protection Against Cruel Tethering Act 1988; what steps the Government is taking to ensure the implementation of adequate protections for tethered horses; and if he will make a statement.

**David Rutley:**

The Protection Against Cruel Tethering Act 1988 was repealed by the Animal Welfare Act 2006 ("the 2006 Act") and its provisions replaced with section 9 of the 2006 Act. This introduces a duty on people to ensure the welfare needs of animals for which they are responsible. Local authorities, the Animal and Plant Health Agency and the police all have powers of entry under the 2006 Act and can investigate allegations of poor welfare and take enforcement action where necessary. Furthermore, under the 2006 Act anyone is able to investigate allegations of poor welfare and take forward prosecutions. It is on this basis that the RSPCA successfully prosecute 800 to 1,000 people each year, including in relation to equines and equine tethering.

In addition, the 2006 Act is backed up by the statutory 'Code of Practice for the Welfare of Horses, Ponies, Donkeys and Their Hybrids' which has a specific Annex dedicated to tethering. RSPCA inspectors will use the code when investigating horse welfare incidents, such as inappropriate tethering, to check compliance. Although it is not an offence to breach the code, it can be used as evidence in court, for example if a case for inappropriate horse tethering was brought against the owner.

We agree that more can be done to spread best practice amongst horse owners. On this basis, I recently hosted a horse tethering roundtable with key stakeholders including horse welfare groups, local authorities and the RSPCA. Following this we will continue to engage with key stakeholders to tackle this important issue.

## ■ Nature Conservation: North Cornwall

**Scott Mann:**

[\[277227\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much of the £7.7 million funding for the Back from the Brink programme is accessible to North Cornwall.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

Programme funding was allocated to projects that will best help bring threatened species back from the brink, rather than on a regional basis. Projects are delivered

across multiple locations so we are unable to give detailed geographical breakdowns. However, as part of the Ancients of the Future project, funding is being used in Lanhydrock, North Cornwall, and nearby Fowey Valley to survey, provide advice to land managers, and upskill local tree surgeons in techniques to manage ancient trees and woodlands providing habitat for bats and other wildlife. Another project aims to improve the prospects for the vulnerable Lesser Butterfly Orchid by providing advice to land managers in Greena Moor and nearby in Dunsdon National Nature Reserve.

#### ■ **Plastics: EU Law**

**Alex Chalk:** [\[277217\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when the Government plans to bring forward legislative proposals to implement the EU Single Use Plastics Directive 2019/904 which came into force on 3 July 2019.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

There is a two year transposition period for the EU Single Use Plastics Directive. An assessment of the legislative work required to transpose the directive is being carried out.

#### ■ **Plastics: Recycling**

**Paul Farrelly:** [\[278919\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he plans to increase support for catalytic chemical recycling and upcycling to realise the ambition of zero plastic waste.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

£4.7 million of grant funding was announced on 12 June and made available through the Waste & Resources Action Programme, to support new capital infrastructure projects that will help to recycle difficult plastic packaging and textile materials.

The Government also incentivises business-led technology innovation through Innovate UK and its role to fund business-led innovation through the allocation of competitively awarded grants. This fund has previously supported chemicals recycling projects. Further details on Innovate UK are available at:

[www.gov.uk/innovate-uk](http://www.gov.uk/innovate-uk).

#### ■ **Rural Areas: Public Transport**

**Layla Moran:** [\[277286\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department has had recent discussions with the Department for Transport on the environmentally-friendly expansion of rural public transport; and if he will make a statement.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

Last December Defra and the Department for Transport (DfT) held a joint roundtable on rural bus services with a wide range of key stakeholders, exploring the issues and potential solutions for providing effective bus services in rural communities.

The new Community Rail Development Strategy, published in November 2018, looks for ways to make it easier for the rail industry and local community rail partnerships to improve services and stations on local branch lines. Defra worked with DfT on the draft strategy and the consultation process on the strategy prior to its launch.

The Government published its Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy in March and will be setting out thinking on the future of rural mobility in due course, to explore how the benefits of transport innovation can be enjoyed by everyone, wherever they live.

The Government's ambitions for the Oxford Cambridge Arc recognise that it is an area of significant strength and opportunity. We recognise that a high-quality environment is key to achieving the ambition of a more productive and connected Arc and aim to meet our economic and housing ambitions while delivering on the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan. Defra is working closely with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and DfT to create sustainable places for people and wildlife, to preserve the environment for future generations. Within the Arc, we are encouraging the constituent local authorities to be looking to develop local potential transport systems that provide convenient, clean, effective, accessible, inclusive, safe and active travel, with less congestion and better air quality.

Oxford City Council has received £2,334,480, through the Clean Bus Technology Fund, run by Defra and DfT's Joint Air Quality Unit. This will retrofit 115 buses across Oxford and Oxfordshire to Euro VI standard.

**■ Sheep Meat: UK Trade with EU****Jenny Chapman:**[\[278953\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of preventing imports of sheep meat into the UK in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Government announced on 13 March that we would apply the maximum level of tariff protection in line with our World Trade Organization (WTO) commitments for the UK sheep meat sector. In particular, the tariff for sheep meat would be set at the 'bound rate', which is the highest tariff we are able to apply to imports.

The UK would, however, be retaining a share of current EU WTO quotas for sheep meat, including imports from New Zealand to meet our commitments at the WTO. The share has been calculated based on apportioning the EU quota in proportion to previous trade flows.

**Jenny Chapman:**

[\[278954\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the timetable is for listing the UK as a third country for the purposes of exporting sheep meat to the EU in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

**David Rutley:**

If the UK leaves the EU in a no deal scenario then it will be treated as a third country.

In order to be prepared for all possible outcomes, the UK submitted its application for listing as a third country to continue exporting live animals and animal products to the EU after EU Exit. In the event of a no deal exit, without listed status exports of animal products, the export of most live animals to the EU could not take place.

When the relevant EU committee ('SCoPAFF') met on 9 April, Member States unanimously voted to list the UK. This vote guaranteed that exports of live animals and animal products to the EU could have continued if the UK had left the EU without a deal on 12 April.

The 9 April decision would only have come into force if the UK left the EU on 12 April. Following the Article 50 extension in April, the European Commission have confirmed a further SCoPAFF vote will be required to list the UK prior to a potential no deal EU Exit in the future. We are confident the UK will continue to meet the requirements for listing should that be required.

We would expect the Commission to hold the further SCoPAFF meeting ahead of the UK leaving the EU without a deal.

**Jenny Chapman:**

[\[278955\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of potential demand for UK produced sheep meat in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Government recognises the concerns of our UK sheep farmers and is determined to get the best deal for them as we leave the EU. The UK is the largest producer of sheep and by far the largest exporter of sheepmeat in the EU. Around a third of production is exported, 95% of which is to the EU.

We are doing all we can to mitigate the challenges our farmers will face and we have contingency plans in place to minimise disruption. In the event of a 'no deal', an increased availability of lamb on the domestic market could filter through to increased demand for our globally recognised product.

A recent study carried out by The Andersons Centre for the UK's levy bodies for the red meat sector looked into the impact of tariff and non-tariff measures on the sector, which included analysis on domestic consumption.

## ■ Sheep: Transmissible Encephalopathies

**Deidre Brock:**

[\[277203\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to enable the identification of the age of ovine animals other than by the eruption of the permanent incisor under the Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies Regulations (2018).

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Government is preparing to consult on amendments to the Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies Regulations (2018) in line with changes to EU rules, which would permit the introduction of an optional method of ageing of sheep alternative to dentition.

## EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION

### ■ Brexit

**John Redwood:**

[\[278884\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what recent assessment the Government has made of the UK's level of preparedness in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal on 31 October 2019.

**James Cleverly:**

Leaving the EU with a deal remains our priority, but as a responsible Government we've been preparing for nearly three years to minimise disruption in the event of no deal.

We have over 300 work streams looking at specific no deal plans across a range of sectors and these are well advanced. There is still some work to be done but departments are making sensible decisions about prioritisation.

Departments report progress delivering each workstream on a regular basis. DExEU aggregates the cross-Government picture of readiness and provides regular updates to Ministers. This allows for the swift resolution of barriers to improve the Government's overall preparedness for exit.

As you might expect, these aggregate assessments of Government preparedness are exceptionally sensitive. If our overall assessment - or the underlying data - were made public, both our negotiating position and our ability to manage delivery across the programme would be significantly damaged.

### ■ Finance: British Overseas Territories

**Chuka Umunna:**

[\[278502\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, which parts of the Government's plan for British Overseas Territories funding in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal (a) have and (b) have not been implemented.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

In the event of the UK leaving the EU without a deal, the Government has guaranteed funding for specific EU projects received by the Overseas Territories, in line with the technical notice published on this issue. Departments are working to ensure the guarantee is ready to be implemented if required. I refer the hon. member to the technical notices published by the Government on the guarantee and the funds covered by it for further details.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/funding-for-british-overseas-territories-if-theres-no-brexiteal/funding-for-british-overseas-territories-if-theres-no-brexiteal>

■ **Gibraltar****Andrew Rosindell:****[278433]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what additional support will be allocated to Gibraltar in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

**Andrew Rosindell:****[278434]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what plans the Government has to provide additional support to the Falkland Islands in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The Overseas Territories, including Gibraltar and the Falkland Islands, are responsible for their own contingency planning. We regularly meet with the Overseas Territories, and provide advice and support on contingency planning to ensure they are prepared to trade with the EU in all scenarios. In the event of a no deal, HMG has agreed to guarantee funding for specific EU projects in the Overseas Territories, should it be required.

■ **UK Trade with EU: Employment****Ian Lavery:****[278507]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what assessment he has made of the effect of changes to trade between the UK and the EU after the UK leaves the EU on employment in the trade sector.

**James Cleverly:**

In November 2018, the Government delivered on its commitment to provide appropriate analysis to Parliament with a robust, objective assessment of how exiting the EU may affect the economy of the UK, sectors, nations and regions across a range of potential future policy scenarios. The 'EU Exit: Long-term economic analysis' can be found at the following link:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachm ent\\_data/file/760484/28\\_November\\_EU\\_Exit\\_-\\_Long-term\\_economic\\_analysis\\_1\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachm ent_data/file/760484/28_November_EU_Exit_-_Long-term_economic_analysis_1_.pdf)

**FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE****■ British Indian Ocean Territory: Sovereignty****Patrick Grady:**[\[277209\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to the oral contribution of the Minister of State in Westminster Hall on 3 July, column 584WH, if he will provide a reference to the section of the award of March 2015 of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea Tribunal which concluded that the Agreement in 1965 to the detachment of the Chagos Archipelago was legally binding.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

Section 6 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea Arbitral Tribunal Award (18 March 2015) considers this issue in detail and makes the relevant conclusions.

**■ China: Ethnic Groups****Mr Steve Baker:**[\[277175\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the accuracy of reports of Uighur Muslim children in western Xinjiang being separated from their parents; and if he will make a statement.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

Reports about forced separation of children, including Dr Adrian Zenz's report of 4 July 2019, add to the growing body of evidence about the disturbing situation that Uyghurs and other minorities are facing in Xinjiang. We assess that there could be more than a million Uyghurs and other minorities who have been or are currently detained extra-judicially in detention camps in the province. As Mr Field explained in a Westminster Hall debate on 29 January 2019, these detentions have split up families and have had a significant impact on the children of those detained.

We also frequently raise our concerns about the human rights situation in Xinjiang bilaterally with the Chinese Government and in multilateral fora. Most recently on 3 July at the 41<sup>st</sup> session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, we noted our increasing concern at the growing use of detention camps in Xinjiang and re-iterated our call on China to allow UN observers unrestricted access.

**■ China: State Visits****Emily Thornberry:**[\[277142\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions his Department had with the Chinese authorities prior to the state visit of President Xi in 2015 on the policing of public protests against the visit.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

For any State Visit, it is standard practice for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to work closely with the relevant Embassy or High Commission in support of the visit,

which will include discussions about the security arrangements. The Foreign & Commonwealth Office does not publicly disclose details of any discussions on security arrangements.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[277143\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the Chinese authorities made any specific, (a) formal and (b) informal requests to his Department on the policing of protests prior and during the state visit of President Xi in 2015.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office does not publicly disclose details of requests for security or security arrangements.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[277144\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what information his Department holds on meetings between the police and the Chinese authorities during the state visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping in October 2015; and if he will make a statement.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not publicly disclose details of any discussions on security arrangements.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[277145\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether his Department made any specific requests to the (a) Metropolitan Police and (b) City of London Police on the handling of protests during the state visit of President Xi in 2015.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

Operational Independence is integral to the work of the Metropolitan Police Service and City of London Police. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office did not make specific requests to either on the handling of protests during the state visit of President Xi.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[277146\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the Chinese authorities made any specific requests to his Department on the monitoring of specific individuals prior to the state visit of President Xi in 2015.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office does not publicly disclose details of requests for security or security arrangements.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[277147\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions his Department had with the previous Mayor of London on the policing of protests prior to the state visit of President Xi in 2015.



**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office had no discussions with the previous Mayor of London on the policing of protests prior to the state visit.

**Emily Thornberry:**[\[277148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether his officials were party to any discussions between the previous Mayor of London and Chinese Government officials on the policing of protests prior to the state visit of President Xi in 2015.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials were not party to any discussions between the previous Mayor of London and Chinese Government officials on the policing of the protests prior to the state visit of President Xi.

**Emily Thornberry:**[\[277149\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what meetings were facilitated by his Department between the Chinese authorities and (a) other Departments, (b) the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime and (c) the Metropolitan Police Service to discuss the policing of protests prior to the state visit of President Xi in 2015.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

For any State Visit, it is standard practice for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to work closely with other government departments and the Metropolitan Police Service in support of the visit. The Foreign & Commonwealth Office does not publicly disclose details of any discussions on security arrangements.

**Emily Thornberry:**[\[277150\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether any requests made to his Department by the Chinese authorities on the policing of protests against the state visit of President Xi in 2015 were passed onto (a) other Departments, (b) the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime, (c) the Metropolitan Police Service and (d) the City of London Police.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office does not publicly disclose details of requests for security or security arrangements.

**■ Eritrea: Yemen****Ann Clwyd:**[\[277115\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what information his Department holds on reports of Eritrean soldiers on Yemeni islands in the Red sea.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

We monitor the conflict in Yemen closely. We are not aware of the presence of Eritrean soldiers on Yemeni islands in the Red Sea.

**■ Hezbollah and Islamic Resistance Support Organization****John Spellar:** [\[277639\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the relationship between Hezbollah and the Islamic Resistance Support Organisation.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

We do not comment on intelligence matters.

**■ Hong Kong: Extradition****Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:** [\[277805\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the compatibility of the Hong Kong Government's policing of the recent protests against the proposed extradition law with sections of the Sino-British Joint Declaration of 1984 on rights and freedoms related to (a) speech, (b) assembly, (c) the press, (d) movement, (e) correspondence, (f) travel, (g) to strike and (h) academic research.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

Freedoms of speech, assembly, the press, movement, correspondence, travel, of strike, and academic research are all guaranteed rights under the legally binding Sino-British Joint Declaration of 1984.

The British Government supports the Hong Kong people's right to peaceful and lawful protest, which is also one of the fundamental freedoms in Hong Kong. It is imperative that any protests are conducted in a peaceful manner, and that the authorities' response is proportionate. We note the announcement of a special inquiry by the Independent Police Complaints Council into recent events in Hong Kong, and look forward to the publication of further details about the scope and composition of the investigation.

The Foreign Secretary announced on 25 June that we will not issue export licenses for crowd control equipment to Hong Kong unless we are satisfied that concerns raised on human rights and fundamental freedoms have been thoroughly addressed.

**■ Iran: Baha'i Faith****Dr David Drew:** [\[277106\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what reports his Department has received on trends in the level of Tazir laws in Iran in relation to the (a) arbitrary punishment, (b) imprisonment and (c) internal exile of members of the Baha'i community in that country; and if he will make a statement.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

We are aware of reports about the continued harassment and mistreatment that the Baha'i and other minority groups face. We support the assessment of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights that discrimination against the Baha'is

in Iran is sanctioned by a lack of constitutional recognition and the absence of other legal protections for adherents of this faith. We regularly call upon Iran to cease harassment of all religious minorities and to fulfil its international and domestic obligations to protect freedom of religion or belief.

#### ■ **Khaleda Zia**

**Sir David Crausby:**

[\[278383\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to his Bangladeshi counterpart on the imprisonment of opposition leader Khaleda Zia.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

We continue to stress to the Government of Bangladesh, both in public and in private, the importance of respect for human rights and the rule of law. We expect those in detention, including Khaleda Zia, to be treated in accordance with Bangladesh's international commitments on human rights. We regularly engage with the Government of Bangladesh on the treatment of those in detention and on the integrity and independence of the judicial process.

The Foreign Secretary wrote to Bangladesh Foreign Minister, AK Abdul Momen, this year to express our concerns about the general election in December 2018 and to encourage the Government of Bangladesh to maintain dialogue with opposition parties and civil society. The Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific reiterated these concerns and the importance of respect for human rights when he met the Prime Minister and ministers during his visit to Bangladesh in April 2019.

#### ■ **Norfolk Island: Foreign Relations**

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[\[278429\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent engagements he has had with representatives of Norfolk Island.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

Foreign & Commonwealth Ministers have not had any recent engagement with representatives of Norfolk Island.

#### ■ **North Macedonia: NATO**

**Kelvin Hopkins:**

[\[278881\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, when he plans to bring the Protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty on the Accession of the Republic of North Macedonia before the House for ratification.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

The Protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty on the Accession of the Republic of North Macedonia was brought before the House for ratification on Thursday 27 June.

**■ Sub-Saharan Africa: English Language****Dan Carden:****[277833]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the recently announced £4 million programme for English language teaching in sub-Saharan Africa will be funded from the Official Development Assistance budget.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

English Connects is a major new programme connecting the UK with the next generation of African youth through English. It will improve the quality of English language learning and teaching and facilitate digital literacy; creating opportunities that enable young people to fulfil their potential. The programme, initially focused on Cote D'Ivoire, Mali and Senegal, is being expanded to Niger, Cameroon, Gabon, Guinea, Djibouti, Angola and Democratic Republic of the Congo. The British Council and Foreign and Commonwealth Office will provide support through £3.9 million in funding from the Official Development Assistance budget.

**HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE****■ 5G: Health Hazards****Chuka Umunna:****[279011]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what research his Department has conducted on the potential effect on public health of upgrading infrastructure to support 5G.

**Seema Kennedy:**

Public Health England (PHE) advises that the guidelines of the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) should be adopted and there is no convincing evidence that radio wave exposures below the ICNIRP guideline levels cause adverse health effects. The ICNIRP guidelines cover exposures arising from new 5G base stations, as well as from older technologies.

Many exposure measurements have been made at publicly accessible locations near to mobile phone base stations, and these have consistently been well within guidelines. It is possible that there may be a small increase in overall exposure to radio waves when 5G is added to an existing network or in a new area; however, the overall exposure is expected to remain low relative to guidelines and as such there should be no consequences for public health.

PHE has published information about exposure to the radio waves from mobile phone base stations, including those for 5G networks, at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phone-base-stations-radio-waves-and-health/mobile-phone-base-stations-radio-waves-and-health>

PHE continues to monitor the health-related evidence applicable to radio waves and is committed to updating its advice as required.

**■ Accident and Emergency Departments: Nottinghamshire****Gloria De Piero:****[278943]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the average waiting time for patients attending the accident and emergency departments at (a) Sherwood Forest and (b) Nottingham University hospitals was in the last 12 months for which data is available.

**Stephen Hammond:**

The information is not held in the format requested.

**■ Audiology and Hearing Aids****Mary Glendon:****[277193]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer on 12 June 2019 to Question 260081, whether his Department will require Clinical Commissioning Groups to collect and publish data in a comparable form on (a) the amount spent on audiology services, (b) the number of hearing aids fitted and (c) outcomes of hearing aid fittings.

**Caroline Dinenge:**

Clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) are responsible for the collection and collation of audiology data to enable them to manage regional needs. NHS England has no plans to mandate CCGs to collect or publish their data in a comparable form.

**■ Calea: Parenteral Nutrition****Ian Lavery:****[277742]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking with Calea UK Limited to ensure that (a) outpatients and (b) inpatients who are reliant on total parenteral nutrition are able to access the supplies and equipment they need.

**Seema Kennedy:**

We are aware that there is currently disruption affecting the supply of parenteral nutrition from the supplier Calea. This is due to necessary changes in their manufacturing process, meaning that Calea is operating at reduced capacity. We understand the concerns of those who use these products. We are working closely with the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, NHS England and NHS Improvement, the supplier and national experts to resolve this supply issue as quickly as possible to ensure patients requiring parenteral nutrition can be maintained on treatment.

**■ Cancer: Children and Young People****Mark Tami:** [\[278391\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he plans to take to ensure that the target set out in the NHS long term plan that 50 per cent of teenagers and young adults with cancer will be able to take part in clinical trials by 2025.

**Caroline Dinenge:**

The Department's National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) is working with NHS England, cancer charities, teenage and young adult cancer patients, and clinicians towards meeting this NHS Long Term Plan commitment.

The NIHR Clinical Research Network has held two summits. The first summit, held in 2017, developed a clear strategy. The second summit, held in April this year, focused on ensuring that the strategy's objectives were still fit for purpose, and that the right stakeholders were engaged to ensure successful delivery. The NIHR Clinical Research Network is now funding a dedicated teenage and young adult cancer research nurse in each of its 15 Local Clinical Research Networks, with posts made available from 1 April 2019.

**■ Cancer: Cornwall****Scott Mann:** [\[277228\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many (a) doctors and (b) nurses are employed on a full-time basis for cancer care in Cornwall.

**Seema Kennedy:**

NHS Digital publishes hospital and community health services workforce statistics for National Health Service trusts and clinical commissioning groups in England.

However, the information held by NHS Digital does not capture sufficient level of detail to identify those working in cancer care in Cornwall.

**■ Cancer: Diagnosis****Nic Dakin:** [\[277173\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to his oral statement of 1 July 2019, Official Report, column 929, on the NHS Long Term Plan: Implementation, what steps his Department is taking to achieve the target to diagnose 75 per cent of cancers at stage 1 and 2 for less survivable cancers.

**Nic Dakin:** [\[277174\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to his oral statement of 1 July 2019, Official Report, column 929, on the NHS Long Term Plan: Implementation, if he will publish his plans to achieve the target to diagnose 75 per cent of cancers at stage 1 and 2 for less survivable cancers.

**Seema Kennedy:**

To achieve the NHS Long Term Plan ambition, we are modernising our world-renowned cancer screening programmes by introducing faecal immunochemical testing into the NHS Bowel Cancer Screening Programme and human papillomavirus as the primary test in the NHS Cervical Screening Programme.

NHS England is establishing rapid diagnostic centres, which build on the 10 models piloted through the 'Accelerate, Coordinate and Evaluate' programme, which have focussed on diagnosing cancers where patients often present with non-specific symptoms and may go to their general practitioner (GP) many times before being sent for appropriate tests. These will be particularly important for the less-survivable cancers.

NHS England is extending lung health checks, targeting clinical commissioning groups with the lowest survival rates. In Greater Manchester introducing low dose CT health checks saw an almost five-fold reduction in stage 4 disease, with 80% of cancers diagnosed at an early stage.

There will also be efforts to continue to raise awareness cancer symptoms, lower the threshold for GP referrals and accelerate access to diagnosis and treatment.

As set out in the NHS Long Term Plan Implementation Framework, local systems are being asked to create their five-year strategic plans to deliver the commitments in the NHS Long Term Plan. Plans should be created by November 2019. System plans will then be aggregated, brought together with additional national activity and published as part of a national implementation plan by the end of 2019. These plans will include the less survivable cancers.

**■ Cancer: Integrated Care Systems****Tom Brake:**[\[277611\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress he has made on aligning the Cancer Alliances and Integrated Care Systems footprints as a result of the recommendations in the NHS Long-Term Plan.

**Seema Kennedy:**

The NHS Cancer Programme is working closely with regional and Cancer Alliance colleagues in the few remaining areas where integrated care systems are not yet coterminous to assess where boundaries need to change to meet this requirement, to ensure footprints align with cancer patient flows, optimise use of capacity and resources across Alliance geographies and support robust governance.

**■ Cervical Cancer: Research****Jim Shannon:**[\[277734\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to establish a medical consensus on the management of CIN2 cervical cell changes.

**Seema Kennedy:**

The National Cervical Screening Programme is planning to publish its updated national guidance on colposcopy and programme management, which will include the management of CIN2 cervical cell changes in England, later this year.

The guidance will bring together robust published evidence and current clinical practice to help provide a national consensus on this matter.

**■ Clinical Commissioning Groups: Standards****Sir Roger Gale:**[\[278885\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions he has had with the (a) CEO, (b) Accountable Officers and (c) chief nurses of the CCGs rated as inadequate in NHS England's assessment framework on the performance of those CCGs; what measures have been agreed to help ensure improvement of the performance of those CCGs; and if he will make a statement.

**Stephen Hammond:**

My Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has meetings with many health leaders and other key stakeholders on a regular basis.

All clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) rated as inadequate in the annual performance assessment of CCGs are placed in NHS England's special measures regime. This is a non-statutory, internal support regime, tailored to the CCG's circumstances, requiring the delivery of an action plan for improvement.

**■ Cystic Fibrosis: Drugs****Kerry McCarthy:**[\[278928\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent discussions there have been between Vertex Pharmaceuticals and NHS England with on cystic fibrosis medicines.

**Kerry McCarthy:**[\[278929\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will set a deadline for NHS England and Vertex Pharmaceuticals to come to an agreement to enable access to cystic fibrosis medicines produced by that company.

**Seema Kennedy:**

Discussions with Vertex, including meetings, are ongoing.

NHS England and NHS Improvement are leading the negotiations with Vertex and have made a revised and improved offer to Vertex that would provide immediate funding for Orkambi and Symkevi in advance of a positive assessment by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), in addition to expanded access to Kalydeco which is already funded by the National Health Service for certain patients.



The Government fully supports NICE, NHS England and NHS Improvement in seeking to ensure access for patients to effective and innovative medicines at a price that represents value to the NHS, and it is not for Ministers to intervene in this process. The Department's approach remains to strongly urge Vertex to accept NHS England's and NHS Improvement's generous offer, but in the absence of a deal, we have asked NHS England and NHS Improvement to continue to explore all options to ensure patients can access treatments as soon as possible.

## ■ Dementia

**Stephen Morgan:**

[\[279141\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people living with dementia are aged over 75.

**Caroline Dinenge:**

NHS Digital collects data on the number of people in England who are recorded as having Dementia aged 75 and over.

Figures from NHS Digital show that there are 400,221 people aged 75 and over living with a diagnosis of dementia in England.

The data is available at the following link:

<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/recorded-dementia-diagnoses/june-2019>

## ■ Drugs: Storage

**Daniel Zeichner:**

[\[277759\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to his oral evidence at the Health and Social Care Committee on 9 July 2019, if he will place in the Library his Department's latest assessment of (a) the appropriate level of warehousing capacity required for stockpiling medicines and (b) the flow assumptions of importing medicines in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

**Stephen Hammond:**

To ensure sufficient space to store stockpiled medicines, we agreed contracts for additional warehouse space, including ambient, refrigerated and controlled drug storage aligned to the possible 29 March exit date. All these types of storage remain available and should be sufficient to meet the additional needs of medicines suppliers to enable them to build or rebuild their stockpiles prior to 31 October. The original procurement was carried out to give additional leeway should the level of storage required be greater than initially estimated. As part of our contingency planning for a possible 'no deal' European Union exit on 31 October, we have re-assessed the additional warehouse capacity required to meet the six-week stockpile request made of industry and have confidence that the current capacity we have in place for 31 October will be sufficient.

The Government's Border Delivery Group has been reviewing the readiness of border infrastructures and of traders to comply with customs and borders processes in the United Kingdom and the EU. While the predicted flow rate across the short straits has improved slightly since 29 March, significant disruption would be expected for six months following a 'no deal' exit, with the most severe period being the first three months.

## ■ **Genetics: Screening**

**Catherine West:**

[\[277243\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Clinical Advisory Group for Genomics, if he will set out (a) its terms of reference, (b) when it will first meet, (c) how patient voice will be incorporated into its work, (d) who it will report to and (e) when the (i) Commissioning Policy for Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis review and (ii) other work of its predecessor, the Clinical Reference Group for Medical Genetics, will be completed; and if he will make a statement.

**Caroline Dineneage:**

NHS England has paused the recruitment for the clinical genetics clinical reference group to ensure the right advisory groups are in place to provide clinical advice across the breadth and depth of the future NHS Genomic Medicine Service.

These new arrangements will need consider clinical genetics and genetic counselling, but also wider implications of genomics for the National Health Service. Any future arrangements will have appropriate representation, including patient and public voices.

NHS England is progressing the clinical commissioning policy for Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis (PGD). This work will include assessment of the treatment pathways for existing PGD services and consideration of the ethical issues. NHS England will continue to seek input from clinicians and patients throughout this work.

## ■ **Health Services: Technology**

**Nic Dakin:**

[\[277170\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many patient organisations are involved in the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's review of health technology assessment methods and processes.

**Nic Dakin:**

[\[277171\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what opportunities patient organisations will have to make representations to the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's review of health technology assessment methods and processes.

**Nic Dakin:**

[\[277172\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he will take to ensure the broadest number of patient groups can participate in the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's review of health technology assessment methods and processes.

**Seema Kennedy:**

There are three patient/lay representatives on the methods working group with a wide range of experience, covering a range of topic areas, reflecting the programmes under review. Two of the patient/lay representatives also belong to the Patients Involved in NICE coalition.

Patient groups will be involved in the review of each of the specific methodological areas as detailed in the paper presented to the NICE board on 17 July 2019. Experts in the area will be invited to participate in topic specific methods task and finish groups.

NICE has established a dedicated patient working group. There are six patient organisation representatives on the group, including those who belong to the Patients Involved in NICE coalition. The group will work directly with patient/carer groups to coordinate the patient perspective on both methods and process. A stakeholder workshop with patient groups was held in January 2019 that included representatives from 22 patient organisations.

The patient working group has recently disseminated a survey to patient umbrella groups to develop a clear understanding of the patient perspective on both methods and processes. The survey runs until 5pm on Monday 12 August 2019. It will be promoted via social media and sent directly to groups working with NICE. Patient organisations can communicate with representatives on the methods working group and patient working group outside of this survey.

Patient organisations will have the opportunity to comment directly on proposals during the public consultation in summer 2020.

NICE is implementing other opportunities to encourage more patient group involvement throughout the review via provision of a subscription based bulletin for updates and information (which people can subscribe to via their website) and exploring arrangements of additional engagement sessions (i.e. webinars), as and when appropriate.

## ■ Heart Diseases and Strokes: Females

**Paula Sherriff:**

[\[279083\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will respond to the recommendations in the report entitled Call for Action: Inquiry into heart attack and stroke, published by the all-party Parliamentary group on women's health in July 2019; and if he will make a statement.

**Seema Kennedy:**

NHS England has acknowledged the recently published report and will be considering the content.

Improving the prevention and treatment of heart attacks and stroke are key aims in the NHS Long Term Plan, with an important milestone being for the National Health Service to help prevent up to 150,000 heart attacks, strokes and dementia cases over the next 10 years. The NHS Long Term Plan highlights that outcomes from heart attack and stroke can be improved, and that there should be a focus on inequalities.

**Paula Sherriff:**[\[279084\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to improve (a) outcomes, (b) early identification and (c) treatment of heart attack and stroke for women.

**Seema Kennedy:**

Improving the prevention and treatment of heart attacks and stroke are key aims in the NHS Long Term Plan, with an important milestone being for the National Health Service to help prevent up to 150,000 heart attacks, strokes and dementia cases over the next 10 years. The NHS Long Term Plan highlights that outcomes from heart attack and stroke can be improved, and that there should be a focus on inequalities.

In addition, addressing variations in outcomes from cardiovascular disease (CVD), such as heart attacks and stroke, is one of Public Health England's (PHE) top priorities, and in February 2019, PHE announced new 10-year CVD ambitions for England, which are intended to complement the NHS Long Term Plan and are the first ever national ambitions to improve the detection and treatment of the major causes of CVD.

**■ HIV Infection: Drugs****Jim Shannon:**[\[277726\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department plans to include women who are at risk of contracting HIV in the PrEP impact trial.

**Seema Kennedy:**

Women at high risk of contracting HIV are already eligible to participate in the Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis Impact Trial.

**Matthew Pennycook:**[\[277797\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what additional funding his Department will allocate to the NHS to fund the expansion of the PrEP Impact trial.

**Matthew Pennycook:**[\[277798\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what additional funding his Department will allocate to local authorities to fund additional sexual health appointments as a result of the expansion of the PrEP Impact trial.

**Matthew Pennycook:**

[\[277799\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if it is his Department's policy that there should be continuous delivery of PrEP for participants after the conclusion of the PrEP Impact trial.

**Seema Kennedy:**

Following my Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care's announcement on 30 January that the Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) Impact Trial would be expanded to 26,000 people, NHS England has committed to fund the PrEP drug and research costs of these additional places, in line with current arrangements.

Local authority and clinic participation in the trial is on a voluntary basis. Participation costs of local authorities are met from existing resource allocations.

The 36 month PrEP Impact Trial is scheduled to continue until autumn 2020. Work is underway to prepare for a seamless transition from the PrEP trial to future commissioning arrangements, which includes consideration of funding options.

#### ■ HIV Infection: Greater London

**Matthew Pennycook:**

[\[277796\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the level of demand for participation in the PrEP Impact trial in London.

**Seema Kennedy:**

My Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care announced in January 2019 that places on the Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) Impact Trial would be doubled from 13,000 to 26,000. The planning of the Trial is led by Public Health England (PHE) and NHS England and is overseen by the PrEP Programme Oversight Board jointly chaired by PHE and NHS England, including allocation of places to reflect need.

#### ■ Medical Treatments

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[277724\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 2 April 2019 to Question 236381, what steps NHS England has taken to fill the gap left by the closure of the Commissioning Support Programme for those treatments that are awaiting review by the Clinical Priorities Advisory Group.

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[277725\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the closure of the Commissioning Support Programme on treatments within NHS England's Clinical Commissioning Policy programme; and if he will make a statement.

**Seema Kennedy:**

NHS England does not believe that the closure of the Commissioning Support Programme will leave a gap in the review of treatments.

The topics that would have been referred to the Commissioning Support Programme will now be routed to the appropriate appraisal programme, undertaken by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), except where there is a clear rationale not to do so. NICE expects to implement this expansion from April 2020. It will be in a position to start progressing topics through the NICE topic selection process from the summer of 2019.

All policy propositions relating to topics previously being supported in development through the Commissioning Support Programme have been handed over at the agreed stage as for all topics, post stakeholder testing. These are now being progressed through the usual development process. This process is set out in 'Methods: National Clinical Policies' at the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/methods-national-clinical-policies/>

The voluntary scheme agreed between Department and the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry on getting the best value and most effective medicines into use more quickly for branded medicines pricing and access was published in November 2018. The voluntary scheme started on 1 January 2019 and will be in place for five years until 2023.

**■ NHS: Drugs**

**Anne Marie Morris:** [\[279026\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to tackle the overcharging of medicines to the NHS.

**Anne Marie Morris:** [\[279028\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department will use the Health Service Products (Provision and Disclosure of Information) Regulations 2018 to prevent price inflation of medicines.

**Seema Kennedy:**

The costs of branded medicines are controlled by the statutory and voluntary schemes for branded medicines. Under those schemes, any price increase needs to be agreed by the Department. For generic medicines, the Department encourages competition between suppliers to drive prices down. This generally works well but there are instances where there is no or not enough competition and prices appear unreasonably high. Section 262 of the National Health Service Act 2006 enables the Secretary of State to limit the price of any medicine not covered by the voluntary scheme for branded medicines. The Department is preparing a public consultation on the use of this power for generic medicines. The Health Service Products (Provision and Disclosure of Information) Regulations 2018 support the powers in the National Health Service Act 2006 by enabling the Secretary of State to require suppliers to

provide information about their products including information about the cost of manufacturing those products.

**Anne Marie Morris:**

[\[279029\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to tackle the promotion of red listed drugs to non-specialist healthcare professionals by pharmaceutical companies.

**Seema Kennedy:**

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency investigates, or appropriately refers to another medicines self-regulatory body, complaints from any source about medicines advertising in relation to compliance with United Kingdom legislation.

#### ■ **Radiotherapy: Staffordshire**

**Paul Farrelly:**

[\[277673\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that all people entitled to radiotherapy in North Staffordshire are able to access that treatment.

**Seema Kennedy:**

The NHS Long Term Plan reaffirms the Government's ongoing commitment to modernising radiotherapy. The plan specifically promises faster, smarter and effective radiotherapy, supported by greater networking of specialised expertise. This will mean more patients are offered curative treatment, with fewer side effects and shorter treatment times.

Part of the Radiotherapy Modernisation Programme includes the commissioning of 11 Radiotherapy Operational Delivery Networks across England including a West Midlands Network which will serve people in North Staffordshire. This programme is aimed at improving access to and reducing variation in the quality of radiotherapy services.

#### ■ **Rehabilitation Centres: County Durham**

**Grahame Morris:**

[\[278956\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to increase the number of residential drug recovery services for women in County Durham.

**Grahame Morris:**

[\[278960\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will increase the (a) funding for and (b) provision of residential drug treatment services.

**Seema Kennedy:**

The Government provides funding to local authorities for their public health responsibilities through a public health grant. It is for individual local authorities to

decide their spending priorities based on an assessment of local need, including the need for residential drug treatment services taking account of their statutory duties.

Future funding for local authority public health functions will be a matter for the Spending Review.

## ■ Sophie Holman

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[277727\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what response his Department has provided to the Prevention of Future Deaths report on the death of Sophie Holman.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

The Department responded to the Prevention of Future Deaths Report issued by the Assistant Coroner for the Eastern Area of Greater London following the inquest into the death of Sophie Holman on 24 April 2019.

Publication of the Department's response is a matter for the Chief Coroner as set out in Coroners (investigations) Regulations 2013.

The Government is committed to doing all it can to ensure the National Health Service learns from tragic, avoidable deaths and provides high quality, safe care for all patients. This is demonstrated by publication of the NHS Patient Safety Strategy on 2 July 2019. The strategy provides a framework for patient safety improvement over the next 10 years and sits alongside the NHS Long Term Plan.

## ■ Synacthen: Prices

**Anne Marie Morris:**

[\[279027\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department is aware that synacthen has recently increased in cost from £2.70 per vial to £38 per vial; and if he will make a statement.

**Seema Kennedy:**

The Department agreed the list price increase for Synacthen in March 2015.

The previous Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme, the current 2019 Voluntary Scheme for Branded Medicines Pricing and Access and our statutory branded medicines pricing scheme all have detailed arrangements for how companies can request an increase to the National Health Service list price for a product.

Companies must comply with the rules of the relevant scheme when making a price increase request and all price increase requests must receive Departmental approval before they can take effect.



**HOME OFFICE****■ Hemp: Licensing**

**Brendan O'Hara:** [\[279071\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many licences for the cultivation of industrial hemp are in effect in the UK.

**Brendan O'Hara:** [\[279072\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many licences for the cultivation of industrial hemp are in effect in Scotland.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

There are currently 55 licences in extant to cultivate low THC cannabis (Industrial Hemp) in England, Wales and Scotland. There are currently 2 licences in extant to cultivate low THC cannabis (Industrial Hemp) in Scotland.

The licences are generally issued for a validity period of three growing seasons and therefore will include licences issued in 2017, 2018 and 2019.

**■ Police: Mental Health**

**Grahame Morris:** [\[278958\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much time is allocated for new police recruits to receive mental health training prior to their first deployment.

**Grahame Morris:** [\[278959\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much time is allocated to police officers for continuing professional development in mental health training.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

The College of Policing sets the standards for training and professional development for police forces in England and Wales. Initial training, which all new recruits must complete to the required standards, includes a specific module on awareness of the powers and policies related to mental health issues, recognising signs and symptoms and understanding the police role. The subject is also integrated throughout the rest of the programme.

Subsequent professional development for serving police officers is the responsibility of Chief Constables and Police and Crime Commissioners and information on training undertaken by officers is not held centrally by the Home Office.

**■ Police: Mental Health Services**

**Grahame Morris:** [\[278957\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on improving access to mental health services in order to reduce the number of mental health related incidents attended to by the police.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

There are regular discussions between the Home Office and the Department for Health and Social Care on policing and mental health issues. In January, the Government announced an additional £2.3bn by 2023/24 to enhance mental health services, and to relieve some of the pressures on the police, as set out in the NHS Long Term Plan.

**■ Sleeping Rough****Layla Moran:**[\[277283\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 8 July 2019 to Question 274616 on the Rough Sleeping Support Service, how many (a) charities and (b) local authorities his Department has engaged with as part of the Rough Sleeping Support Service programme since that programme's launch.

**Layla Moran:**[\[277284\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 8 July 2019 to Question 274619 on the Rough Sleeping Support Service, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of reassigning his Department's staff to the Rough Sleeping Support Service team on the day-to-day functioning of the teams from which those staff were reassigned.

**Caroline Nokes:**

The Home Office has engaged with a wide range of local authorities and charities in and outside of London to explain how the RSSS can assist with swift immigration status checks, help those here lawfully to evidence this to unlock access to support and assist with those who wish to leave the UK. This engagement has also focused on making sure the service works for those organisations and has included meetings with leading rough sleeping charities and local authorities working to support rough sleepers and informal discussions at homelessness and rough sleeping conferences. Due to the broad and varying nature of the engagement it is difficult to provide an exact figure of the number of organisations involved.

The team of up to five casework staff were assigned to the RSSS from within Immigration Enforcement. Where this transfer involved staff ceasing other duties, the work was absorbed by other teams without impacting the delivery of business.

**■ Terrorism: British Nationals Abroad****Andrew Rosindell:**[\[278423\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many UK nationals are suspected of leaving the UK in order to support the activities of Boko Haram and their splinter group Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) in West Africa in the last five years.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

For reasons of national security we cannot be specific about the number of UK nationals suspected of leaving the UK in order to support the activities of Boko Haram or Islamic State West Africa Province.

Anyone who returns to the UK from engaging in terrorist activities overseas should expect to be investigated to determine if they have committed criminal offences or pose a threat to our national security. Where evidence of crimes exist, those responsible should expect to be prosecuted for them. Decisions on prosecution are taken independently of Government by the police and the Crown Prosecution Service.

**HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT****■ Buildings: Insulation****Mr Steve Reed:****[279061]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 17 July 2019 to Question 276197 on Buildings: Insulation, in the event that high-pressure laminate cladding fails a BS 8414 test for the same reasons aluminium composite material (ACM) cladding did, whether he would still consider ACM cladding to be wholly exceptional.

**Kit Malthouse:**

On 18 July 2019 the Independent Expert Advisory Panel (IAEP) issued an advice note to building owners. In this advice note the IAEP states the following:

*“The view of the Expert Panel is that the level of risk from unsafe HPL systems is not as high a risk as unsafe systems using ACM Category 3 panels. Therefore, the Expert Panel remains clear that the immediate removal of unsafe systems using ACM Category 3 panels should be an absolute priority of focus for building owners and the sector, followed by immediate action to remediate unsafe HPL systems. For the avoidance of doubt both the removal of unsafe ACM Category 3 panels and action to remediate unsafe HPL systems should be carried out as soon as possible.”*

The full advice note is available at

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/818184/Advice\\_note\\_on\\_use\\_of\\_HPL\\_panels\\_in\\_external\\_wall\\_systems.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/818184/Advice_note_on_use_of_HPL_panels_in_external_wall_systems.pdf)

**Sarah Jones:****[279136]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 3 July 2019 to Question 267773 on Buildings: Insulation, whether his Department's engagement with (a) local authorities, (b) housing associations and (c) industry includes requests for information on the number of buildings covered in HPL cladding.

**Sarah Jones:** [279137]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 17 June 2019 to Question 262396 on Buildings: Insulation, whether his Department took steps to estimate the number of buildings with HPL cladding after the failed BS8414 fire test on that cladding.

**Kit Malthouse:**

On 18 July 2019, the Government asked local authorities and housing associations to undertake a data collection exercise on the external wall systems of their high rise residential buildings that are 18 metres or above. This includes high rise residential buildings that are clad in High Pressure Laminate.

**Sarah Jones:** [279138]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 17 June 2019 to Question 262396 on Buildings: Insulation, what type of combustible insulation was combined with HPL cladding for the BS8414 test.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The insulation used during the test was a combustible phenolic foam insulation.

## ■ Council House Transfers

**Chuka Umunna:** [279010]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what his Department's most recent estimate is for the proportion of housing transfer requests that are motivated out of (a) crime and (b) fear of violence in (i) the UK, (ii) Greater London and (iii) the London Borough of Lambeth.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The Department publishes national statistics on new social housing lettings in England.

Of the new social housing lettings that were provided to tenants whose previous tenancy was also in the social sector, 4.6 per cent gave b) fear of violence (including domestic abuse, hate crime and racial harassment) as the reason for moving in England in 2017/18. Separate figures for crime are not available. Figures for Greater London and Lambeth are given below.

These statistics are taken from the Continuous Recording of Social Lettings system available here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/rents-lettings-and-tenancies>

**MOVING DUE TO FEAR OF VIOLENCE(1)**

	England	4.6%
Moving from social housing tenancy	London	4.2%
	Lambeth	4.7%

(1) Includes Domestic Abuse, Hate Crime and Racial Harassment Source: CORE Social Housing Lettings 2017/18

### ■ Council Tax Reduction Schemes

**Marsha De Cordova:** [\[279147\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of how the changes to the rules on social security entitlements for mixed aged couples will affect local authority council tax reduction schemes given the protected status of pensioners in such schemes.

**Rishi Sunak:**

My Department has informed local authorities that it will ensure consistency in the treatment of mixed age couples between local council tax reduction schemes and the wider benefits system from 1 April 2020. Council tax reduction schemes operating in the current financial year should continue to treat persons as pensioners or not pensioners according to definitions set out in existing regulations.

### ■ Disabled Facilities Grants

**Layla Moran:** [\[279143\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the average waiting time for the completion of disabled facilities grants in (a) each district council and (b) every unitary authority area in each of the last ten years.

**Mrs Heather Wheeler:**

The Department does not hold information on the average waiting time for the completion of Disabled Facilities Grants for each district council or every unitary area in each of the last ten years.

### ■ Ground Rent

**Stephanie Peacock:** [\[279125\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what plans the Government has to cap ground rents for existing leaseholders.

**Mrs Heather Wheeler:**

The Government understands the difficulties and frustrations of some existing leaseholders who are unhappy about the amount of ground rent they are required to

pay and feel their leases should be changed. There are no current plans to legislate in this area.

To address the problem of doubling ground rents on existing leases, the Government has encouraged industry to fix the problem they created. We announced a 'Public Pledge for Leaseholders' on 28 March 2019, now signed by over 60 leading property developers, freeholders and managing agents.

This contains a commitment for freeholders to identify any existing leases within their portfolio which contain ground rents that double more frequently than every 20 years. They have also committed to contact the relevant leaseholders and offer to vary their leases.

**Stephanie Peacock:**

[\[279126\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what impact assessments the Government has undertaken on capping ground rents for existing leaseholders, and what cap values were used in those assessments.

**Mrs Heather Wheeler:**

The Government understands the difficulties and frustrations of some existing leaseholders who are unhappy about the amount of ground rent they are required to pay and feel their leases should be changed.

There are many implications to be considered in relation to legislation which would interfere with individual contracts, for instance taking account of Article 1 Protocol 1 of the European Convention on Human Rights and the principle of legal certainty.

There are no current plans to legislate in this area, and so no impact assessment has been done.

## ■ Hate Crime: Sikhs

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[\[277247\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what funding he has allocated to help tackle hate crime reported by the Sikh community in each of the last 10 years.

**Mrs Heather Wheeler:**

The Department does not hold this data but the Government takes the view that all forms of hate crime are completely unacceptable. In October 2018 the Government refreshed the Hate Crime Action Plan, and committed additional funding to continue to protect places of worship - since 2016 Government's Places of Worship scheme has approved 17 grants to Gurdwaras. Additionally, we have committed just over £1.5 million for projects to tackle all forms of racially and religiously motivated hatred. The Government has an extensive engagement programme with all faith communities, including the Sikh community through the MHCLG-led Sikh roundtable. Membership of the roundtable is currently being refreshed to broaden the representation.

**■ High Rise Flats: Fire Prevention****Mr Steve Reed:****[279062]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to Ministerial Statement, Building safety update, HCWS1757, whether the British Standard 8414 test on Class B, fire retardant, high pressure laminate rainscreen with a non-combustible rock fibre insulation carried out by the Fire Protection Association on behalf of his Department was only carried out once in June and July 2019.

**Kit Malthouse:**

A single large test was completed on 11 July 2019 in accordance with BS 8414, the details of the test report and classification of the system are available at :

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-test-report-mhclg-bs-8414-hpl>

Based on the information in this test the Independent Expert Advisory Panel also issued an advice note to Building Owners which is available at

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/818184/Advice\\_note\\_on\\_use\\_of\\_HPL\\_panels\\_in\\_external\\_wall\\_systems.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/818184/Advice_note_on_use_of_HPL_panels_in_external_wall_systems.pdf)

The Fire Protection Association had previously attempted to undertake the large scale test in June, however due to a procedural issue the test was not completed in accordance with the requirements BS 8414. It was agreed with the Independent Expert Advisory Panel that there was no cause for immediate concern and no advice could have been issued on the basis of the attempt.

**Mr Steve Reed:****[279063]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the Written Statement of 18 July 2019, HCWS1757 on Building safety update, whether building owners should ensure that High Pressure Laminate panels of a European classification of Class C or D or European classification of Class B when combined with combustible insulation should be removed from buildings.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The Independent Expert Advisory Panel issued on 18 July 2019 an advice note with regards to the use of High Pressure Laminate (HPL) Panels which is available at

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/818184/Advice\\_note\\_on\\_use\\_of\\_HPL\\_panels\\_in\\_external\\_wall\\_systems.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/818184/Advice_note_on_use_of_HPL_panels_in_external_wall_systems.pdf)

This advice note is clear that where materials achieving European classification of Class C or D or European classification of Class B when combined with combustible insulation are identified building owners should follow the advice in advice note 14. The Expert Panel first issued Advice Note 14, in December 2017 and updated it in December 2018. This advice notes provides information to building owners with regards to external wall systems that do not incorporate Aluminium Composite Material (ACM). This advice notes has made it clear since its publication that where a

system used on a building has not achieved a BS8414/BR135 classification building owners should seek immediate professional advice and consider remediation measures. The Expert panel has always been unequivocal that the clearest way to ensure safety is to remove unsafe materials. The Expert Panel continues to support this advice. Advice note 14 is available at

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/765761/Expert\\_Panel\\_advice\\_note\\_on\\_non-ACM.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/765761/Expert_Panel_advice_note_on_non-ACM.pdf)

**Mr Steve Reed:**

**[279064]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the Written Statement of 18 July 2019, on HCWS1757 on Building safety update, for what reasons his Department's data collection exercise is not covering high risk buildings other than residential blocks.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The data collection exercise launched on 18 July 2019 is part of an ongoing programme of work to enable the Department to build a more complete picture of high-rise residential buildings and the variety of external wall systems in use. Government is collecting data on all external wall systems. The Government is collecting data on all external wall systems on residential buildings 18 metres and above, covering private and social (both local authority and housing association) stock, hotels and student accommodation. The data exercise is structured in such a way that additional questions could be added in the future if this would develop our data set to support this work. There remains a duty for those responsible for buildings to maintain safety of a premises (so far as the requirements are under their control) under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order and the Housing Act.

**Sarah Jones:**

**[279139]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the Written Statement, Building safety update, HCWS1757, by what date the data will be collected; what (a) funding and (b) resources he has allocated to the collection of that data; what data will be collected; and if he will publish the results of that data collection.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The Government is collecting data on all external wall systems on residential buildings 18 metres and above. This exercise covers private and social (both local authority and housing association) stock, hotels and student accommodation.

The Government requests that local authorities and housing associations complete the data collection by 31 March 2020. We have published a technical note (18 July) to aid local authorities and housing associations in identifying the details of external wall systems. We are aiming to provide financial support to local authorities in the form of New Burdens funding. We will publish appropriate summary information from the data collection in our monthly Building Safety Programme data release when ready.



## ■ High Rise Flats: Insulation

**Chuka Umunna:**

[\[279009\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the number of people that are living in council accommodation with combustible cladding in (a) Greater London, (b) the London Borough of Lambeth and (c) England.

**Kit Malthouse:**

MHCLG does not hold data on the number of people living in council-owned accommodation with Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding systems unlikely to meet Building Regulations.

**Sarah Jones:**

[\[279140\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 11 July 2019 to Question 272722 on High Rise Flats: Insulation, whether the tests have started; how many tests are due to take place; and when all the tests are due to be completed.

**Kit Malthouse:**

I refer the Hon Member to the written ministerial statement (HCWS1533) made on 1 May 2019.

As set out in the statement the testing begun in April. The methodology has been laid in the House Library.

The materials tested include copper and zinc composite materials; aluminium honeycomb panels; high-pressure laminate panels; brick slips; and reconstituted stone. The total number of tests will be greater than the number of materials as a number of variants of each material is being tested.

A full picture of the outcomes of the tests can only be provided following a detailed analysis of all the test data. We expect this analysis to be completed in the summer and we will publish the conclusions of the programme thereafter.

## ■ Housing: Repairs and Maintenance

**Eddie Hughes:**

[\[277276\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will meet the Chancellor to discuss the potential cost benefits of reducing VAT on the (a) building products and (b) low-carbon technologies used to retrofit homes to improve indoor air quality, energy efficiency and the health of occupants.

**Kit Malthouse:**

I regularly meet with Cabinet colleagues to discuss a range of issues, including the Government's carbon reduction policies.

**Local Government: Translation Services****Andrew Rosindell:** [\[278441\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, (a) what the national average spend by local authorities on translation services was and (b) how much Havering Council spent on those services in each of the last five financial years.

**Rishi Sunak:**

My Department does not hold these figures. As democratically elected organisations, local authorities are independent of central Government, and are responsible for managing their own budgets in line with local priorities.

**Private Rented Housing: Energy****Paul Farrelly:** [\[278401\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of the introduction of a registration scheme for private-rented accommodation to ensure that it meets minimum energy efficiency standards.

**Kit Malthouse:**

*[Holding answer 22 July 2019]:* Local authorities have enforcement powers to ensure properties meet minimum energy efficiency standards, and the Government is funding a series of studies to understand how they can best use these powers. The Government does not support a registration scheme for private rented sector accommodation as this has the potential to introduce an unnecessary and costly layer of bureaucracy.

**Temporary Accommodation****Chuka Umunna:** [\[279007\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the number of people refused emergency housing each night in (a) Greater London, (b) the London Borough of Lambeth and (c) England in the most recent period for which figures are available.

**Mrs Heather Wheeler:**

MHCLG does not collect this information. MHCLG publishes experimental statistics on statutory homelessness reflecting local authorities' duties towards homeless people. This collection does not include information on individuals not helped by the local authority.

This year through the Rough Sleeping Initiative, MHCLG have provided a total of £46 million funding to 264 local authorities, including Lambeth, and a number of London boroughs, in order to support people off the streets in their areas. This will be used to provide 2,600 beds for rough sleepers and 750 outreach and specialist staff.

The Government is committed to reducing homelessness and rough sleeping. No one should ever have to sleep rough. That is why last summer we published the cross-

government Rough Sleeping Strategy. This sets out an ambitious £100 million package to help people who sleep rough now, but also puts in place the structures that will end rough sleeping once and for all. The Government has now committed over £1.2 billion to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping over the spending review period.

## INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### ■ **Afghanistan and Pakistan: Poliomyelitis**

**Fabian Hamilton:**

[\[277648\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps his Department is taking to help eradicate polio in (a) Afghanistan and (b) Pakistan.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

The UK is the third largest donor to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) and has committed £1.3 billion in total since 1995. In Afghanistan and Pakistan GPEI are working to reach children in inaccessible regions that have been missed by vaccination campaigns. They are also tackling misinformation campaigns that severely affect vaccine uptake. UK funding contributes significantly to these efforts.

The UK are observers on the Polio Oversight Board and represent all state donors on the Strategy Committee, which gives us a position from which to influence the activities of the programme at a strategic level. We regularly review progress in the endemic countries, including Afghanistan and Pakistan and DFID country offices in each of these countries also have valuable insight by engaging with the programme in country.

### ■ **British Overseas Territories: Environment Protection**

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[\[278435\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps he has taken to support the British Overseas Territories tackle environment threats.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

The annual contributions DFID makes to the national budgets of Montserrat, St Helena and Pitcairn (the Overseas Territories eligible for official development assistance (ODA)) which support the delivery of government services, includes funds for environmental protection.

DFID contributed £500,000 each year from 2012-2015 to the Darwin Plus Initiative, a challenge fund created by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and DFID to support environmental protection. Since the 2015 Spending Review, all ODA spend for Darwin Plus has been managed by DEFRA.

**■ Dalal Mughrabi and Omar Abu Laila****Joan Ryan:****[R] [277622]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to her Department's Memorandum of Understanding with the Palestinian Authority (PA) what discussions her Department has had with the PA on reports of the naming of a Palestinian youth summer camps after Dalal Mughrabi and Omar Abu Laila.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

The UK strongly condemns all forms of violence and incitement on both sides of the conflict. We continue to urge the Israeli and Palestinian leadership to avoid engaging in or encouraging any type of action and language that makes it more difficult to achieve a negotiated solution to the conflict.

We have an active dialogue with the Palestinian Authority (PA) on their commitment to adhere to the principle of non-violence and to tackle language and avoid actions that could incite violence or hatred, including an annual assessment of the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding that DFID holds with the PA. We have specifically raised our concerns over the naming of education institutions and will continue to do so.

**■ Democratic Republic of Congo: Ebola****Stephen Twigg:****[278890]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps his Department is taking to work with faith leaders to help tackle the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

The UK has been a major supporter of the response to the Ebola outbreak in eastern DRC since it began in August 2018. Community engagement remains one of the most important factors that will help end the outbreak and strengthening this aspect of the response is a key part of the ongoing 'reset' pushed for by the UK and other partners. The response, led by the Government of DRC with international support directed by the UN, is increasingly working with religious leaders to help foster community trust and ownership. On top of our wider financial, technical and political support to the response, UK Aid is funding anthropological research into community dynamics in affected areas, which is helping response partners strengthen their engagement with communities, including faith leaders.

The Secretary of State for International Development met with faith leaders (both Christian and Muslim) in Butembo during his recent visit to eastern DRC. He also recently discussed the outbreak with the Archbishop of Canterbury, whose insights were incredibly valuable, while officials continue regular dialogue with a number of UK-based faith groups on the issue.

■ **Department for International Development: Ethnic Groups**

**Seema Malhotra:** [\[279053\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many BAME staff are employed at (a) grade 7, (b) grade 5 and (c) grade 3 in his Department.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

The below table shows the number of BAME staff, at Grade 7, Grade 5 and Grade 3, employed by DFID as at 30 June 2019.

GRADE	NO. OF BAME EMPLOYEES
Grade 7 (A2)	101
Grade 5 (SCS-G5)	5
Grade 3 (SCS-G3)	Less than 5
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>108</b>

■ **Department for International Development: Working Hours**

**Jon Trickett:** [\[278371\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much time off in lieu has been taken by staff in his Department in each of the last five years.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

DFID works on a flexible working hours scheme, which allows staff to build up a credit of time which can be used to take time off (flexi-leave). To compensate for working extra hours, staff may be paid overtime or take time off in lieu.

The below table shows all flexi leave recorded for each of the last 5 years, from July 2014 to June 2019. This data includes only full days or half days and not shorter timespans (e.g. a couple of hours), and it cannot be determined that all flexi leave taken has been recorded.

TIME FRAME	NO. OF FLEXI DAYS RECORDED
Jul 14 to Jun 15	3,272.5
Jul 15 to Jun 16	3,235.5
Jul 16 to Jun 17	3,674.5
Jul 17 to Jun 18	4,949.0
Jul 18 to Jun 19	5,076.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,207.5</b>

**■ Developing Countries: Education**

**Stephen Twigg:** [\[278887\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies of the findings of the UNESCO report entitled Meeting commitments: are countries on track to achieve sustainable development goal four that more than 220 million children, adolescents and youth will not be in school in 2030.

**Stephen Twigg:** [\[278888\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his Department's policies of the findings of the UNSECO report entitled Beyond commitments how do countries implement SDG 4, published on 8 July 2019.

**Stephen Twigg:** [\[278889\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies of the findings of UNSECO in its report, Global education monitoring report 2019 – gender report: Building bridges for gender equality.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

We welcome the recent UNESCO reports focusing on how to achieve SDG 4 on Global Education by 2030. These reports resonate well with DFID's Education Policy: *Get Children Learning*. The UK will continue to support 12 years of quality education for girls and boys, starting with the basics of literacy and numeracy.

To achieve this, we:

- a) Drive improvements in teaching which benefit all children in the classroom;
- b) Support ambitious system reform which helps teachers succeed and keeps children safe; and
- c) Provide targeted support to disadvantaged girls, children with disabilities and those affected by conflict and crisis.

We use our leadership on the world stage to shine a spotlight on the needs of the most marginalised and strengthen the multilateral system of support for education.

**■ Developing Countries: Nutrition**

**Jessica Morden:** [\[278937\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps his Department is taking to integrate nutrition into all areas of its work on UK Aid; and what discussions has he had with (a) his international counterparts and (b) international aid agencies on the merits of integrating nutrition into all areas of international aid work.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

Since the release of its 2017 Nutrition Position Paper, DFID has focused on meaningfully integrating nutrition across relevant aspects of its portfolio, particularly health, agriculture, social protection, humanitarian and economic development. For example, we are working with others to improve the impact of the Kenya Hunger Safety Net Programme on nutrition and we are integrating key nutrition services in our wider health programmes such as in South Sudan and DRC. DFID also advocates for other international partners to integrate nutrition, including UNICEF, the Food and Agriculture Organisation and the World Bank.

**■ Gaza: Health Professions****Mr Virendra Sharma:**[\[278454\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that medical workers in Gaza can perform their humanitarian functions without risk of attack.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

We are deeply concerned by the report of attacks on health workers in Gaza. The UK is clear that no health workers or aid workers should be at risk of violence, and that they must have the protection they need from the responsible authorities to allow them to do their jobs in safety. While we recognise Israel's right to security, we have repeatedly made clear to Israel our longstanding concerns about the way Israel Defence Forces (IDF) police protests and the border areas in Gaza, including our concerns about the use of live ammunition and excessive force by the IDF. We regularly raise with the Government of Israel the urgent need to ease all access and movement restrictions on Gaza, including for health workers.

The UK continues to strongly support the delivery of humanitarian assistance in Gaza. In 2019, the UK is supporting urgent medical needs through the International Committee for the Red Cross and the World Health Organisation. We are also providing support to the UN Access Coordination Unit, which works to facilitate humanitarian access for UN and NGO workers into Gaza.

**■ Gaza: Health Services****Mr Barry Sheerman:**[\[277644\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that medical workers in Gaza can provide humanitarian assistance without the risk of attack.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

We are deeply concerned by the report of attacks on health workers in Gaza. The UK is clear that no health workers or aid workers should be at risk of violence, and that they must have the protection they need from the responsible authorities to allow them to do their jobs in safety. While we recognise Israel's right to security, we have repeatedly made clear to Israel our longstanding concerns about the way Israel

Defence Forces (IDF) police protests and the border areas in Gaza, including our concerns about the use of live ammunition and excessive force by the IDF. We regularly raise with the Government of Israel the urgent need to ease all access and movement restrictions on Gaza, including for health workers.

The UK continues to strongly support the delivery of humanitarian assistance in Gaza. In 2019, the UK is supporting urgent medical needs through the International Committee for the Red Cross and the World Health Organisation. We are also providing support to the UN Access Coordination Unit, which works to facilitate humanitarian access for UN and NGO workers into Gaza.

## ■ Humanitarian Aid

**Mr Virendra Sharma:**

[\[278455\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that people responsible for attacks on humanitarian workers are held to account.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

The primary responsibility for prosecuting those who attack humanitarian workers in any context lies with the state authorities. In a conflict context, where the state authorities are unable or unwilling to do this, international accountability mechanisms may be invoked, as appropriate. The UK supports international mechanisms such as the International Criminal Court or *ad hoc* tribunals acting within their mandates when grave violations of international humanitarian law are suspected, and the state is genuinely unable or unwilling to investigate or prosecute.

## ■ Ilois: Resettlement

**Chris Law:**

[\[278525\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much of the £40 million fund for Chagossians has been allocated to date by his Department; for what purposes that money has been allocated; and how much of that spending has been classified as Official Development Assistance.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

DFID was allocated £20 million to develop a support package for Chagossians living in Mauritius, which is eligible to receive Official Development Assistance (ODA).

The support package will be used to address the most pressing needs of Chagossians in terms of access to adequate healthcare and to improved education, including language training, and employment opportunities.



## ■ International Assistance

**Mr Barry Sheerman:** [\[277645\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that those responsible for attacks on humanitarian workers in developing countries are held to account.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

The primary responsibility for prosecuting those who attack humanitarian workers in any context lies with the state authorities. In a conflict context, where the state authorities are unable or unwilling to do this, international accountability mechanisms may be invoked, as appropriate. The UK supports international mechanisms such as the International Criminal Court or *ad hoc* tribunals acting within their mandates when grave violations of international humanitarian law are suspected, and the state is genuinely unable or unwilling to investigate or prosecute.

## ■ Montserrat: Legislatures

**Andrew Rosindell:** [\[278432\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether the Government plans to provide financial support to Montserrat for the building of a new Parliament building.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

Through its programme of Financial Aid to the Government of Montserrat, DFID supports the operational costs of Montserrat's Legislature and Parliament. Ministers approved a Capital Investment programme in Autumn 2018. The Government of Montserrat has not identified a Parliamentary building as a priority for funding under either Financial Aid or the Capital Investment programme.

## ■ Occupied Territories: Health Services

**Mr Barry Sheerman:** [\[277646\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps the Government is taking to tackle impunity for attacks against health workers in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

The UK is clear that no health workers or aid workers should be at risk of violence, that they must have the protection they need from the responsible authorities to allow them to do their jobs in safety, and that the rule of law must prevail to deal with perpetrators.

## ■ Overseas Aid

**Chris Law:**

[\[278527\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much funding his Department allocated to (a) educational, (b) healthcare and (c) infrastructure projects in the 2018-19 financial year.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

(a) DFID spent £564m bi-laterally on the broad Education sector in 2018/19. The sectors that have been included are: Education (level unspecified), Basic education, secondary education and post-secondary education.

(b) DFID spent £691m bi-laterally on the broad Health sector in 2018/19. The sectors that have been included are: Health general, basic health and non-communicable diseases.

(c) (i) DFID spent £1,048m bi-laterally on the broad Economic Infrastructure and services sector in 2018/19. The sectors that have been included are as follows: Transport & storage, communications, energy generation and policy, banking and businesses.

(ii) DFID spent £209m bi-laterally on the broad Social Infrastructure sector in 2018/19. The sectors that have been included are: Social protection, employment creation, Housing Policy, Culture and other social services.

We have used definitions that are in line with DFID's National Statistics – *Statistics on International Development*.

In addition, we make contributions to multilateral organisations like the Global Partnership for Education and the Global Fund.

## ■ Syria: Politics and Government

**Stephen Twigg:**

[\[278891\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent assessment he has made of the humanitarian situation in (a) southern Idlib and (b) northern Hama; and what steps his Department is taking to help alleviate the humanitarian situation in those regions.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

The UK is extremely concerned about the continued escalation of violence in northern Hama and southern Idlib, which has displaced hundreds of thousands of people, including approximately 100,000 children. We are appalled by the Regime and Russia's senseless attacks on civilian infrastructure, with at least 50 schools, 35 health facilities and eight water stations reportedly damaged or destroyed.

DFID remains committed to helping to alleviate the suffering of the affected civilian population. Last year alone, we provided over £80 million of support to Idlib and surrounding areas, and we are continuing our support this year too. Our UN and NGO partners are working tirelessly to meet growing needs among displaced people

through distributing essential items such as food, water and medicines. In addition to humanitarian assistance, the UK continues to use our position on the UN Security Council to call out the regime and Russia in the strongest possible terms for the continued attacks on civilian infrastructure, which clearly violate international law.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

### ■ Arms Trade

**Jonathan Edwards:** [277163]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what estimate he has made of the (a) premium income for defence transactions, (b) claims paid for defence sector contracts and (c) monies at risk for defence transactions in the 2018-19 financial year.

**George Hollingbery:**

During financial year 2018/19 UK Export Finance's (UKEF) support for defence sector transactions generated £109.7m in premium income, in relation to guarantees and insurance issued with a value of £3,057.9m. No claims in respect of defence sector transactions were paid by UKEF in 2018/19.

Where such information is not commercially sensitive, UKEF publishes details of the companies it has supported on an annual basis in its Annual Report and Accounts which are presented to Parliament and can be found on UKEF's website.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-export-finance-annual-reports-and-accounts>

### ■ Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership

**Jonathan Edwards:** [278947]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what comparative assessment his Department has made of the potential economic merits of the UK acceding to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership with the benefits of the UK's membership of the European Single Market.

**George Hollingbery:**

The Government has committed to publishing scoping assessments providing an economic analysis of proposed trade agreements prior to negotiations, including CPTPP. This will present the results of economic modelling, giving an indication of the potential impacts on the UK and partner country's economy. The Government published its assessment of the long-run economic impact of leaving the European Union in November 2018, which presented the economic impact arising from signing a wide range of illustrative free trade agreements, including with current members of CPTPP.

**Jonathan Edwards:** [278948]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what comparative assessment his Department has made of the potential environmental merits of the UK acceding to the

Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership with the UK's membership of the European Single Market.

**George Hollingbery:**

The Government has committed to publishing scoping assessments providing an economic analysis of proposed trade agreements prior to negotiations, including CPTPP, which includes potential impacts on the environment. The Department for Environment and Rural Affairs and the Department for Exiting the European Union may be able to provide further information regarding environmental impacts of the European Single Market.

■ **Defence and Security Organisation**

**Jonathan Edwards:**

[\[277164\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many staff worked for the Defence and Security Organisation (DSO) on 1 April 2019; how many of those staff worked in the Export Support Team; and what the DSO's budget is for 2019-20.

**Graham Stuart:**

As of 1 April 2019 the Defence and Security Organisation (DSO) had a total workforce of 111 staff of which 23 worked for the Export Support Team and were military MOD staff.

DSO's budget for 2019-20 is £8.4m.

■ **Trade Agreements**

**Jonathan Edwards:**

[\[278946\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment his Department has made of the economic merits of potential trade agreements between the UK and (a) the US, (b) Australia and (c) New Zealand compared to the EU's proposed free trade agreements with those countries.

**George Hollingbery:**

The Government has committed to publishing scoping assessments providing an economic analysis of proposed trade agreements prior to negotiations. These will present the results of economic modelling, giving an indication of the potential impacts on the UK and partner country's economy.

We have not undertaken any assessments of the EU's proposed agreements with those countries as negotiations are still ongoing and it would therefore be premature to do so at this stage. However, the Government believes that the UK's departure from the European Union offers us an opportunity to negotiate and design our own trade arrangements, and that we will be able to pursue these agreements in line with UK interests.

**■ Trade Agreements: Trade Unions****Jonathan Edwards:**[\[278944\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to his Department's consultations on trade negotiations with (a) the US, (b) Australia, (c) New Zealand and (d) potential accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, what discussions his Department has had with representatives of (i) farming unions and (ii) trades unions during the consultation period.

**George Hollingbery:**

In addition to ongoing regular engagement with these organisations, the Department ran a series of outreach events to engage stakeholders on the consultation. This included a town hall event in London which the NFU attended and a roundtable in Leeds hosted by the TUC.

**■ Trade Agreements: Wales****Jonathan Edwards:**[\[278945\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what formal consultation his Department had with the Welsh Government during the consultation period on (a) trade negotiations with (i) the US, (ii) Australia, and (iii) New Zealand and (b) potential accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership.

**George Hollingbery:**

The consultation exercise on the proposed Free Trade Agreements with the US, Australia, New Zealand and potential accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, was one of the largest ever undertaken by the UK Government.

As part of this extensive programme, the Welsh Government, along with the other devolved administrations (DAs), was invited to formally respond to the consultation. The response that the Welsh Government submitted was explored in detail between the Department for International Trade (DIT) and Welsh Government officials in December and discussions were held on the response during a quadrilateral that I held with DA ministers in January.

Prior to publication of the summary of responses to DIT's consultations last week, the DAs received an advance copy.

Alongside these specific discussions, there is extensive ongoing engagement that DIT has with the Welsh Government on trade policy. I have regular contact with my counterpart, the Noble Lady Baroness Morgan of Ely and this is supported by 6-weekly Senior Officials Group and regular technical policy roundtables.

## JUSTICE

■ **County Courts: Lambeth****Philip Davies:**[\[277305\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 8 July 2019 to Question 272804 on Court: Sales, if he will place a copy of the valuation report relating to Lambeth County Court in the Library.

**Paul Maynard:**

Lambeth County Court was occupied by HM Courts and Tribunals Service on a leasehold basis. The figure provided in the Answer to Question 272804 showed the negotiated receipt for the early exit of the leasehold arrangement. The disposal value was market tested through an open market campaign, a site valuation report was not conducted.

■ **Courts: Sales****Richard Burgon:**[\[277221\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the of Answer 9 July 2019 to Question 273431 on Courts: Sales, which organisation was responsible for providing each of the valuations.

**Paul Maynard:**

The table below provides a list of the organisations who provided HM Courts and Tribunals Service with valuations for courts listed in the answer to Question 273431.

COURT	VALUATION PROVIDER
Abergavenny Magistrates' Court	Valuation Office Agency
Bow County Court	Valuation Office Agency
Brecon Law Court	GVA
Bridgend Magistrates' Court	Valuation Office Agency
Caerphilly Magistrates' Court	Valuation Office Agency
Carmarthen Law Courts (The Guildhall)	Valuation Office Agency
Dolgellau Mags & Crown Court	Valuation Office Agency
Feltham Magistrates' Court	Valuation Office Agency
Grantham Magistrates' Court	Valuation Office Agency
Greenwich Magistrates' Court	Valuation Office Agency
Hammersmith Magistrates' Court	Valuation Office Agency

COURT	VALUATION PROVIDER
Holyhead Magistrates' Court (North Anglesey)	Valuation Office Agency
Liverpool, Dale Street Magistrates' Court	GVA
Llangefni County Court	Valuation Office Agency
Neath And Port Talbot County Court	Valuation Office Agency
Northallerton Magistrates' Court	Valuation Office Agency
Pontypridd Magistrates' Court	GVA
Rhyl County Court	Valuation Office Agency
Richmond Upon Thames Magistrates' Court	Valuation Office Agency
Solihull Magistrates' Court	GVA
Tottenham (Enfield) Magistrates' Court	Valuation Office Agency
Waltham Forest Magistrates' Court	Valuation Office Agency
Watford Magistrates' Court	JLL
Woolwich County Court	Valuation Office Agency

The closure of any court is not taken lightly – it only happens following full public consultation and when communities have reasonable access to alternative courts.

#### ■ Cremation

**Alex Chalk:** [\[277785\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether the Government plans to bring forward legislative proposals on the use of alkaline hydrolysis as an alternative to traditional cremations.

**Edward Argar:**

The Government currently has no plans to bring forward legislation in this area.

#### ■ Dangerous Driving

**Ms Lisa Forbes:** [\[277861\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he has taken to implement his Department's response to the consultation on driving offences and penalties relating to causing death or serious injury, published on 17 October 2017, Cm 9518.

**Robert Buckland:**

We are focused on getting the law right, to ensure the changes we make are comprehensive, proportionate and, crucially, practical.

We will bring forward proposals for changes in the law to increase the maximum penalties for causing death by dangerous driving and careless driving under the influence of drink or drugs to life imprisonment, and create a new offence of causing serious injury by careless driving as soon as possible. These proposals will take account of other government proposals for safer roads

## ■ European Arrest Warrants

**Richard Burgon:**

[\[277223\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many successful prosecutions following a request made under the European Arrest Warrant there have been in each year for which information is available.

**Robert Buckland:**

The number of prosecutions and convictions following a request made under the European Arrest Warrant is not centrally held in the court proceedings database. Identifying these cases would require a manual search of court records, which would be of disproportionate cost.

## ■ Ministry of Justice: Reviews

**Richard Burgon:**

[\[259338\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will list all (a) ongoing and (b) planned reviews (i) conducted by and (ii) initiated by his Department; when those reviews will finish; and when they are scheduled to report.

**Edward Argar:**

The Ministry of Justice is currently undertaking a Tailored Review of the Parole Board which was launched on 4th February 2019. The report of the review is due to be published in the Autumn.

No other Tailored Reviews, which are reviews of Arms Length Bodies, are currently underway and there are no plans to conduct any other reviews as part of the current programme which concludes at the end of 2019/20.

The Ministry of Justice does not hold a central record of reviews commissioned by the department. Reviews that have been carried out by the department can be found on the GOV.UK website.



**■ Offenders: Electronic Tagging****Kate Green:**[\[278484\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 12 July 2019 to Question 273385 on Offenders: Electronic Tagging, when he plans to publish the quantitative process evaluation of the GPS Pilot.

**Robert Buckland:**

The quantitative process evaluation of the GPS location monitoring Pilot was published alongside a speech on sentencing by my Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Justice on Thursday 18 July. The evaluation can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/process-evaluation-of-the-global-positioning-system-electronic-monitoring-pilot-quantitative-findings> The Secretary of State also announced in his speech on 18 July that we are planning to roll out a variation of location monitoring to children.

**■ Offenders: Foreign Nationals****Philip Davies:**[\[277302\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many foreign offenders were prosecuted by each police force, in the most recent year for which information is available.

**Robert Buckland:**

The nationality of defendants is not centrally held in the court proceedings database. Identifying these cases would require a manual search of court records, which would be of disproportionate cost.

**■ Offenders: Homelessness****Bambos Charalambous:**[\[277250\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many referrals have been made by (a) prison and (b) probation services to local authorities under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 duty to refer since October 2018.

**Robert Buckland:**

Everyone leaving custody should have a safe and suitable home to go to on release; having somewhere to live gives people a stable platform from which to access health services, hold down a job and reduces the likelihood of them reoffending. While statutory responsibility for housing (including planning) and homelessness lies with local authorities in England, and with the Welsh Assembly in Wales, we are committed to working with other departments to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping.

There has been a gradual flow of referrals from prisons and probation providers since the commencement of the 'Duty to Refer' on 1 October 2018. Between 1 October and

30 June: 926 referrals made by probation staff were recorded on the probation operational database, NDELIUS; 613 referrals made by prison staff were recorded on the prison operational database, P-NOMIS.

Over the coming months we will be re-promoting the duty ten months on from commencement, while reviewing the guidance issued to reflect lessons learnt.

## ■ Prisoners: Childbirth

**Richard Burgon:** [\[279094\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many women in prison gave birth in 2018.

**Edward Argar:**

The information is not centrally held and could only be obtained only at disproportionate cost. However, all pregnant women in custody have an individual care and management plan that is communicated to all staff and all pregnant women are seen by a mid-wife at least fortnightly or as required.

Healthcare in prisons is provided by trained medics and nurses, but we have also made training on dealing with pregnant women available to all prison officers.

We know it is extremely rare for a woman to give birth in prison - because every step is taken to get them to hospital - but those unique cases are invariably down to the unpredictability of labour.

Our Female Offender Strategy made clear that we want fewer women serving short sentences in custody and more remaining in the community, making use of women's centres to address needs such as substance misuse and mental health problems.

## ■ Prisoners: Employment

**Richard Burgon:** [\[279097\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many hours of purposeful activity per prisoner were recorded on average in (a) each prison rated in the 2017-18 performance rating as performance is of serious concern and (b) each prisons that was rated as exceptional performance.

**Robert Buckland:**

The Department does not currently collect data on the amount of time prisoners spend out of cell. We are examining the feasibility of developing such a measure and are exploring how this might be done, including working with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons to understand the methodology it uses in its inspections.

Data are published on GOV.UK on the number of prisoners who have completed accredited programmes in custody, the number of hours worked in prison industries, and the number of prisoners released from prison on a temporary licence.

The introduction of Offender Management in Custody, and the associated staffing, mean that prisons will be better equipped to run fuller regimes with more opportunities for purposeful activity. Our Education and Employment strategy

launched last year will create a system where prisoners are on a path to employment, through increased opportunities to gain experience of work in communities while released on temporary licence.

## ■ Prisons: Education

**Richard Burgon:**

[\[279099\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 15 July 2019 to Question 273816 on Prisons: Education, what the value by lot is of Dynamic Purchasing System contracts awarded to date.

**Robert Buckland:**

The 17 Lots in the Prison Education Framework (PEF) have awarded the following cumulative values of contracts under the Prison Education Dynamic Purchasing System (PEDPS) as at 19/07/2019.

- Lot 01 - Avon & South Dorset - £519,011.08
- Lot 02 - Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire & Norfolk - £429,911.68
- Lot 03 - Cumbria & Lancashire - £334,311.67
- Lot 04 - Devon & North Dorset – No contracts awarded currently
- Lot 05 - East Midlands & Morton Hall - £291,421.86
- Lot 06 - Gt Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire - £786,416.84
- Lot 07 - Hertfordshire, Essex & Suffolk - £ 543,250.00
- Lot 08 - Kent, Surrey & Sussex - £1,625,170.20
- Lot 09 – London - £19,100.00
- Lot 10 - Long Term High Security North - £311,744.91
- Lot 11 - Long Term High Security South - £242,380.99
- Lot 12 - North Midlands - £6,840.00
- Lot 13 - South Central - £311,959.91
- Lot 14 - Tees & Wear - £1,322,253.00
- Lot 15 - West Midlands - £76,315.00
- Lot 16 - Women's Estate North - £203,702.00
- Lot 17 – Yorkshire - £630,991.15

We have overhauled the prison education system and implemented a new Prison Education Framework. Under the new system, governors control their budget, including the power to choose providers and deliver learning that will best support their prisoners.

Our Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS), an innovation that brings in bespoke and short-term provision, is already proving popular, with over 230 providers signed up and over 20 contracts already awarded by governors.

**Richard Burgon:**

**[279100]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 15 July 2019 to Question 273816 on Prisons: Education, which providers have been awarded Dynamic Purchasing System contracts to date.

**Robert Buckland:**

A total of 92 contracts have been awarded to 46 Suppliers under the Prison Education Dynamic Purchasing System as at 19/07/2019.

Contracts have been awarded to the following organisations:

5 Step Startup School Ltd	x2
Acorn Training Ltd	x2
Advanced Personnel Management Group (UK) Limited	x1
Adviza Partnership	x2
Age UK Nottingham & Nottinghamshire	x1
Astara Training Ltd	x1
Beating Time (also known as "Choirs Beating Time")	x1
Bedfordshire and Luton Education Business Partnership (Trading as Develop)	x2
Career Connect - Duplicate registration	x1
Cathedral Training Ltd	x1
Changing Lives	x1
Chichester College Group	x5
Community Arts Projects UK	x1
Cronin Music Ltd	x1
CXK Limited	x1
First Point Training	x1
Fusion21 Ltd	x1
Geese Theatre Company	x3
GLA Group	x1
Good Vibrations	x1

---

Hillsbridge Services limited	x1
InHouse Records	x1
Karen Mackey Consultants	x2
Life Cycle UK	x1
Lincoln College Group	x1
LTE Group (Trading as Novus)	x12
Magistra Ltd	x1
Mainstream Training	x2
Milton Keynes College	x8
mybe awards Ltd	x1
n-ergy Group Limited	x4
N-Gaged Training & Recruitment Ltd	x2
Prospects Services	x5
RiseUp CiC	x2
RMF Construction Training Academy Ltd.	x2
Seetec Business Technology Cente Limited	x1
SevenThreeOne	x1
Sharon Hardy IAG and Employment Services Adviser	x1
St Giles Trust	x1
Standguide Ltd	x3
The Forward Trust	x2
The Growth Company Ltd	x1
The Junction 42 Foundation	x1
TKO "Training, Knowledge & Opportunities" Limited	x2
User Voice	x1
Weston College	x3

We have overhauled the prison education system and implemented a new Prison Education Framework. Under the new system, governors control their budget,

including the power to choose providers and deliver learning that will best support their prisoners.

Our Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS), an innovation that brings in bespoke and short-term provision, is already proving popular, with over 230 providers signed up and over 20 contracts already awarded by governors.

#### ■ Prisons: Mental Health Services

**Chi Onwurah:** [\[279003\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answers of 16 May 2019 to Question 255325 and Question 255326 on mental health in prisons, whether the number of prison officers trained in the new suicide and self-harm reduction training is 14,000 or 24,000.

**Chi Onwurah:** [\[279004\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 16 May 2019 to Question 255326 on death and self-harm in prisons, whether key workers supporting new prisoners are mandated to undertake suicide and self-harm prevention training.

**Robert Buckland:**

All staff who have contact with prisoners are required to undertake training in suicide and self-harm prevention. This includes key workers, who are uniformed prison officers. The training comprises six modules, one of which focuses on mental health awareness.

At the time of the previous answers, more than 24,000 staff had undertaken at least one module of the training, and of those more than 14,000 had undertaken all six, including the mental health awareness element.

#### ■ Secure Accommodation

**Richard Burgon:** [\[277225\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average number of places available in Secure Children's Home was in each year since 2010.

**Edward Argar:**

The requested information is provided in the table below.

YEAR ENDING	AVERAGE NUMBER OF JUSTICE BEDS AVAILABLE
March 2018	117
March 2017	118
March 2016	133
March 2015	139

YEAR ENDING	AVERAGE NUMBER OF JUSTICE BEDS AVAILABLE
March 2014	162
March 2013	166
March 2012	183
March 2011	192
March 2010	198

### ■ Segregation of Prisoners

**Richard Burgon:** [\[279095\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prisoners have spent time in segregation by prison in each year since 2010.

**Robert Buckland:**

The information requested is not held centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

**Richard Burgon:** [\[279096\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the (a) average length of time and (b) longest number of days was that a prisoner spent in segregation in each prison in 2018.

**Robert Buckland:**

The information requested is not held centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

### ■ Social Security Benefits: Appeals

**Dame Louise Ellman:** [\[278914\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many disability qualified members of tribunals there are and what the qualifications are for those roles; and if he will she make a statement.

**Paul Maynard:**

As of 1 April 2019, there were 450 disability members in post across the First-tier Tribunal. This represents a significant increase from 358 members as of 1 April 2018. This information is taken from the Judicial Diversity statistics published at [www.judiciary.uk/publications/judicial-diversity-statistics-2019](http://www.judiciary.uk/publications/judicial-diversity-statistics-2019)

In terms of qualifications, the relevant statutory requirement is that “a person who is experienced in dealing with the physical or mental needs of disabled persons because they –

- (a) work with disabled persons in a professional or voluntary capacity; or
- (b) are themselves disabled.”

This is set out at [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2008/2692](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2008/2692)

## ■ Television: Licensing

**Kate Green:**

[\[278485\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June 2019 to Question 264316 on Television: Licensing, how many (a) men and (b) women were given a prison sentence for failure to pay fines imposed for non-payment of the BBC licence fee in each of the last five years.

**Robert Buckland:**

The requested information can be viewed in the attached table.

### Attachments:

1. Table [PQ 278485 Reply.xlsx]

## ■ Universal Credit: Appeals

**Mr Jim Cunningham:**

[\[278908\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will introduce targets for the waiting time for a universal credit appeal case to be heard by a tribunal.

**Paul Maynard:**

We do not have targets for waiting times. The listing of appeals, including consideration of whether a hearing should be expedited, is a judicial function.

Nevertheless, MoJ are working to reduce waiting times for appeals by increasing judicial resource. This includes recruiting up to 250 judges across the First-tier Tribunal, 125 disability qualified members and up to 230 medical members. Once this is completed we expect more cases to be listed, improving the throughput in the Tribunal.

## ■ Universal Credit: Disability

**Mr Jim Cunningham:**

[\[278907\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he has made of the average waiting time for an appeal for universal credit by a tribunal for people with a disability in the most recent period for which figures are available.

**Paul Maynard:**

Waiting times for appeals against decisions made about Universal Credit (UC) are published at:

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

The specific information requested is not held: Her Majesty's Courts & Tribunals Service does not record whether UC appeals have been made by people with a disability.



**Wakefield Prison: Pepper Gas**

**Dan Jarvis:** [\[277743\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the timeframe is for the (a) commencement of training on the use of PAVA spray and (b) roll-out of PAVA spray to staff in HMP Wakefield.

**Robert Buckland:**

HMP Wakefield have had their initial readiness assessment visit on the 26<sup>th</sup> June, following this they are required to provide a local training plan which will outline a timeframe for them to complete local training of staff.

The readiness assessment and training plan will require sign-off by their Prison Group Director and the Project Sponsor to ensure it is realistic and achievable. Once sign-off is provided training will commence.

**NORTHERN IRELAND****Loughs Agency: Finance**

**Lady Hermon:** [\[278924\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, whether the Government plans to provide funding to the Loughs Agency after the UK leaves the EU; and if she will make a statement.

**John Penrose:**

As the Loughs Agency is a cross-border body, core funding is provided by both the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in Northern Ireland and the Department of Communications, Climate Control and Environment in the Republic of Ireland.

The Loughs Agency has also previously secured EU funding for a number of cross-border infrastructure projects. Decisions will be taken at the Spending Review on which future EU programmes the UK will seek to take part in.

**Tourism Ireland: Finance**

**Lady Hermon:** [\[278925\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, whether the Government will continue to provide financial support to Tourism Ireland after the UK leaves the EU; what the level of current financial support is; and if she will make a statement.

**John Penrose:**

Tourism, and the funding of Tourism Ireland, is a matter for the devolved Department for Economy. Decisions on funding should rightly rest with that Department and an incoming NI Executive.

For its part, the UK Government remains firmly committed to the principles of the Belfast Agreement, including supporting cross-border co-operation, embodied in organisations such as Tourism Ireland.

## SCOTLAND

### ■ NHS: Drugs

**Hugh Gaffney:**

[\[277259\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on the supply of medicine to Scotland in the event that the UK leaves the EU without an agreement.

**David Mundell:**

While the Government believes that leaving the EU with a deal is the best outcome, leaving without a deal remains the legal default at the end of the extension period on 31 October 2019. As a responsible Government, we have been preparing to minimise any disruption in the event of a no-deal scenario and are continuing with these preparations.

The supply of critical 'category 1' goods, including medicines and medical products, remains an essential element of the Government's no-deal contingency planning. The Department of Health and Social Care is working with the Devolved Administrations to support the continuity of medical supplies and medicines for the whole of the UK, and will continue to engage with devolved administration officials and Ministers to prepare for a potential 'no-deal' on 31 October. The Government has also set out in a Written Ministerial Statement an update on its preparations for a no-deal scenario on 26 June 2019 ([HCWS1661](#)).

### ■ Public Expenditure: Scotland

**Mr Philip Hollobone:**

[\[278931\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, if he will make a comparative assessment of total public spending per capita in Scotland with that in (a) Northamptonshire and (b) England, in the latest period for which data is available.

**David Mundell:**

The latest official figures and analyses of public expenditure by country, region and function were published by HM Treasury on Thursday 18 July 2019. This provides comparable per capita spending figures for the UK as a whole, its regions and countries.

Total identifiable expenditure per head in Scotland was £10,881 in 2017/18, this compares to £9,080 in England for the same period. This publication does not provide comparable statistics for Northamptonshire.

**TRANSPORT**■ **A422: Farthinghoe**

**Andrea Leadsom:** [\[278988\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of (a) the volume of traffic passing through the village of Farthinghoe on the A422 and (b) the effect on the wider local route network when the A422 is closed.

**Andrea Leadsom:** [\[278989\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of the cost, including design and construction, of a bypass for the village of Farthinghoe on the A422.

**Andrea Leadsom:** [\[278990\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions his Department has had with officials at Highways England and Northamptonshire Highways on the benefits to the wider local route network of a bypass on the A422 at the village of Farthinghoe.

**Andrea Leadsom:** [\[278991\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department has taken to prepare for the creation of the Major Road Network in Northamptonshire; what assessment he has made of the effect of the designation of the A422 as part of that network on the wider local route network (a) with the Farthinghoe bypass on the A422 and (b) without the Farthinghoe bypass.

**Andrea Leadsom:** [\[278992\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will visit the village of Farthinghoe to discuss with local residents the potential merits of the Farthinghoe bypass.

**Michael Ellis:**

The A422 is managed by Northamptonshire County Council and assessments of traffic passing through the village of Farthinghoe, the effect on the wider road network, and proposals for a bypass on the A422 would be for the local council to consider.

The A422 meets the objective criteria to be eligible for funding as part of the Major Road Network (MRN). It is for Sub-National Transport Bodies, in this case England's Economic Heartland, to work with Members of Parliament and local authorities to submit schemes for consideration for MRN funding by the end of July. If a MRN bid is submitted for this road, discussions will take place between Departmental officials, Highways England and Northamptonshire Highways, but to date none have been held.

**■ Aviation: Carbon Emissions****Gareth Thomas:** [\[277100\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans he has to include emissions from international aviation in the Government's climate targets.

**Michael Ellis:**

The Government is clear about the need for action to tackle emissions across the whole economy – including emissions from international aviation. Emissions from domestic flights are already covered by our existing domestic legislation and the Committee on Climate Change account for emissions from international aviation in their advice on setting our carbon budgets. This will continue to be the case for the new net zero target.

Action to tackle emissions from international aviation must be done globally to be effective. That is why we are working closely with the International Civil Aviation Organization, to ensure we and the rest of the world are taking ambitious action.

**■ Aviation: Safety****Grant Shapps:** [\[278940\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make an assessment of the safety implications of failing to renew the UK's current exemption from Standard European Rules of Air on vertical separation from cloud in Class D airspace for aircraft operating under Visual Flight Rules.

**Michael Ellis:**

The current exemption was issued by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to allow a safe and orderly transition to the requirements of the SERA with effect from 12 September 2019. The CAA is taking the necessary measures to meet the aims of the exemption. The SERA requirement gives effect to the international standard set out in Annex 2 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation and is already safely applied throughout most of the world.

We are aware that the airspace structure in the UK may give rise to some operational complications in respect of complying with the SERA requirement. The Department is working with the CAA to fully understand any safety implications arising from the application of the requirement in the UK, including whether any safeguarding measures are necessary.

**■ Bus Services****Gloria De Piero:** [\[278942\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many cessations of bus services (a) his Department and (b) Traffic Commissioners were notified of in 2018-19; and where in the UK those cessations were.

**Ms Nusrat Ghani:**

Changes to bus services are notified to the Traffic Commissioners.

The Traffic Commissioners Annual Report for 2018-19 is due to be published in the Autumn. The latest published data from the Traffic Commissioners with regards the number of cancelled registrations can be found:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/traffic-commissioners-annual-report-2017-to-2018>

The numbers of cancelled registrations will not be the same as the number of cessations of bus services: a registration that is cancelled may be complemented by a new service introduction that is an exact match or a slight variation to the one which has been cancelled.

### ■ Electric Vehicles: Charging Points

**Mohammad Yasin:**

[\[277245\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with the oil sector on introducing charging points for electric vehicles at (a) service stations and (b) petrol forecourts.

**Michael Ellis:**

The Government has had a number of discussions with representatives of the oil sector about the provision of electric vehicle charge points at service stations and petrol forecourts. We are encouraging the private sector to invest in and operate a self-sustaining public network supported by the right policy framework. Only last week, the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Transport met with automotive industry leaders, where there was a discussion about having the right charging infrastructure in place and a number of new commitments about charging were made to make electric vehicles more convenient than ever to own. The Government's view is that the market is often better placed to identify the right locations for chargepoints and it is essential that viable commercial models are in place to ensure continued maintenance and improvements to the network. As evidence of this, BP Chargemaster, the UK's largest electric car charge point provider, announced last month that it will install 400 points capable of ultra-fast 150kW charging by 2021 – including 100 at 50 sites by the end of 2019.

### ■ Electric Vehicles: Grants

**Mohammad Yasin:**

[\[277246\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to replace the plug-in car grant to encourage the manufacture and sale of low emission vehicles.

**Michael Ellis:**

Our mission is to put the UK at the forefront of the design, manufacture and uptake of zero emission vehicles. We are investing more than £1.5bn between 2015 and 2021 to support this. The plug-in car grant continues to support the purchase of the cleanest vehicles and will remain in place until at least 2020. Our Road to Zero Strategy confirmed that consumer incentives in some form will continue to play a role beyond 2020.

The government recently announced company car tax rates out to 2022-23. To accelerate the shift to zero emission cars, all zero emission models will pay no company car tax in 2020-21, 1% in 2021-22 before returning to the planned 2% rate in 2022-23 – a significant tax saving for employees and employers.

Alongside other measures in the government's Road to Zero strategy, including support schemes for the installation of charge points, the UK government's support package adds up to one of the most comprehensive worldwide. As part of the upcoming spending review, government will be setting out funding and other measures for future years.

### ■ Heathrow Airport: Exhaust Emissions

**Gareth Thomas:**

[277099]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, by what proportion, compared to current figures, will carbon emissions from aviation at Heathrow change following the completion of a third runway.

**Michael Ellis:**

The 'UK aviation forecasts 2017' provides a forecast of UK air passenger demand and aviation carbon dioxide emissions to 2050. This analysis includes aviation emissions at Heathrow Airport in 2016 and a forecast of emissions, including the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme, across a range of years. The data you have requested can be found in Tables 69 and 70 of the 'UK aviation forecasts 2017 data' spreadsheet, accessible via this link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-aviation-forecasts-2017>

**Gareth Thomas:**

[277101]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he will take to offset the carbon emissions from increased aviation into and out of Heathrow following its proposed expansion.

**Michael Ellis:**

The UK takes a leading role in tackling greenhouse gas emissions, and on 27 June 2019, the UK became the first major economy in the world to set a 2050 net zero target to end its contribution to climate change.

Whilst international aviation emissions currently only represent 2% of international emissions, aviation must play its part in achieving net zero carbon emissions. The Government will propose a long-term vision for UK aviation carbon and a pathway to achieve this in the Aviation 2050 white paper due to be published later this year. Any expansion at UK airports, including Heathrow, will need to demonstrate it is consistent with this vision.

The UK will continue to play a key leadership role in the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO). The UK has already played a crucial role in successfully negotiating and securing the first ever global measure to reduce emissions in a single sector in the form of the carbon offsetting and reduction scheme for international

aviation (CORSIA). We will also negotiate for a long-term goal for international aviation that is consistent with the temperature goals of the Paris Agreement, ideally by ICAO's 41<sup>st</sup> Assembly in 2022.

To better understand the role offsetting emissions can play in achieving future carbon goals, the Government launched a call for evidence on offsetting carbon emissions produced by transport on 18 July 2019. The call for evidence invites views on whether transport operators should have to offer offsetting to passengers. It also explores the public understanding of carbon emissions from the journeys they make and the options to offset them.

### ■ **Motor Vehicles: Children**

**Dr Matthew Offord:** [\[277167\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent guidance he has published on the use of off-road all-terrain vehicles by people under the legal driving age.

**Michael Ellis:**

The Government has not published any guidance as the legislation governing the legal age to drive applies to on-road vehicles only. The Department for Transport's remit covers road traffic legislation which applies to the road or public place. There is no legislation which covers use outside of a road or public place.

### ■ **Motorcycles**

**Mr Steve Baker:** [\[277179\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will take steps to encourage a modal shift to motorcycles and scooters.

**Mr Steve Baker:** [\[277180\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the opportunities to improve (a) congestion, (b) the environment and (c) road safety through a modal shift to motorcycles and scooters.

**Michael Ellis:**

The Government has committed to leaving the environment in a better state than was inherited by this generation and improving the health and lives of people across the UK. Transport has a key role to play in reducing emissions to meet both climate change and air quality goals. The Clean Air Strategy, published this year, is the most ambitious air quality strategy in a generation, aiming to halve the harm to human health from air pollution in the UK by 2030.

Motorcycles can make a significant contribution to addressing the nation's transport and traffic problems. They offer real benefits in terms of reduced congestion and an affordable alternative to the car, providing independence and mobility and widening employment opportunities. Motorcyclists represent one of the most vulnerable road user groups and the Department has just published a refreshed Road Safety

Statement and a two-year action plan to address the following four key priority groups: motorcyclists; rural road users; young road users; and older road users.

Electric scooters are illegal to use on public roads in the UK. The Department is also currently undertaking a Regulatory Review which will include whether electric scooters and other micromobility devices should be permitted in the UK and the impacts of introducing electric scooters on congestion, the environment and road safety.

### ■ **Parking: Disability**

**Alex Chalk:** [\[277218\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of introducing a national parking exemption badge to assist people (a) Thalidomide and (b) other disabilities that have difficulties in using the clock system on Blue Badges.

**Michael Ellis:**

The Department has assisted local authorities by providing guidance to local authorities who may want to consider issuing an exemption letter to the Blue Badge holder which would clarify the position in the event of a Penalty Charge Notice being issued. Blue Badge holders affected with upper limb disabilities eg. Thalidomide can use marked disabled bays on-street without needing to display a parking clock alongside their Blue Badge.

### ■ **Railways: Surveys**

**Dame Cheryl Gillan:** [\[277595\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 15 July 2019 to Question 275643 on Railways: Surveys, if he publish the titles of the working documents his Department has developed that are based on information from National Rail Travel Survey December 2010.

**Andrew Jones:**

The National Rail Travel Survey (NRTS) data were collected between 2000 and 2004/05. An overview report, most recently updated in 2010, is available on the Department's website at this address: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/73094/national-rail-travel-survey-overview-report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/73094/national-rail-travel-survey-overview-report.pdf).

This report is the only document which the Department has developed based on information from the NRTS.

### ■ **Transport for Wales: Bristol**

**Jessica Morden:** [\[278936\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, for what reasons his Department will not allow additional Transport for Wales train services to serve Bristol Temple Meads station.



**Andrew Jones:**

Capacity on the rail network in the Bristol area is currently restricted. The Agency Agreement signed by the Secretary of State and Welsh Ministers sets out the limitations that needed to be considered by bidders for the current Wales & Borders franchise when they were developing their proposals in respect of English services. That restriction was put in place because capacity is limited in the Bristol area and, as well as additional services from Wales, local authorities in the Bristol area have been planning to upgrade Bristol local services for many years.

Upgrade works for the Bristol area network are currently being developed through the Rail Network Enhancement Pipeline process. Until these upgrade works are completed, it is not possible to allow bids for unplanned additional train services.

Given this background, bidders for the Wales & Borders franchise were advised not to propose English services on the route prior to completion of those works. That restriction continues in the new Wales & Borders franchise which started last October.

The new franchise operator (Transport for Wales Rail Services) will have the ability to bid for paths to Bristol during the life of the new 15-year franchise once any relevant infrastructure works are completed.

**■ Transport: Infrastructure****Frank Field:**[\[277653\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what transport infrastructure the Government is supporting to help the manufacturing industry grow.

**Michael Ellis:**

As set out in the Industrial Strategy, transport infrastructure investment is vital to support businesses right across the country, including in manufacturing. We support businesses through our roads, rail and local transport investment, and delivery of major projects like HS2. For example, HS2 already supports 9,000 jobs, and its innovative approach to construction includes looking at opportunities for off-site manufacture, such as Temporary Modular Bridges.

DfT also supports manufacturing through its procurement, and has adopted the Procuring for Growth Balanced Scorecard to help ensure major government procurements have a positive impact on economic growth, as well as best value for the taxpayer.

**TREASURY****■ Child Tax Credit**

**Marsha De Cordova:** [\[279149\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many households with no one in work receive the (a) disabled child element and (b) the disabled child element but not the severely disabled child element in their child tax credit.

**Marsha De Cordova:** [\[279150\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many single parents who are not in work receive (a) the disabled child element and (b) the disabled child element but not the severely disabled child element in their child tax credit.

**Elizabeth Truss:**

As at December 2018 there were 176,000 out-of-work families receiving the disabled child element, of which 101,000 were not also receiving the severely disabled child element.

There were 121,000 out-of-work single adult families receiving the disabled child element, of which 71,000 were not also receiving the severely disabled child element.

**■ Employment: Taxation**

**Crispin Blunt:** [\[277599\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 3 July 2019 to Question 268953 on Employment: Taxation, which elements of the Check Employment Status for Tax (CEST) online guidance tool were tested; how were they tested; and who tested them.

**Jesse Norman:**

All elements of the Check Employment Status for Tax service (CEST) were thoroughly tested.

In a series of workshops, officials and external experts, including lawyers, tax and IT professionals, developed the set of rules that underpin the tool. The workshop participants agreed the key relevant facts and points of law and then tested the rules that went into the tool to ensure it gave the correct answer. Those rules were then tested against live and settled cases.

**■ EU External Trade: Import Controls**

**John Redwood:** [\[278327\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what proportion of goods from non-EU countries are held at EU borders for physical checks.

**Jesse Norman:**

The European Commission collates statistics on the proportion of EU imports subject to physical control, but does not publish this data.

## ■ Minimum Wage and Work Experience

**Janet Daby:** [\[279153\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many complaints HMRC has received of employers (a) advertising unpaid internships and (b) not paying the minimum wage in the last 12 months.

**Jesse Norman:**

Everyone entitled to the National Minimum Wage (NMW) should receive it.

All businesses, irrespective of size or business sector, are responsible in law for paying the correct minimum wage to their staff.

HMRC actively promote compliance by working with both employers and workers to raise awareness of the employers' obligations and workers' rights in respect of NMW. This includes scanning the internet for adverts with a view to making contact where a business may appear to be non-compliant with its NMW obligations.

HMRC do not hold a record of employers advertising for unpaid internships but in the last 12 months has received 40 complaints relating to issues affecting interns. The total number of complaints received by HMRC in the last 12 months is 3,972.

## ■ Motor Vehicles: Excise Duties

**Suella Braverman:** [\[277783\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the merits of amending vehicle excise duty so that the duty applicable is based on the emissions recorded at MOT tests.

**Robert Jenrick:**

MOT emissions tests are mainly used to check for dangerous levels of air quality pollutants, such as carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons.

To help meet our legally binding climate change targets, Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) is based on carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions which is not tested during MOTs.

A vehicle's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are tested under laboratory conditions at the point of manufacture. This provides an accurate figure which determines the rate of VED paid, allows comparisons to be made between models and encourages motorists to choose low CO<sub>2</sub> emitting options.

## ■ Non-domestic Rates

**Liz Twist:** [\[277816\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his Department plans to undertake a review of business rates and their effect on the sustainability of the retail sector.

**Liz Twist:** [\[277817\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to reduce the burden of business rates on (a) retailers and (b) businesses in Blaydon constituency.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Government concluded the last fundamental review of business rates in 2016. Respondents to the review agreed that property based taxes are easy to collect, difficult to avoid, relatively stable compared to other taxes, and that they have a clear link with local authority spending.

The Government has taken repeated action to reduce the burden of business rates for all ratepayers including retailers. Our Plan for the High Street announced at Budget 2018 provides £1 billion of upfront support through a new retail discount, cutting retailers' business rates bills by a third for two years from 1 April 2019 subject to eligibility.

Reforms and reliefs announced since Budget 2016 are reducing business rates by more than £13 billion over the next five years. This includes switching from RPI to CPI indexation, increasing the threshold for the standard multiplier to £51,000, and doubling the threshold for Small Business Rate Relief, meaning 675,000 of the smallest businesses pay no business rates at all.

**Public Sector: Redundancy Pay****Lilian Greenwood:**[\[278975\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many responses his Department received to its consultation on restricting exit payments in the public sector.

**Elizabeth Truss:**

The consultation received over 580 responses. We are currently analysing these and will produce a government response in due course.

**Social Services: VAT****Mrs Kemi Badenoch:**[\[278576\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of removing VAT from social care after the UK leaves the EU.

**Jesse Norman:**

The provision of welfare services by certain bodies is exempt from VAT, so no VAT is charged to the final consumer. In order to qualify for this exemption, service providers either need to meet the requirements set by the Care Quality Commission or be a registered charity.

**Treasury: Credit Unions****Gareth Thomas:**[\[279369\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 9 July 2019 to Question 271336, for what reasons his Department does not offer a payroll deduction service to enable employees to join a credit union; and if he will make a statement.

**Robert Jenrick:**

HM Treasury explored the option of offering a credit union to staff, however due to lack of staff interest and other reward and benefit priorities it hasn't been implemented.

■ **Treasury: Ethnic Groups**

**Seema Malhotra:** [\[279059\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many BAME staff are employed at (a) grade 7, (b) grade 5 and (c) grade 3 in his Department.

**Robert Jenrick:**

The data for HM Treasury is based on Paid Staff as of 30th June 2019, and those who have chosen to declare their ethnicity.

	BAME
Range E (Grade 7)	64
Range SCS 1 (Grade 5)	6
Range SCS 2 (Grade 3)	Fewer than 5

■ **UK Trade with EU**

**Chuka Umunna:** [\[279012\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many (a) businesses and (b) companies (i) have an Economic Operator Registration and Identification (EORI) number, (ii) require an EORI number but do not have one and (iii) have applied for an EORI number and not received one.

**Jesse Norman:**

Approximately 479,000 traders hold a live Economic Operator Registration and Identification (EORI) number issued by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC). It is not possible to provide a breakdown of this data.

Data on the number of traders that would need a UK EORI number is not readily available.

HMRC have issued UK EORI numbers to all traders who registered for a number and did not already possess one at the time of their registration.

■ **VAT: Business**

**Chuka Umunna:** [\[279466\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Guidance on how to prepare for Brexit if there's no deal, published by the Department for Exiting the European

Union, what parts of the plan for VAT for businesses in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal have been implemented.

**Jesse Norman:**

As a responsible government, the Government has been preparing plans to minimise any disruption in the event of no deal for nearly three years.

HM Revenue and Customs and HM Treasury are aware of the VAT policies that need to be delivered for exit day and the Government remains confident that all required SIs will be brought forward in good time.

In light of the extension that has now been agreed, departments continue to advance their 'no deal' preparations and are making sensible adjustments on the timing and pace at which certain work is progressing, so that the Government is ready to implement necessary work in the lead-up to 31 October if needed.

## WALES

### ■ Wales Office: Ethnic Groups

**Seema Malhotra:**

[\[279154\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, how many BAME staff are employed at (a) grade 7, (b) grade 5 and (c) grade 3 in his Department.

**Kevin Foster:**

The number of staff working in the Office of the Secretary of State for Wales and declaring themselves as BAME as at 30 June 2019 are shown below:

GRADE	NO. OF STAFF REPORTING	
	ETHNICITY	BAME
(a) grade 7/6	9	0
(b) grade 5	3	1
(c) grade 3	1	0
<b>Total other staff grades</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>6</b>

## WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

### ■ Assistance Animals

**Sarah Champion:**

[\[272199\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, if she will take steps to amend the definition for assistance dog to ensure that it applies to the Equality Act 2010.

**Victoria Atkins:**

Section 173(1) of the Equality Act (the Act) already sets out a definition of an assistance dog in relation to those sections of the Act – applicable to taxis and private hire vehicles - which refer to assistance dogs, as follows:

a dog which has been trained to guide a blind person;

a dog which has been trained to assist a deaf person;

a dog which has been trained by a prescribed charity to assist a disabled person who has a disability that consists of epilepsy or otherwise affects the person's mobility, manual dexterity, physical co-ordination or ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects;

a dog of a prescribed category which has been trained to assist a disabled person who has a disability (other than one falling within paragraph (c)) of a prescribed kind;

**Sarah Champion:**[\[272844\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, if she will make an assessment of the implications for her Department's policies of the recommendations in the report by the charity Guide Dogs entitled, Access denied: a report into the frequency and impact of access refusals on assistance dog owners in 2019, on the establishment of an equality ombudsman.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on businesses and service providers to make reasonable adjustments to improve disabled people's access to goods and services so they are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to non-disabled people. This reasonable adjustment duty is an anticipatory duty therefore those who provide goods, facilities and services to members of the public are expected to anticipate the reasonable adjustments that disabled customers may require, including auxiliary aids.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is the public body responsible for enforcing the Equality Act. In 2017, the EHRC published two pieces of guidance - a guide to help businesses understand what they can do to meet their legal duties to assistance dog owners, and a guide to help tourism businesses welcome people with access requirements. The EHRC also supports disabled individuals who have experienced discrimination to take their cases to court. The EHRC has delivered a Legal Support Project to increase access to justice for people experiencing disability discrimination. In 2017/18 it offered disabled groups £189,000 for legal assistance across 94 cases in areas including employment, education and public services. The EHRC is also increasing its legal capacity to advise on discrimination cases."

In the Government's view, an equalities ombudsman as recommended by the Guide Dogs report would not usefully add to the EHRC's functions.

**■ Civil Partnership Act 2004 (Amendment) (Sibling Couples) Bill [HL]****Dr Rupa Huq:**[\[270808\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of the Government supporting the Civil Partnership Act 2004 (Amendment) (Sibling Couples) Bill [HL] 2017-19.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The Government is very clear that there is a significant difference between an intimate partner relationship (for which civil partnerships are intended) and a relationship between siblings or other family members.

We have no intention of extending civil partnerships to siblings, and are not supporting the Civil Partnership Act 2004 (Amendment) (Sibling Couples) [HL] 2017-19 Private Members Bill.

**■ Civil Partnerships: Heterosexuality****Darren Jones:**[\[266884\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, when she plans to use the powers in section 2(1) of the Civil Partnerships, Marriages and Deaths (Registration etc) Act 2019 to amend the Civil Partnership Act 2004 to enable two persons who are not of the same sex to form a civil partnership in England and Wales.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The Government intends to change the law by regulations to extend civil partnerships to opposite-sex couples, as required by the Civil Partnerships, Marriages and Deaths (Registration etc) Act 2019, by 31 December 2019.

**■ Employment: Disability****Matt Western:**[\[267246\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what steps she is taking to ensure that employers are offering disability leave to disabled employees as part of reasonable adjustments.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The Government is committed to protecting people with disabilities in the workplace and The Equality Act 2010 places obligations on employers with disabled employees, including the requirement to make reasonable adjustments, which may include granting leave related to the employee's disability.

However, the Act recognises the need to strike a balance between the needs of disabled people and those of employers. What is 'reasonable' will be different for each employer because of factors such as the practicality and the cost of making the adjustment. A court or tribunal may ultimately make a final decision on whether a particular person meets the definition of disability in the Act and whether an adjustment request is reasonable.



Practical advice on reasonable adjustments is available from a number of sources, including Acas and the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC). The EHRC's examples of reasonable adjustments for employers include disability leave.

If a disabled person feels that they have not been treated fairly by an employer, the Equality Advisory Support Service (EASS) offers information and advice about discrimination, including disability discrimination. EASS can be contacted by telephone, via an online contact form or by post.

## ■ Equal Pay

**Dawn Butler:** [\[263102\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what steps she is taking to ensure that the Equality and Human Rights Commission assesses the accuracy of the gender pay gap figures filed by employers for the 2018-19 reporting year.

**Victoria Atkins:**

It is an employer's legal responsibility to ensure that they report on time and that their figures are accurate. The vast majority of the over 10,000 organisations that reported this year have reported their data on time.

In 2018, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) undertook an investigation into 100 employers suspected of publishing inaccurate gender pay gap figures for the 2017/18 reporting year. The EHRC now intends to carry out the same action on employers' suspected of publishing inaccurate data for the 2018/19 reporting year and will take enforcement action where appropriate.

## ■ Gender Recognition: Children

**David T. C. Davies:** [\[260601\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, whether people under the age of 18 can transition gender through routes other than under the Gender Recognition Act 2004.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The only method of legally changing gender is through the process set out in the Gender Recognition Act 2004. This involves applying for a Gender Recognition Certificate, which can then be used to obtain a new birth certificate. This process is only open to those aged 18 and over.

Medical transition is governed by the NHS, and surgery is not available to those under the age of 18. Cross-sex hormones can only be prescribed under strict clinical supervision from the age of 16.

Social transition, such as changing the name you are known by, and the pronouns you use, can be done by anyone at any age, and is often subject to a discussion between a child and their parents if it happens before age 18.

**■ Government Equalities Office: Written Questions****Matt Western:**[\[277263\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, when she plans to respond to Question 267246 on Employment: Disability, tabled by the hon. Member for Warwick and Leamington on 20 June 2019.

**Victoria Atkins:**

I have today responded to the hon. Member's Question 267246.

**■ Human Papillomavirus: Vaccination****Jim Shannon:**[\[259224\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what recent discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on the provision of the HPV vaccine at sexual health clinics.

**Victoria Atkins:**

My right hon. Friend the Minister for Women and Equalities has frequent discussions with cabinet colleagues on a range of equalities matters.

The Department for Health and Social Care lead on policy relating to the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine. Advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation is that there may be considerable benefit in offering the HPV to other individuals who have a similar risk profile to that of the men who have sex with men (MSM) population attending Specialist Sexual Health Services and/or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) clinics. This wider range includes some MSM aged over 45 years, sex workers, HIV positive women, and HIV positive men.

Clinicians are able to offer vaccinations outside of the national programme using individual clinical judgement, and HPV vaccination could therefore be considered for such individuals on a case-by-case basis.

**WORK AND PENSIONS****■ Amazon: Industrial Health and Safety****Jessica Morden:**[\[278935\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what discussions she has had with representations of Amazon on (a) the number of NHS ambulance responses to that company's warehouses in the last three years and (b) working conditions at those warehouses.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions has not had any discussions with representations of Amazon on (a) the number of NHS ambulance responses to that company's warehouses in the last three years and (b) working conditions at those warehouses.

**■ Children: Day Care****Stephen Twigg:**[\[278894\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of providing upfront financial support for childcare to parents claiming universal credit.

**Will Quince:**

Universal Credit (UC) is paid in a single monthly amount directly into people's bank accounts, giving them control over their own money and making the move into work easier.

The Government is committed to supporting parents with moving into work and, as part of this, we increased the level of support for childcare costs from 70 per cent in legacy benefits to up to 85 per cent in UC. The UC childcare policy aligns with the wider government childcare offer, which includes free childcare hours and tax free childcare. UC claimants can utilise both the free childcare entitlement and UC childcare costs in conjunction with each other for relevant hours. This offer means that reasonable childcare costs should not form a barrier to work.

We have made other changes to ease the burden on claimants and encourage work. We recognise that upfront childcare costs or deposits may prevent a claimant from starting work so Jobcentres can now use the Flexible Support Fund to support the transition into work. When parents have good reason for late reporting of their childcare costs, the Department is piloting a more flexible approach for reimbursing these costs.

Since February 2018, Universal Credit claimants have been able to upload digital copies of their childcare cost receipts or invoices through their online Universal Credit account.

**■ Children: Maintenance****Karin Smyth:**[\[277210\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether her Department has plans to undertake a public consultation on changing the sequence by which deductions from benefits are ordered to ensure that child maintenance payments take priority over debts to private companies.

**Alok Sharma:**

Under Universal Credit there is a structured approach to deductions from benefit, which simplifies the current complex arrangements of the legacy system.

The aims of the deductions policy in Universal Credit are to protect vulnerable claimants by providing a last resort repayment method for arrears of essential services, to enforce social obligations and to recover Government debt in a cost effective manner.

Deductions are made following the priority order, which determines the order in which items should be deducted. 'Last resort' deductions, such as rent or fuel costs, are at

the top of the priority order, ensuring that claimant welfare is prioritised, followed by social obligation deductions, such as child maintenance, and finally benefit debt, such as Social Fund loans and benefit overpayments.

We prioritise the welfare of claimants, as this is the best way to support them and to help them to move towards work and off benefits.

The Deduction Priority Order can be found here (p. 72) -

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/683470/benefit-overpayment-recovery-guide.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683470/benefit-overpayment-recovery-guide.pdf)

## ■ Employment and Support Allowance

**Sarah Champion:** [\[277751\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what account is taken of income from compensation payments under the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme in employment and support allowance calculations.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

Payments for Criminal Injuries Compensation come under payment for personal injury. Once the claimant has provided the information the Decision Maker would disregard for 52 weeks from the date of the award and if the award is put in trust the Decision Maker would disregard indefinitely. If the claimant was to take an income from the Trust it is treated as income from capital.

**Stephen Twigg:** [\[278886\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 8 May 2019 to Question 237584, if she will place in the Library a copy of letter from the Minister for Disabled People clarifying previous answers on the ministerial requirement to amend the wording of the ESA65B letter to claimants' doctors.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

A copy of this letter has been placed in the library of the House.

## ■ Employment: Autism

**Marion Fellows:** [\[279085\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps she is taking further to the Disability Confident Scheme and the Disability Confident Toolkit to ensure people with autism spectrum conditions are supported within the workplace through (a) peer and (b) mentor support.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

Access to Work offers eligible individuals practical advice and a discretionary grant of up to £59,200 per year to fund support above the level of an employer's statutory obligation to make reasonable adjustments, and this can include specialist mentoring. DWP is working with the Supported Business Alliance (SBA) and The British Association for Supported Employment (BASE) to develop a new long term element

of Access to Work, to support people working for a supported business, many of whom have autism spectrum conditions.

DWP, in partnership with Department of Health and Social Care, has published a consultation: 'Health is everyone's business: proposals to reduce ill health-related job loss' on how employers can best support disabled people and people with long-term health conditions, including those with autism spectrum conditions, to stay and thrive in work.

**Marion Fellows:**

[\[279086\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps she is taking, in addition to the Disability Confident Scheme and the Disability Confident Toolkit, to ensure people with autism spectrum conditions are supported in the workplace in relation to the working environment and their sensory needs.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

Access to Work staff have a specialist knowledge of disabilities and health conditions, including autism spectrum conditions, which enables them to offer customers tailored packages of support, and the scheme offers eligible individuals a workplace assessment to establish what personalised support would be most appropriate to support them at work.

DWP is working with the Supported Business Alliance (SBA) and The British Association for Supported Employment (BASE) to develop a new long term element of Access to Work, to support people working for a supported business, many of whom have autism spectrum conditions.

DWP is also working in partnership with Department of Health and Social Care to publish a consultation on how employers can best support disabled people and people with long-term health conditions, including those with autism spectrum conditions, to stay and thrive in work.

**Marion Fellows:**

[\[279087\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if her Department will offer people with autistic spectrum conditions of working age access to interview training designed and delivered by individuals with extensive knowledge of autism spectrum conditions through Jobcentres.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

The new Health and Work Conversation allows work coaches to build engagement with claimants with disabilities and health issues. Work Coaches are given comprehensive training to build their empathy skills and help them to actively listen to claimants. In addition, two new specialist job roles were introduced into Jobcentres from April 2019 - a revised Disability Employment Adviser role, bringing together the current role and incorporating elements of the Community Partner and Small Employer Adviser roles, and a new Disability Employment Adviser Leader role. These new roles will be instrumental in driving the government's commitment to providing high quality support to disabled people and those with health conditions, including

autism spectrum conditions. In total, more than 800 people will be employed in these new roles.

Work Coaches can refer individuals to a range of personalised support, which can include specialist interview training, through programmes like The Work and Health Programme. Work and Health Programme providers have links to organisations with extensive knowledge of autism spectrum conditions, including Autism Plus, Triple A (All About Autism), Autism Anglia, Autism Spectrum Connections CYMRU (ASCC), Gwent Integrated Autism Service, and The Autism Directory.

By the end of 2019 we will have rolled out our new Intensive Personalised Employment Support Programme, which will provide highly personalised packages of employment support for disabled people, including people with autism spectrum conditions, who are at least a year away from moving into work.

#### ■ Pension Credit: Dementia

**Stephen Morgan:** [\[279142\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people who are eligible for but do not claim pension credit live with dementia.

**Guy Opperman:**

Official statistics on the take-up of income related benefits at Great Britain level, including Pension Credit, can be found in the 'Income-related benefits: estimates of take-up in 2016 to 2017' publication.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/income-related-benefits-estimates-of-take-up-financial-year-2016-to-2017>

The information requested on the number of people who are eligible for pension credit but do not claim and live with dementia is not available.

#### ■ Pensions: Consumer Information

**Stephen Lloyd:** [\[278951\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps her Department has taken to assess how the Pensions Dashboard could connect into private pension schemes using a federated Digital Identity.

**Guy Opperman:**

The Government's response to the consultation on pensions dashboards set out that it is the responsibility of the industry delivery group to agree a standardised level of digital identity to make dashboards work, working closely with industry and the government. We are clear that it must comply with the National Cyber Security Centre's Good Practice Guide 45. Therefore, it will ultimately be the responsibility of the industry delivery group reporting to the Money and Pensions Service to identify a digital identity solution(s) for dashboards that meet these standards and to make a decision on whether those digital identity solution(s) use a federated digital identity.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/792303/government-response-pensions-dashboards.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/792303/government-response-pensions-dashboards.pdf)

## ■ Social Security Benefits

**Paul Farrelly:** [\[277674\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of reinstating the employment and support allowance and universal credit work-related activity component.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

No such assessment of merits has been made. There are no plans to reinstate the change to the Employment and Support Allowance work-related activity component and the Universal Credit limited capability for work element.

As part of the Personal Support Package which was announced in the 'Improving Lives' Green Paper in October 2016, we committed to a £330m package of support over 4 years for claimants affected by the removal of the Work Related Activity component.

The Department believes that this change will provide the right incentives and support to help new claimants with limited capability for work.

In 2019/20 we are spending £55 billion on benefits to support disabled people and people with health conditions. Furthermore, real terms disability benefits spending will be higher every year to 2023 than in 2010.

## ■ Social Security Benefits: Disability

**Paul Farrelly:** [\[277677\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will meet the Chancellor of the Exchequer to discuss increasing support for charities and other advice agencies to ensure that they are able to assist people in completing all disability benefit application forms.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

It is important that all of our claimants are able to access our services and that they do not face obstacles in applying. The Department can provide support, including help filling in the application form or the questionnaire where accessibility requirements would call for that.

The Department does not provide any funding support for charities or other advice agencies to support them in the completion of forms for the disability benefits: Attendance Allowance; Disability Living Allowance; and Personal Independence Payment. The Department does however undertake a wide variety of engagement with representatives from various charities and welfare rights organisations in order to share information and updates and to ensure the systems work as effectively as possible to support people with disabilities and long-term health conditions.

**Mr Steve Baker:** [\[278483\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the effect of welfare changes on disabled people in the last 10 years.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

We are spending £55 billion a year on benefits to support disabled people and people with health conditions. That's a record high and up £10 billion in real terms since 2010. Spending on disability benefits will be higher in every year to 2023 than 2010.

**Mr Jim Cunningham:** [\[278905\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the effect of the two-child limit for universal credit and tax credits on disabled parents with more than two children.

**Alok Sharma:**

It is the Department's view that providing support for a maximum of two children or qualifying young persons in Universal Credit and Child Tax Credit ensures fairness between those supporting themselves solely through work and those receiving benefits.

The Government assessed the impact of the policy from an equality and human rights perspective throughout its development and in preparation for its implementation. The Department published statistics related to the first year of policy implementation in June 2018 and will publish updated statistics on 31<sup>st</sup> July.

An impact assessment of the policy of providing support for a maximum of two children in Child Tax Credits and Universal Credit, which considered the impact of the policy on families and other protected groups, including those with disabilities, was published in July 2015 and is available at:

<https://www.parliament.uk/documents/impact-assessments/ia15-006e.pdf>

**Mr Jim Cunningham:** [\[278906\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department is taking to work with (a) charities and (b) advice centres to improve the advice and support provided to disabled people completing applications and undergoing assessments for benefits.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

We are absolutely committed to improving the overall claimant experience as this is what claimants rightly expect and deserve. We continue to engage with charities, academics, think tanks, and disabled people through several forums to ensure that options for improvement are informed by a wide variety of perspectives and views.

Stakeholders are currently involved in our ongoing work on improving the PIP2 questionnaire and design of the Light Touch Review. The PIP Toolkit is accessible to all third parties to assist in the PIP application process. In addition, there is signposting for additional resources on [www.gov.uk/PIP](http://www.gov.uk/PIP). In the 2017 "Improving Lives: The Future of Health, Work and Disability" Command Paper, we committed to



reforming the WCA, and to working with external stakeholders to ensure that we get any future changes right.

From 1 April 2019 Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland are now delivering the Help to Claim service which supports claimants in making a new Universal Credit claim or moving from a legacy benefit to Universal Credit because of a change of circumstances. Help to Claim runs alongside the support that Jobcentres can provide and offers tailored, practical support to help people make their claim up to receiving their first full correct payment on time. It is widely available online, through a Freephone number and face to face through local Citizens Advice services. There is early evidence that the Help to Claim service is supporting those who most struggle to access DWP's services, particularly those with multiple complex needs and health conditions.

### ■ **Social Security Benefits: Forms**

**Paul Farrelly:** [\[277676\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent steps his Department has taken to simplify the forms used to claim benefits.

**Will Quince:**

The Department for Work and Pensions is committed to ensuring its claim forms are as simple and easy to use as possible. We have simplified over 180 forms in the last six months by making changes to the layout, style, wording and accessibility. We carry out usability testing on new and revised forms with claimants.

### ■ **Social Security Benefits: Medical Examinations**

**Paul Farrelly:** [\[277678\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether his Department plans to work with medical practitioners to improve the quality of medical evidence for benefits claimants.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

In response to the Work and Pensions Select Committee report on Personal Independence Payment and Employment and Support Allowance assessments, published on 14 February 2018, the Department is currently working with the Assessment Providers and external stakeholders, such as NHS England, to improve healthcare professionals' knowledge and understanding of medical evidence requirements for DWP benefits purposes.

### ■ **Unemployment**

**Ian Lavery:** [\[278511\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Transport on the effect of the price of commuting on unemployment.

**Will Quince:**

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions has not had any recent discussions with the Secretary of State for Transport on the effect of the price of commuting on unemployment.

■ **Universal Credit****Jessica Morden:**[\[278934\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the May 2019 High Court judgment, when she plans to deliver transitional and ongoing payments for people who have lost the Severe Disability Premium since moving onto universal credit.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

The transitional payments provisions for claimants previously entitled to the severe disability premium contained in the Universal Credit (Managed Migration and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2019 will come into force 24<sup>th</sup> July 2019. That means that we will be able to provide immediate support for these claimants who were entitled to the Severe Disability Premium on legacy benefits and who have already moved onto Universal Credit. These claimants will also be considered for backdated payments covering the time since they moved onto Universal Credit, as well as ongoing monthly payments that reflect any lost Severe Disability Premium. We will make these payments as quickly as possible.

**Stephen Twigg:**[\[279359\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment her Department has made of the implications for her Department's policies of the statement in the press release by Save the Children on 3 July 2019, that 30,000 families on universal credit face paying up to £800 in childcare costs this summer.

**Will Quince:**

The Department listens to a range of stakeholders and considers recommendations, such as those from Save the Children's recent report, that may improve support for our claimants. We have already improved Universal Credit's (UC) childcare support; for example, our Work Coaches are already providing increased support through the Flexible Support Fund to help eligible claimants who need help with paying upfront childcare costs, as well as allowing greater flexibility in when claimants can report their childcare costs.

As UC is paid as a single monthly amount directly into people's bank accounts, it helps families have control over their own budget and making the move into work easier. However, we recognise that childcare costs can affect parents' decisions to both obtain and maintain employment and we are committed to removing barriers that prevent parents moving into work.

Claimants are able to claim up to 85% of their childcare costs on UC, compared to 70% on the legacy system. This can be worth up to £13,000 a year for families with two children. The UC childcare policy aligns with the wider government childcare offer, which includes free childcare hours and tax free childcare and, during 2019/20,

a record amount of £6 billion is being spent on childcare support overall. This offer means that reasonable childcare costs should not form a barrier to work.

We are aware of the difficulty that some claimants might have in paying childcare costs over the summer holidays and our work coaches are able to discuss this with them and explain and promote both the UC childcare offer and the wider government childcare offer. In addition to this, budgeting advances are available for eligible claimants that can be used to cover the cost of paying additional upfront childcare cost or a deposit that might be needed during the school holidays.

## ■ Universal Credit: Disability

**Paul Farrelly:**

[\[277675\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of introducing a disability element to universal credit to replace disability premiums.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

Universal Credit does not replicate the premiums of the legacy benefits system, and this has allowed us to target additional support to a wider group of claimants, while streamlining the system. This was a conscious policy decision from the outset, and by doing this we have increased provision for the most severely disabled.

The Universal Credit rate for the most severely disabled people (the Limited Capability for Work and Work Related Activity addition) is more than double the equivalent rate for the Employment and Support Allowance support group.

The Limited Capability for Work and Work Related Activity addition is £336.20 a month compared to the Employment & Support Allowance Support Group rate of £167.05.

On Universal Credit, more people who are severely disabled will receive higher payments, with around 1 million disabled households gaining on average around £100 more per month on Universal Credit than on legacy benefits.

## ■ Universal Credit: Domestic Abuse

**Sarah Champion:**

[\[278515\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what information her Department collects on needs of claimants of universal credit that are survivors of domestic abuse.

**Will Quince:**

The Department is sensitive to the fact that it can be difficult for any victim of domestic abuse to come forward and disclose this. Universal Credit claimants are assigned to a single Work Coach, with whom they can build a trusting relationship. All of our work coaches have received mandatory training, developed with input from domestic abuse charities in order to help them recognise the signs of abuse. If it becomes apparent that a claimant has been, or is a victim of domestic abuse, as soon as they feel able to disclose this personal and sensitive information, a

discussion should take place about their circumstances to enable their work coach to tailor the support they provide to their needs. This includes signposting the claimant to expert organisations. Almost all Jobcentres have private rooms available so that individuals can discuss these sensitive issues in private.

With the permission of the claimant, their Work Coach is able to record the information they disclose, in a free text format, through the use of pinned notes, which supports staff in identifying and managing relevant experiences and circumstances of individual claimants.

**Sarah Champion:**

[\[278516\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what progress she has made on the development of universal credit management systems to enable the collation of the number of domestic violence easements.

**Will Quince:**

We are continuing to develop our approach to capture accurate, aggregate data on vulnerable claimants, including those who are victims of domestic and economic abuse. This work is ongoing and has been prioritised for the current Universal Credit development phase. This involves us meeting with claimants and expert users such as third parties and Work Coaches to see how people will respond to being asked about their circumstance and support they may require. We are also working on how we can use the Claimant Commitment to capture information about when easements have been applied for claimants.

We are also implementing other improvements across our service for victims and survivors of domestic abuse and in response to one of the Joint Committee's recommendations on the Domestic Abuse Bill, we have committed to review and evaluate the effectiveness of a new feature to encourage payments of UC to the main carer and the introduction of domestic abuse specialists in every Jobcentre.

## ■ Universal Credit: Northern Ireland

**Chris Ruane:**

[\[278916\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the merits of twice monthly universal credit payments in Northern Ireland.

**Alok Sharma:**

Social security matters are the responsibility of the Department for Communities in Northern Ireland. The Department for Communities therefore delivers Universal Credit with the support of DWP and its Universal Credit Programme. Mitigations agreed as part of the Fresh Start Agreement allow the Department for Communities to deliver UC differently from the way it is delivered in GB, and responsibility for evaluating the effectiveness of the mitigations package rests with them.

## MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

### EDUCATION

#### ■ Department for Education: Apprentices

Angela Rayner:

[226126]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of staff in his Department working on apprenticeship strategy, policy, and delivery are apprentices.

**An error has been identified in the written answer given on 4 March 2019. The correct answer should have been:**

**Anne Milton Nadhim Zahawi:**

The department currently employs 209 apprentices. This can be broken down into the following groups in the attached table, which also shows the proportion against the total number of employees.

Regarding the proportion of apprentices employed at the Institute for Apprenticeships, this is a matter for the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education. I have asked the Chief Executive, Sir Gerry Berragan, to write to the hon. Member for Ashton-under-Lyne and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

**The Education and Skills Funding Agency is responsible for apprenticeship strategy, policy and delivery and there are 317 employees in this division.**

Within the Education and Skills Funding Agency, 58 employees working on apprenticeships strategy, policy and delivery are apprentices, which represents 4.6% 2.5% of their workforce. the total of 317 employees.

**Attachments:**

1. [226124\\_226125\\_226126\\_table\\_of\\_apprentices\\_employed\\_by\\_the\\_Department\\_for\\_Education.doc](#)

#### ■ Institute for Apprenticeships: Apprentices

Angela Rayner:

[226125]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of staff at the Institute for Apprenticeships are apprentices.

**An error has been identified in the written answer given on 4 March 2019. The correct answer should have been:**

**Anne Milton Nadhim Zahawi:**

The department currently employs 209 apprentices. This can be broken down into the following groups in the attached table, which also shows the proportion against the total number of employees.

Regarding the proportion of apprentices employed at the Institute for Apprenticeships, this is a matter for the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical

Education. I have asked the Chief Executive, Sir Gerry Berragan, to write to the hon. Member for Ashton-under-Lyne and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Within the Education and Skills Funding Agency, 5 employees working on apprenticeships strategy, policy and delivery are apprentices, which represents 1.6% of the total of 317 employees.

**Attachments:**

1. [226124\\_226125\\_226126\\_table\\_of\\_apprentices\\_employed\\_by\\_the\\_Department\\_for\\_Education.doc](#)

## WRITTEN STATEMENTS

### BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

#### ■ Business Update

##### **Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Small Business, Consumers and Corporate Responsibility (Kelly Tolhurst):**

[\[HCWS1788\]](#)

The Good Work Plan sets out the Government's vision for the future of the UK labour market and how we will implement the Taylor Review recommendations. It forms an integral part of the modern Industrial Strategy and this Government's long-term plan to boost the productivity and earning power of people throughout the UK and to develop better jobs for all. We are now delivering the next phase of the Good Work Plan.

Flexibility has been a key factor behind the success of our labour market, but we are aware there are a small minority of employers who transfer too much risk to the individual, sometimes to the detriment of their financial security and personal wellbeing. The Taylor Review termed this 'one-sided flexibility'. The Low Pay Commission found that this was particularly relevant for low paid, vulnerable workers and has made recommendations to Government. We are committed to tackling the problem and on 19 July we launched a consultation with proposals to:

- provide a right to reasonable notice of working hours – with the aim to give workers more certainty about their shifts and work patterns so they can have more control over their working lives.
- provide workers with compensation for shifts cancelled without reasonable notice – The Low Pay Commission found that the practice of cancelling shifts at the last minute, sometimes on arrival at work or partway through a shift was not uncommon.

Earlier this year, the Government also consulted on measures to prevent the misuse of confidentiality clauses in cases of sexual harassment or discrimination in the workplace. This followed unacceptable cases of their misuse as evidenced in the media, inquiries by the Women and Equalities Select Committee and individuals' responses to our consultation. These cases highlighted the seriousness of abuse that has taken place and the impact this has had on the lives of individuals.

We have now published the Government Response and will be legislating on the proposals we consulted on, and in some cases going even further. For example, for the first time, no provision in an employment contract will be able to prevent someone from disclosing information to the police or to regulated health and care and legal professionals. The proposals will increase clarity on the limitations of confidentiality clauses, increase protections for vulnerable individuals and ensure employers use confidentiality clauses appropriately.

The Government also recently consulted on proposals to extend redundancy protections for pregnant women and new mothers returning to work. We have now published the Government Response to this consultation.

Any form of discrimination against pregnant women and new mothers is unacceptable and unlawful. Despite this, evidence from the Women and Equalities Select Committee, amongst others, suggests that new mothers are still being unfairly forced out of work. We are therefore taking action and are committing to extending the redundancy protection period that currently exists for pregnant women for a further six months once a new mother has returned to work. The Government response also looks at how we can increase awareness amongst pregnant women and new mothers of their maternity rights. As part of this the Government will establish a taskforce which will make recommendations on what improvements can be made to the information available to employers and families.

The reforms we have announced are the next important step in delivering on the Good Work Plan, ensuring we have a labour market that is fit for purpose. We recognise that the world of work is changing and are delivering the necessary reforms to ensure the UK labour market can adapt effectively, and support the needs of both workers and employers.

Copies of the referenced consultations and Government responses will be placed in the Libraries of the House and will be available electronically on the GOV.UK website.

## ■ Consumer Update

**Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Greg Clark):**  
[\[HCWS1794\]](#)

Last week, on Thursday 18 July, I gave a speech at the Social Market Foundation which considered three current challenges in relation to competition. The speech is available on the department's website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/competition-rules-must-continue-to-evolve-with-emergence-of-digital-platforms>.

First, reducing consumer harm caused by the "loyalty penalty" in sectors such as cash savings, mortgages, household insurance, mobile phone contracts and broadband. Second, addressing the new competition issues that are arising in digital markets, including in relation to the market power of large platforms. Third, harnessing the power of competition to raising the UK's productivity.

In conjunction with this speech, the Government last week brought forward publications relating to the role and performance of the UK's competition institutions. Together, these pave the way for further consideration of potential reforms to address the challenges identified.

### **Strategic Steer to the Competition and Markets Authority**

On Thursday 18 July, I published the Government's Strategic Steer to the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA). For each Parliament the Government issues a non-binding Strategic Steer to the CMA. The intention of the Steer is to support the CMA in achieving



its legal duties and objectives to promote competition, both within and outside the UK, for the benefit of consumers and the UK economy. The Steer provides a transparent statement of how the Government sees competition fitting with its wider objectives for the economy alongside the CMA's accountability framework.

### **Review of Aspects of Competition Law**

I also laid before Parliament on 18 July the review of aspects of the law on competition as required under sections 46 and 56 of the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013. The review considers the effectiveness of competition enforcement and changes made to the competition regime by the 2013 Act.

The review finds that the direction of travel is broadly positive. More competition cases are being opened, merger reviews and market studies are being brought to conclusion more quickly, and stakeholder views suggest a good degree of confidence in the regime.

The review notes that we need to consider how well-equipped the UK's competition framework is to respond to current and future competition challenges. In its upcoming Competition Green Paper, the Government will take a wide-ranging look at the institutions, powers and tools that promote and enforce competition in the UK.

### **Consultation on the Statutory Audit Services Market**

The Government has also published a consultation in response to the statutory audit services market study by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA).

We have a problem with audit quality, as has been recognised and analysed by Sir John Kingman's review, the BEIS Select Committee, the CMA and, more recently, the Financial Reporting Council itself. This is why it is right that we continuously review our audit regime to maintain the UK's world-leading position.

In October 2018, I asked Lord Tyrie, Chair of the CMA, to consider what can be done to improve competition in the statutory audit sector. I took this action because I want the UK to continue to benefit from a high quality, competitive and resilient audit services market. Good governance underpins our modern Industrial Strategy and audits are a vital contributor to the trust and confidence required in a modern economy.

The CMA's final report concluded that the statutory audit market has fallen short of what the UK needs in a modern economy, and made a series of compelling and wide-reaching recommendations to improve quality and increase choice in the audit market. I am most grateful to Lord Tyrie and his colleagues for their detailed and comprehensive study, which captures evidence and views from a wide variety of stakeholders. I share their concerns, and I am pleased that this study complements a wider body of work being undertaken to improve audit quality. Most importantly, we have endorsed Sir John Kingman's recommendation to replace the Financial Reporting Council with an independent statutory regulator with a new mandate and powers.

The government is committed to creating a fit-for-purpose and proportionate regulatory regime that delivers a competitive and resilient audit market that works for shareholders, investors and the wider public. I would welcome views on the CMA's final proposals. I would also strongly encourage proposals from the sector outlining what they believe

could be done to address the CMA's concerns on a voluntary basis ahead of regulatory intervention. The Government will then develop a full set of proposals for reform taking account of both the recommendations from the CMA and the outcome of Sir John Kingman's Review of the Financial Reporting Council. I do not believe that the government need wait on the outcome of Sir Donald Brydon's review of the purpose of audit before continuing with the process of reform of the audit market.

The consultation document will be placed in the Libraries of the House and is available on the Gov.UK website. The consultation is open for 8 weeks and I look forward to the continued contribution of interested parties.

## ■ Energy Update

### **Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Greg Clark):** [\[HCWS1789\]](#)

On 27 June, the UK became the first major economy in the world to legislate to reach net zero emissions by 2050.

Achieving this target will require significant changes in the way we produce, deliver and use energy. We will need to harness the power of innovation and new technology to ensure the energy system remains flexible and resilient. We will need to provide confidence to businesses across the country to invest in a greener future by maintaining clear and stable policy frameworks. We will also have to ensure that as we move to cut greenhouse gas emissions across the economy, the security of our energy supplies is never in doubt and energy costs are kept low for all households and businesses.

As we set out on the path to reach net zero emissions, the government is today outlining a series of important reforms across the energy system. These include new approaches to how low-carbon infrastructure is financed, potential changes to the retail energy market so it works better for all consumers, a new strategy for tackling fuel poverty and significant changes to the way we set the detailed rules that govern the energy system.

The action we are taking today is only a first step. Continuous action over the next three decades by successive governments will be required if we are to end the UK's contribution to global warming and inspire the necessary action at a global level.

The government has today published the following public consultations and reviews:

#### **Regulated Asset Base financing model for new nuclear projects**

The government committed in January 2019 to publish an assessment of the Regulated Asset Base model as a means of financing new nuclear projects. We are today publishing that assessment as part of a public consultation on the Regulated Asset Base model. The purpose of this consultation is to set out the basis for our assessment and to seek views from a range of interested parties on how it could be implemented within the current energy system in such a way that allows new nuclear to be built at low cost to consumers. The consultation includes a set of core principles that have resulted from our feasibility assessment and considers important issues such as the approach to risk-

sharing under such a model. This consultation will be open for responses until 14 October 2019.

### **Business models for Carbon Capture Usage and Storage (CCUS) projects**

As we committed to in the CCUS Action Plan, we are today publishing a consultation on how we can bring CCUS projects to market in the years ahead. This is an important step in order to meet our Action Plan commitment of delivering the UK's first CCUS project from the mid-2020s. The consultation seeks views on possible CCUS business models for industry, power, and carbon dioxide transport and storage, as well as a framework to support hydrogen production with CCUS. The consultation sets out the risks that are inherent in first of a kind CCUS projects, and the possible delivery and coordination challenges of deploying CCUS at scale. This consultation will be open for responses until 16 September 2019.

### **The re-use of oil and gas assets for Carbon Capture Usage and Storage (CCUS) projects**

This consultation fulfils the government commitment in the CCUS Action Plan to identify existing oil and gas infrastructure that has the potential for re-use and to develop a policy to support the development of CCUS in the UK. It seeks views on whether government should introduce a discretionary power for the Secretary of State to remove the decommissioning liability from previous oil and gas asset owners if assets are transferred to CCUS projects; and on changing guidance from the Oil and Gas Authority and government to encourage owners and operators of oil and gas assets to propose a period of suspension prior to decommissioning in circumstances in which there is a reasonable prospect of the asset being acquired by a CCUS project. This consultation will be open for responses until 16 September 2019.

### **Flexible and responsive energy retail markets**

The consultation is issued in partnership with Ofgem and sets out a vision for the future energy retail market, the key challenges which the government and Ofgem wish to address, and the outcomes the retail energy market needs to deliver for all consumers. This includes how the regulatory framework may need to change to facilitate the introduction of innovative products and services that may face barriers today and could support our transition to a greener future. The consultation assesses the case for making reforms which could remove market distortions so as to improve the functioning of the energy retail market as a dynamic and competitive sector. The consultation also outlines how the energy retail market can benefit all consumers, ensuring they are able to secure a fair deal and receive a good level of customer service. This consultation will be open for responses until 16 September 2019.

### **Reforming energy industry codes**

This consultation seeks to address the fact that the way the detailed rules governing the energy system are managed may be frustrating the shift towards a greener future. The consultation suggests creating a new function to translate the government's vision for the energy system into a strategic direction for codes, as well as giving code administrators

more power to change codes, ensuring that vision can be delivered. We propose creating a new process that allows for greater agility in how codes and code changes are governed. We also set out an approach that will ensure we can deliver rules that are clear, accessible and simpler. This consultation will be open for responses until 16 September 2019.

### **Fuel Poverty Strategy**

We are consulting on proposed reforms to the 2015 Fuel Poverty Strategy to ensure that the actions we are taking to support people out of fuel poverty are as effective as possible. This includes a potential change to the way that fuel poverty is measured to ensure that we are able to include all those living in fuel poverty. We also propose making changes to ensure that those most at risk from living in a cold home get the support they need by aligning our fuel poverty policies with medical evidence. We are also proposing a new principle which would ensure that policies contributing to the fuel poverty target are complementary to other government priorities such as the Clean Growth Strategy. This consultation will be open for responses until 16 September 2019.

### **Capacity Market five-year review and consultation on proposals for Capacity Market emissions limits**

We are today publishing a five-year review of the Capacity Market mechanism. This review has found that the scheme is working effectively and performance against the original objectives has been achieved. In considering the future of the scheme, we propose focusing on specific areas of the scheme that will need to change as we maintain security of electricity supply while also moving towards net zero emissions. One of the first steps we propose to take is to implement a restriction on the most polluting types of energy generation, such as coal, within the Capacity Market by introducing new carbon emissions limits. To implement these changes, we are today issuing a public consultation on carbon emission limits within the scheme. This consultation will be open for responses until 2 September 2019.

### **Facilitating energy efficiency in the electricity system**

Increasing our ambition on improving energy efficiency across the UK energy system will be vital if we are to reach net zero emissions. The Electricity Demand Reduction pilot evaluation we are publishing today has concluded that energy efficiency projects are not yet ready to enter the GB Capacity Market. We are therefore publishing a Call for Evidence on market barriers to energy efficiency, and how we can create new markets for energy efficiency and secure its role in the wider energy market. This includes considering how energy efficiency could help reduce the requirement for network reinforcement and help compliment the growth in distributed generation. This Call for Evidence will be open for responses until 25 September 2019.

### **Funding for advanced nuclear technologies**

In addition to the above consultations, we are today announcing that we are developing proposals to invest government money in the creation of innovative small modular reactors (SMRs) which are less expensive to build than traditional nuclear power plants.

As stated to this house on 17 January, we have received a proposal from a consortium of businesses, led by Rolls-Royce, who have proposed a significant joint investment of more than £500m focused on designing a first-of-a-kind SMR. The consortium expects to more than match any Government funding both by direct investment and by raising funds from third party organisations that wish to invest.

The government can today confirm that the Consortium's proposal has been accepted into Wave 3 of the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund. The Challenge is to design a working model that could be operational by the early 2030s. We are looking to make an initial award of up to £18m to the Rolls-Royce-led consortium in early Autumn 2019. This is subject to final decisions to invest, including business case and other approvals, and this consortium representing the best option for pursuing this technology. The Rolls-Royce led consortium believes this new technology could create 40,000 jobs at its peak and each power station could produce enough clean energy to power 750,000 homes.

This money is alongside up to £45 million to be invested in the second phase of the Advanced Modular Reactor programme, with project bids currently under consideration.

The Office for Nuclear Regulation and the Environment Agency plan shortly to publish their modernised guidance for developers of SMRs on their Generic Design Assessment, the process through which reactor designs are scrutinised by the regulators prior to further necessary regulatory steps, including site specific assessment and issuing of site licence and environmental permits, to enable subsequent deployment.

## ■ Government Chemist Review 2018

**Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation (Chris Skidmore):**

[\[HCWS1791\]](#)

The twenty-second Annual Review of the Government Chemist has been received. The Review will be placed in the Libraries of the House plus those of the Devolved Administrations in Wales and Northern Ireland. The Review will also be laid before the Scottish Parliament.

The Government Chemist is the Referee Analyst named in Acts of Parliament. The Government Chemist's team carry out analysis in high-profile or legally disputed cases. A diverse range of referee analysis work was carried out during 2018, which included pioneering work undertaken to detect mycotoxins in sultanas and Brazil nuts; pesticides in animal feed; formaldehyde in food contact materials and molecular biology approaches to support "consumer as analyst" devices for food testing.

**DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ **Media Matters****Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (Jeremy Wright):**[\[HCWS1798\]](#)

On 10 January 2019, News UK submitted an application to vary certain conditions put in place in 1981 by the then Secretary of State for Trade. The changes proposed by News UK would allow The Times and The Sunday Times to share journalistic resources, subject to the agreement of each newspaper's editor.

Having considered News UK's application and representations made following an Invitation to Comment issued by DCMS on 17 January, I announced, in a Written Ministerial Statement dated 11 April, that I was minded to accept News UK's application to vary the 1981 conditions. However, in considering the proposed new undertakings as a whole, I also noted that the existing governance arrangements lacked clarity and certainty over roles and responsibilities. Following discussions between News UK and Officials, News UK submitted revised undertakings which substantially meet my concerns.

On 27 June, as required by legislation, I issued a further consultation notice seeking views on the changes to News UK's revised undertakings. Two responses were received. Neither response raised any issues that would warrant me seeking further modifications to the Undertakings from News UK. Accordingly, I have today formally decided to accept the new Undertakings and have today issued a Notice of Acceptance. A copy of the Notice of Acceptance with the final signed undertakings and the revised articles of association of Times Newspapers Ltd (TNL) and Times Newspapers Holding Ltd (TNHL) will be published on the Government website. My Department will shortly publish in the Issues Note circulated to News UK prior to the discussions with Officials.

The new undertakings creates an explicit requirement for the CMA and the Secretary of State to monitor the effectiveness of the obligations placed on News UK and the TNHL Independent National Directors (INDs). As part of this, I can confirm that in line with the Government's commitments on the handling of media merger cases, that DCMS will publish a non-confidential version of the reports from the TNHL INDs which have to be submitted to DCMS and the CMA annually.

**EDUCATION**■ **Correction****The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families (Nadhim Zahawi):**[\[HCWS1801\]](#)

Information supplied by the HR Capability and Business Partnering Division of the Department for Education has been identified as containing incorrect facts in the response provided to two Parliamentary Questions from the Honourable Member for Ashton-under-Lyne concerning the number and proportion of staff employed in each group of the Department that are apprentices (PQ226124).

In response to PQ226124, the correct figures for the end of February 2019 are that the Department for Education employed 251 apprentices. These can be broken down as follows:

AREA	NO OF APPRENTICES	NO OF EMPLOYEES PER AREA	PROPORTION THAT ARE APPRENTICES
Early Years and School Group	40	1901	2%
Education and Skills Funding Agency	77	1543	5%
Government Equalities Office	0	103	0%
Higher and Further Education	9	501	2%
Operations Group	110	1740	6%
Social Care, Mobility and Equalities	15	677	2%
Legal Advisors Office	0	14	0%
	<b>251</b>	<b>6479</b>	<b>4%</b>

The Government Equalities Office is captured in Department for Education data because they were still employees of the Department for Education at the end of February. Legal Advisers Office remain departmental employees.

Following the identification of this issue, we have completed an audit of our database. A rigorous new process has been put in place to ensure the robustness of our data.

## ■ Higher Education Student Finance

**The Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation (Chris Skidmore):**

[\[HCWS1793\]](#)

I am announcing details of student finance arrangements for higher education students undertaking a course of study in the 2020/21 academic year starting on 1 August 2020.

Maximum tuition fees for the 2020/21 academic year in England will be maintained at the levels that apply in the 2019/20 academic year, the third year in succession that fees have been frozen. This means that the maximum level of tuition fees for a standard full-time course will remain at £9,250 for the 2020/21 academic year.

Maximum undergraduate loans for living costs will be increased by forecast inflation (2.9%) in 2020/21. And the same increase will apply to maximum disabled students' allowances for students with disabilities undertaking full-time and part-time undergraduate

courses in 2020/21. Maximum grants for students with child or adult dependants who are attending full-time undergraduate courses in 2020/21 will also increase by forecast inflation in 2020/21.

We are also increasing support for students undertaking postgraduate courses in 2020/21. Maximum loans for students starting master's degree and doctoral degree courses from 1 August 2020 onwards will be increased by forecast inflation (2.9%) in 2020/21. And the same increase will apply to the maximum disabled students' allowance for postgraduate students with disabilities in 2020/21.

Further details of the student support package for 2020/21 are set out in the attached document.

I expect to lay regulations implementing changes to student finance for undergraduates and postgraduates for 2020/21 late in 2019 or early in 2020. These regulations will be subject to Parliamentary scrutiny.

The Government will consider the recommendations of the independent panel to the Review of Post-18 Education and Funding, published on 30 May 2019, and will conclude the review at the Spending Review later this year.

### **Higher Education Student Finance for 2020/21**

#### ***1) Fees for full-time and part-time undergraduate students.***

Maximum fees for full-time and part-time undergraduate courses will remain at 2019/20 levels in 2020/21.

The maximum fee for standard full-time courses offered by Approved (Fee Cap) Providers with an Access and Participation Plan (APP) and a Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Award (TEF) will remain at £9,250 in 2020/21.

The maximum fee for full-time accelerated degree courses offered by Approved (Fee Cap) Providers with an APP and a TEF will remain at £11,100 in 2020/21.

The maximum fee for part-time courses offered by Approved (Fee Cap) Providers with an APP and a TEF will remain at £6,935 in 2020/21.

Lower maximum fees will remain at 2019/20 levels in 2020/21 for (i) courses offered by providers without an APP and/or a TEF and (ii) overseas study years, work placement years and short final years of full-time courses.

Students undertaking courses at Approved (Fee Cap) Providers will be able to apply for up-front tuition fee loans to meet the full costs of their tuition.

Maximum fees for undergraduate courses offered by Approved Providers are not capped. Students undertaking courses at Approved Providers will be able to apply for up-front tuition fee loans towards the costs of their tuition which will remain at 2019/20 levels in 2020/21: up to £6,165 for a standard full-time course; up to £7,400 for a full-time accelerated degree course and up to £4,625 for a part-time course.



**2) Living costs support for full-time undergraduate students.**

*Loans for living costs for new full-time students and continuing full-time students starting their courses on or after 1 August 2016.*

Maximum loans for living costs for new full-time students and eligible continuing full-time students starting their courses on or after 1 August 2016 will be increased by forecast inflation (2.9%) in 2020/21.

The maximum loan for living costs for 2020/21 will be £9,203 for students living away from home and studying outside London. The equivalent loan rate for students living away from home and studying in London will be £12,010; for those living in the parental home during their studies, £7,747; and for those studying overseas as part of their UK course, £10,539.

*Loans for living costs for new full-time students and continuing full-time students starting their courses on or after 1 August 2016 who are eligible for benefits.*

Maximum loans for living costs for new full-time students and eligible continuing full-time students starting their courses on or after 1 August 2016, and who are eligible for benefits, will be increased by forecast inflation (2.9%) in 2020/21.

The maximum loan for living costs for 2020/21 will be £10,490 for students who are eligible for benefits who are living away from home and studying outside London. The equivalent loan rate for students who are eligible for benefits who are living away from home and studying in London will be £13,098; for those living in the parental home during their studies, £9,140; and for those studying overseas as part of their UK course, £11,732.

*Loans for living costs for new full-time students and continuing full-time students starting their courses on or after 1 August 2016 who are aged 60 or over on the first day of the first academic year of their course.*

The maximum loan for living costs in 2020/21 for new full-time students and eligible continuing full-time students starting their courses on or after 1 August 2016 who are aged 60 or over on the first day of the first academic year of their course, will be increased by forecast inflation (2.9%) to £3,893.

*Maintenance grants and special support grants for full-time students who started their courses before 1 August 2016.*

The maximum maintenance grant and special support grant for eligible full-time students who started their courses on or after 1 September 2012 but before 1 August 2016, will be increased by forecast inflation (2.9%) to £3,801 in 2020/21.

The maximum maintenance grant and special support grant for eligible full-time students who started their courses before 1 September 2012 will be increased by forecast inflation (2.9%) to £3,489 in 2020/21.

*Loans for living costs for full-time students who started their courses before 1 August 2016.*

Maximum loans for living costs for eligible students who started their courses on or after 1 September 2012 but before 1 August 2016, will be increased by forecast inflation (2.9%) in 2020/21.

The maximum loan for living costs will be £6,597 for students who are living away from home and studying outside London. The equivalent loan rate for students living away from home and studying in London will be £9,205; for those living in the parental home during their studies, £5,247; and for those studying overseas as part of their UK course, £7,837.

*Loans for living costs for eligible students who started their courses before 1 September 2012.*

Maximum loans for living costs for eligible students who started their courses before 1 September 2012 will be increased by forecast inflation (2.9%) in 2020/21.

The maximum loan for living costs will be £5,938 for students who are living away from home and studying outside London. The equivalent loan rate for students living away from home and studying in London will be £8,309; for those living in the parental home during their studies, £4,604; and for those studying overseas as part of their UK course, £7,068.

*Long Courses Loans.*

Maximum long courses (living costs) loans for new and continuing students who are attending full-time courses that are longer than 30 weeks and 3 days during the academic year will be increased by forecast inflation (2.9%) in 2020/21.

### **3) Targeted support for undergraduate students with dependants and undergraduate students with disabilities.**

*Dependants' Grants.*

Maximum dependants' grants (adult dependants' grant, childcare grant and parents' learning allowance) will be increased by forecast inflation (2.9%) in 2020/21 for all new and continuing full-time undergraduate students.

The maximum adult dependants' grant will be increased to £3,094 in 2020/21.

The maximum childcare grant payable in 2020/21, which covers 85% of actual childcare costs up to a specified limit, will be increased to £174.22 per week for one child only and £298.69 per week for two or more children.

The maximum parents' learning allowance payable in 2020/21 will be increased to £1,766.

*Disabled Students' Allowances.*

Maximum grants for undergraduate students with disabilities will be increased by forecast inflation (2.9%) in 2020/21.

For a full-time course: to £23,258 for a non-medical personal helper, £5,849 for major items of specialist equipment and £1,954 for other disability related expenditure.

For a part-time course: to £17,443 for a non-medical personal helper, £5,849 for major items of specialist equipment and £1,465 for other disability related expenditure.

#### **4) Support for part-time undergraduate students.**

*Fee and course grants for students who started part-time courses before 1 September 2012.*

Maximum fee and course grants for students who started part-time courses before 1 September 2012 will be increased by forecast inflation (2.9%) in 2020/21. Maximum fee grants will be increased to £959, £1,150 or £1,442, depending on the intensity of study of the course. The maximum course grant will be increased to £314.

*Loans for living costs for new part-time students and continuing part-time students starting degree level courses on or after 1 August 2018.*

Maximum loans for living costs for new part-time students and continuing part-time students who started degree level courses on or after 1 August 2018 will be increased by forecast inflation (2.9%) in 2020/21.

The maximum loan for living costs for 2020/21 will be £9,203 for students living away from home and studying outside London. The equivalent loan rate for students living away from home and studying in London will be £12,010; for those living in the parental home during their studies, £7,747; and for those studying overseas as part of their UK course, £10,539.

Part-time students qualify for a proportion of the full-time loan for living costs depending on their intensity of study compared with a full-time course.

#### **5) Support for postgraduate students.**

*Loans for students undertaking postgraduate master's degree courses.*

Maximum loans for new students starting postgraduate master's degree courses in 2020/21 will be increased by forecast inflation (2.9%) to £11,222.

*Loans for students undertaking postgraduate doctoral degree courses.*

Maximum loans for new students starting postgraduate doctoral degree courses in 2020/21 will be increased by forecast inflation (2.9%) to £26,445.

*Disabled Students' Allowance.*

The maximum grant for postgraduate students with disabilities will be increased by forecast inflation (2.9%) to £20,580 in 2020/21.

More details of Higher Education student finance arrangements for the 2020/21 academic year will be published on Government websites in due course.

**HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE****■ Advancing our Health: Prevention in the 2020s**

**Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Public Health and Primary Care (Seema Kennedy):** [\[HCWS1795\]](#)

Further to the Prevention Vision published on 5 November 2018, I wish to inform the House of the publication of the green paper, Advancing our Health: Prevention in the 2020s. The consultation will launch today and will run for 12 weeks.

For the first 70 years of the NHS, we have been successful in helping people live longer. Life expectancy has increased by almost 30 years over the past century. Cancer survival rates are up, mortality rates from heart disease and stroke are down.

Despite this progress, over 20% of our lives are spent in poor health. On average, men born today can expect to live 16 years in poor health and women 19 years. There is also a clear social gradient, with people in deprived areas living shorter lives in poorer health. Now we must move from thinking about life span to health span: the number of years we can expect to live healthy, independent lives.

The NHS is already making good progress, placing prevention at the heart of its Long-Term Plan and supported by our record £20.5bn additional investment. In the years ahead, the challenge is to deliver on these commitments, to move from a national treatment service (focussed on illness) to a national wellness service (focussed on good health), and to work even more closely with local authorities who have specific responsibilities around prevention and influence many of the determinants of good health.

As well as modernising prevention services, we also need to lay the foundations for good health across society and make healthy choices easier. This is because less than a quarter of our health is shaped by the services we receive.

Our health is our greatest asset. Just as we save for our retirement, we should be investing in our health throughout life. We know that some people find this easier than others. Not because of innate differences in their values or beliefs, but because of differences in their experiences and circumstances. We believe that everybody has the right to a solid foundation on which to build their health. This means giving our children a good start and growing the conditions for good health throughout life.

When it comes to living a healthy life, the modern world presents many challenges. It can feel like the odds are stacked against us. This green paper is not about nannying but making healthier choices easier for people, so they are empowered to make decisions that are right for them and their families. To live a healthy, happier life, evidence suggests our focus should be on: eating a healthy diet, being physically active, being smoke-free and taking care of our mental health.

The commitments in the green paper help us towards our mission of healthy, happier lives. We aim to publish a government response by Spring 2020, setting out our proposals in more detail.

Health is a shared responsibility. Only by working together can we achieve our vision of healthier, happier lives for everyone.

## ■ Consultation on Pensions for NHS Clinicians

**Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (Matt Hancock):** [\[HCWS1799\]](#)

The NHS Pension Scheme is a generous and valuable part of the package of pay, terms and conditions for NHS staff, which continues to compare favourably with schemes in other sectors. However, the interaction between the NHS pension scheme and the tapered annual allowance means some clinicians are facing unintended consequences. The tapered allowance rightly aims to see more higher earners contributing towards the public purse by reducing the amount they can save into their pensions tax-free.

The Government has been listening to concerns about the impact on patient care as clinicians decline to take on additional work or seek early retirement in response to the prospect of incurring pension tax charges, and evidence that some NHS clinicians are changing their working patterns due to this issue. The Government is determined to find a solution that provides the right balance of incentives for clinicians to provide the services that patients need. Retaining and maximising the contribution of our highly-skilled clinical workforce is crucial to delivery of the ambitions for patient care set out in the Long-Term Plan for the NHS.

The Government has therefore launched a full public consultation setting out proposals to make the NHS Pension Scheme more flexible for clinicians, to give them more control over their pension growth and tax liabilities. Greater pension flexibility will help clinicians avoid cutting their hours, allow them to undertake additional shifts to reduce waiting lists, or take on further supervisory responsibilities.

The consultation proposes a 50:50 flexibility, which lets clinicians halve their pension contributions in exchange for halving the rate of pension growth, balancing simplicity with the need to offer flexibility. Following discussions with clinicians and employers, the consultation goes further and invites views on other measures that Government should consider.

For NHS Pension Scheme members who do incur annual allowance tax charges, the Scheme Pays facility offers an alternative to finding funds up front to meet any tax charges for saving into their pension whilst they work. Instead they can choose for the pension scheme to pay the tax charge. The pension scheme will then recoup the tax paid plus interest by deducting it from the value of their pension at retirement. The consultation proposes a potential improvement to the calculation of Scheme Pays deductions so that it is more transparent and staff can better assess the effect on their pension.

The consultation will listen to feedback on all potential ideas on pension flexibility before making changes in time for the new tax year.

**HOME OFFICE****■ Consultation on the introduction of statutory guidance to the police for firearms licensing**

**The Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service (Mr Nick Hurd):**  
[\[HCWS1792\]](#)

Today, I am publishing a public consultation on the introduction of statutory guidance to the police on firearms licensing. The proposed guidance aims to ensure that the highest standards of public safety are maintained in the firearms licensing process, improving consistency between police forces and in court when licensing decisions are appealed. It is being introduced following a recommendation made by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services in September 2015, which found that police forces were not always following the Home Office firearms guidance, resulting in inconsistent application of the law.

We have acted on this recommendation and the Policing and Crime Act 2017 made provision for the Home Secretary to issue statutory guidance to the police on their firearms licensing functions. The police will have a duty to have regard to the guidance, which will include existing safeguards relating to firearms ownership, such as police background checks or the criteria around applicants with a history of domestic violence.

The draft guidance in the consultation also contains new proposals on the arrangements for assessing the medical suitability of firearms applicants, following consideration of how the system is currently operating, and concerns raised about the variation in practice across the country. It is important that the arrangements support doctors in providing the necessary medical information to the police who have responsibility for firearms licensing, and that the police are able to require sight of the medical information before they proceed to grant the firearm certificate. I am seeking views on these arrangements from all those with an interest so that we can ensure the system operates as effectively as possible. It is vitally important to ensure that those in possession of firearms are medically fit, to safeguard the public and the firearm certificate holder themselves.

The consultation is seeking views from police forces, firearms owners and other interested parties and the wider public on the contents of the proposed statutory guidance. I am also consulting the National Police Chiefs' Council and the Chief Constable of Police Scotland, as required by the legislation. I will consider very carefully the views which are put forward during the consultation, which will last for a period of eight weeks, following which the Home Office will publish the new statutory guidance. I am committed to efficient and effective operation of the firearms licensing system, and once the statutory guidance has been in place for a suitable period, I intend to review the operation of the new medical arrangements to ensure they are working effectively.

Copies of the consultation along with the draft guidance and Impact Assessment will be made available on Gov.uk and will be placed in both Libraries of the House.

## ■ Immigration

**The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sajid Javid):** [\[HCWS1803\]](#)

I am today making an announcement on a number of issues related to immigration. These include an expansion of the Shortage Occupation List (SOL) in line with the recommendations of the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) and a planned future amendment in the Immigration Rules to Section 67 leave. I am also providing an update on the Home Office's response to cheating in English language tests and the Border, Immigration and Citizenship System (BICS) independent review.

### **Migration Advisory Committee review of the Shortage Occupation List**

On 29 May, the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) published the outcome of its full review of the Shortage Occupation List (SOL). I am very grateful to the MAC for a very thorough and comprehensive piece of work. The MAC recommended a number of changes to the main UK-wide SOL, expanding the list to cover a range of high-skilled occupations, including a number of health and social care, engineering and digital technology occupations.

The Government is happy to accept all of the MAC's recommendations on the composition of the SOL and the necessary amendments will be made in the Autumn Immigration Rules changes.

The MAC also suggested that, in order to combat the particular challenges faced by some remote communities, the Government should pilot a scheme that facilitated migration to these areas. The Government accepts that this is an idea worth pursuing. Further details will be given in due course.

### **Section 67 Leave**

In June 2018, we introduced section 67 leave to fulfil our legal obligation to those children transferred to the UK under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016. This ensures that those unaccompanied children transferred to the United Kingdom under section 67, and who do not qualify for refugee status or humanitarian protection, are able to remain in this country and build a life here. This form of leave allows them to study, work, access public funds and healthcare, and is a route to settlement which they would not ordinarily have had.

Currently, the Immigration Rules only provide for section 67 leave to be granted to those who have already had an application for refugee status or humanitarian protection refused. This means that upon arrival in the United Kingdom, the child is required to go through the process of claiming asylum, including providing an account of why they fled their country of origin.

We intend to amend the existing Rules to allow those transferring under section 67 to receive this form of leave immediately, as soon as they arrive. This will provide the children, and the local authorities who will care for them, with additional reassurance and guarantee their status in the UK at the earliest opportunity.

Children who have already been transferred to the UK under section 67 and are currently having their asylum claims assessed will also be entitled to section 67 leave automatically once this amendment has been made. Children granted section 67 leave on arrival will still have the opportunity to claim asylum. Should they be successful in an asylum claim, those who qualify will receive refugee or humanitarian protection status.

The Government is absolutely committed to transferring the specified number of 480 unaccompanied children under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016 as soon as possible.

### **The Home Office's response to cheating in English language tests**

Five years ago, the scale of this issue was uncovered by Panorama. Their footage revealed systematic cheating in test centres run on behalf of the company ETS. Further investigation showed just how widespread this fraud was. 25 people who were involved have been convicted and sentenced to over 70 years in prison. Further criminal investigations are ongoing, with a further 14 due in court next month.

Our approach to taking action on students has been endorsed by the courts, who have consistently found the evidence the Home Office had was enough to prompt the action that was taken at the time.

Despite this, there have remained concerns that some people who did not cheat may have been caught up and I am aware that some people found it hard to challenge the accusations against them. So earlier this year, I commissioned officials for advice.

This is a complex matter given that we need to work within existing legal frameworks relating to appeal rights, judicial review and administrative review.

I have therefore asked officials to review our guidance to ensure that we are taking the right decisions on these cases to ensure we are properly balancing a belief that deception was committed some years ago against other factors that would normally lead to leave being granted, especially where children are involved. We will update operational guidance to ensure no further action is taken in cases where there is no evidence an ETS certificate was used in an immigration application.

We continue to look at other options, including whether there is a need for those who feel they have been wronged to be able to ask for their case to be reviewed. We intend to make further announcements about this and will update the House in due course.

### **Review of the Border, Immigration and Citizenship System**

In October 2018, I committed to conducting a review of the Border, Immigration and Citizenship System (BICS). The purpose of this review will be to ensure the BICS is ready and able to deliver a world class immigration system.

The review will focus on whether the BICS has in place the right systems, structures, accountability and working practices to deliver against its goals. It will be forward looking in its nature. It will not consider individual policies or goals, but rather whether the system has the right capabilities to deliver against those stated objectives.



I am pleased to announce today that I have appointed Kate Lampard CBE to lead the review. Kate has previously held senior non-executive roles in the NHS, chaired the Financial Ombudsman Service, and has undertaken important reviews for Government. She has a wealth of skills and experience to bring to this critically important task.

I will place a copy of the terms of reference for the review in the Libraries of both Houses. The review will aim to complete by early 2020.

## ■ **Revision of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 ('PACE') Codes of Practice C and H**

**The Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service (Mr Nick Hurd):**

[\[HCWS1796\]](#)

I am today laying before the House an order under section 67(7A) of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 ('PACE') to amend PACE Codes C and H, which govern the detention, treatment and questioning of suspects by the police. Copies of the revised Codes C and H will also be laid.

These revisions, which will come into operation on 21 August 2019, are being introduced to ensure that the menstrual needs of female and transgender detainees, and the health, hygiene and welfare needs of all individuals in police custody are protected. The new codes include the following revisions:

- Each female detainee must be asked if they require or are likely to require any menstrual products whilst they are in custody. They must be told that they will be provided free of charge and that replacement products are available
- Custody officers must ask all detainees if they wish to speak in private with a member of custody staff about any matter concerning their personal needs relating to health, hygiene and welfare; if the detainee wishes, this member of staff may be of the same sex. These changes provide an opportunity for female detainees to raise issues about their menstrual needs and also for all detainees to raise issues relating to other health and hygiene needs such as products that may be required for incontinence. If detainees wish to take this opportunity to raise health and hygiene needs, necessary arrangements should be provided/made as soon as practicable.
- The changes highlight that the clothing and personal effects that detainees may retain include menstrual and other health, hygiene and welfare products. A decision to withhold any such products must be subject to a further specific risk assessment.
- Access to toilet and washing facilities must now also take account of the detainee's dignity. For example, in cells subject to CCTV monitoring, privacy in the toilet area should be ensured by any appropriate means and detainees should be made aware of this when they are placed in the cell.
- The changes make it explicit that strip searches and intimate searches of detainees must take due regard of their dignity. This includes the detainee's health, hygiene and welfare needs including menstruation.

- The above provisions around health, hygiene and welfare products take into account the possible needs of transgender individuals.

These revisions were prompted by concerns raised by the Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA) that in some cases women were being left without basic menstrual products in police cells.

They received overwhelming support following a public consultation last year, and we have subsequently sought and secured the agreement of my Rt Hon Friend the member for Normanton, Pontefract and Castleford, in her role as Chair of the Home Affairs Select Committee, that these straightforward revisions to the Codes can be brought into force as soon as possible, as per the commitments made by the then government during the introduction of section 67(7A) of PACE in 2003, without the approval of a resolution by each House.

I am grateful for the work and support of partners across the policing system, ICVA, and dedicated custody staff across the country. We all share a commitment to ensuring the dignity of detainees, and these changes will help ensure the needs of individuals are met across the board.

## ■ Terrorism

**The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sajid Javid):** [\[HCWS1797\]](#)

I am today announcing changes to the terrorism threat level system. As recommended in the Operational Improvement Review, the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre have taken an increased role in assessing all forms of terrorism, irrespective of the ideology that inspires them.

The national threat level system will now take account of the assessments from all forms of terrorism, including Islamist, Northern Ireland, and extreme right-wing. The threat from Northern Ireland-related terrorism in Northern Ireland will remain separate from the national threat level.

Also, to ensure clarity in the threat level system, I am also announcing the change in definition of the LOW, SUBSTANTIAL and CRITICAL threat levels. The threat levels will now be defined as below:

- CRITICAL meaning an attack is highly likely in the near future
- SEVERE meaning an attack is highly likely
- SUBSTANTIAL meaning an attack is likely
- MODERATE meaning an attack is possible but not likely
- LOW meaning an attack is highly unlikely

The changes made today do not affect the current threat level. The threat level to the UK from terrorism remains at SEVERE, and the threat level to Northern Ireland from Northern Ireland-related terrorism also remains at SEVERE, meaning that an attack is highly likely.

Threat levels are designed to give a broad indication of the likelihood of a terrorist attack. They are a tool for security practitioners working across different sectors and the police to use in determining what protective security response may be required. They also keep the public informed and give context to the protective security measures which we all encounter in our daily lives.

There remains a real and serious threat against the United Kingdom from terrorism and I would ask the public to remain vigilant and to report any suspicious activity to the police regardless of the threat level.

The decision to change the terrorism threat levels are taken by taken by the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre independent from Ministers. The Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre set the national threat level and the Security Service set the Northern Ireland-related Terrorism in Northern Ireland threat level. These are based on the very latest intelligence, considering factors such as capability, intent and timescale. Threat levels are kept under constant review.

## HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### ■ Local government update

**The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (James Brokenshire):** [\[HCWS1790\]](#)

In my written statement of 1 November 2018 (HCWS 1058) to the House, I committed to set out in due course the specific circumstances in which I would be prepared to issue a formal invitation to councils under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, to submit proposals for the establishment of new unitary councils.

Today I am confirming the circumstances in which I would be prepared to issue such an invitation; how I intend to assess any unitary proposals councils make in response; and our continued approach to any proposals two or more district councils may make to merge in order to form a new larger district council.

Locally-led changes to the structure of local government, whether in the form of unitarisation or district mergers, can – with local support – be an appropriate means of ensuring more sustainable local government and local service delivery, enhanced local accountability, and empowered local communities. This statement today continues the Government's commitment to supporting those councils that wish to combine, to serve their communities better and will consider unitarisation and mergers between councils when locally requested.

However, I recognise that unitarisation may not be appropriate everywhere. I also recognise that it is essential that any local government restructuring should be on the basis of locally led proposals and should not involve top-down Whitehall solutions being imposed on areas. The Government does not support top-down unitary restructuring. This has been the Government's consistent approach since 2010.

Today, I want to provide further clarity for those councils who might consider the possibility of restructuring, by setting out the factors councils should consider and the processes to be followed – including with regard to local support.

For councils wishing to restructure to form unitary local government, the first step of the statutory process as set out under the 2007 Act is for me to issue an invitation to councils

to submit proposals. There are two circumstances in which I will consider issuing such an invitation.

The first circumstance is where the following two conditions are met:

1. There is a local request for an invitation.
2. That I consider that the request demonstrates local opinion is coalescing around a single option which is reasonably likely to meet the existing publicly announced criteria for unitarisation.

In forming my view I would carefully consider the request, including the groups making and supporting it and their reasons for so doing. Where I issue an invitation, I would do so to all those councils that I consider to have regard to the area concerned, whether or not they were among those who had made the original request.

The second circumstance is where I consider that doing so would be appropriate given the specific circumstances of the area, including in relation to the long-term sustainability of local services. This is the situation in which my predecessor, the Rt Hon Member for Bromsgrove (Sajid Javid), issued an invitation to the councils in Northamptonshire.

Following such an invitation, it would be for the councils concerned to decide whether to develop and submit proposals for unitarisation, either individually or jointly by two or more councils.

I confirm that I will assess any locally-led unitary proposal that I receive against the criteria for unitarisation which we announced to Parliament in 2017 and which I and my predecessor have consistently used since then. These criteria state that subject to Parliamentary approval a proposal can be implemented, with or without modification, if I conclude that across the area as a whole the proposal is likely to:

- improve the area's local government;
- command a good deal of local support across the area; and
- cover an area that provides a credible geography for the proposed new structures, including that any new unitary council's population would be expected to be in excess of 300,000.

On district council mergers, I confirm that where two or more district councils submit a proposal to merge, I will assess this against the criteria for mergers which we announced to Parliament in November 2017 and which we have used since then. The statutory process for such mergers does not involve my inviting proposals, and I recognise that particularly small district councils may wish to propose merging as a natural next step following a number of years of successful joint working, sharing of services and senior management teams.

The criteria for district council mergers are that, subject to Parliamentary approval, a proposal to merge would be implemented if I had reached a judgement in the round that if so implemented it would be likely to:

- improve the area's local government;

- command local support, in particular that the merger is proposed by all councils which are to be merged and there is evidence of a good deal of local support; and
- the area is a credible geography, consisting of two or more existing local government areas that are adjacent, and which, if established, would not pose an obstacle to locally-led proposals for authorities to combine to serve their communities better and would facilitate joint working between local authorities.

This statement is intended to provide clarity to councils and communities and help ensure that time and effort are not wasted on pursuing proposals which are unlikely to get the go ahead. It is important that those seeking to pursue locally led proposals are confident that there is a broad basis of common local support for the proposals to avoid unnecessary local conflict and distraction from the delivery of quality public services. The statement underlines the need for any proposals to be innovative, improve services, enhance accountability, have local support and deliver financial sustainability if they are to be taken forward.

Moreover, restructuring is only one of the different ways that councils can move forward. Joint working with other councils and partners could also be an appropriate and sustainable way forward. Such joint working can take a variety of forms ranging from adopting joint plans, setting up joint committees, and sharing back office services, to establishing Combined Authorities, and may extend across county boundaries. Those in an area will know what is best – the very essence of localism to which the Government remains committed.

## JUSTICE

### ■ Appointment to the Prison Service Pay Review Body

**The Minister of State for Justice (Robert Buckland):**

[\[HCWS1800\]](#)

I am pleased to announce that the Prime Minister has appointed Tim Flesher CB as Chair of the Prison Service Pay Review Body. This appointment is for three years, with Mr Flesher's term commencing on 1 August 2019 and ending on 31 July 2022. This appointment has been made in accordance with the Governance Code on Public Appointments.

## TRANSPORT

### ■ Annual Update on Crossrail 2019

**Secretary of State for Transport (Chris Grayling):**

[\[HCWS1802\]](#)

It has been a challenging year for the Crossrail project. Since August 2018 when Crossrail Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of Transport for London (TfL), announced that the opening of the Elizabeth line through central London would be delayed, the project has been fully reviewed and reset.

Crossrail Ltd, TfL and the Department for Transport (DfT) have taken significant action in response to issues raised in the independent reviews by KPMG, as well as the reports from the National Audit Office, the Public Accounts Committee and the London Assembly's Transport Committee. Lessons have been learned and Crossrail Ltd and both project Sponsors, DfT and TfL, remain fully committed to the completion of the project which will transform London rail transport, and carry around 200 million passengers per year.

Actions taken this year have included:

- The commissioning and completion of two wide ranging and detailed independent reviews into the project's governance, commercial and financial agreements with all recommendations acted upon by June 2019.
- The agreement in December 2018 to an additional £2.15bn financing package to deliver the final stages of the project in a way that is fair to the UK taxpayer.
- The appointment of a new executive leadership team within Crossrail Ltd, a review of the organisational structure to ensure maximum efficiency, and the strengthening of the Crossrail Board to ensure the right skills are in place right across the organisation and its Board.
- The announcement in April 2019 of a revised schedule which confirmed a six month window for delivery of the central tunnel section between Abbey Wood and Paddington (not including Bond Street), with a mid-point in December 2020, with more certainty to follow as testing progresses.
- The publication in April 2019 of a joint report by the Department for Transport and the Infrastructure Projects Authority (IPA) on lessons learned from the sponsorship of major projects including Crossrail.

Despite the challenges, the project has seen some key achievements during this year. Main dynamic testing of the trains commenced in January, and Crossrail Ltd recently achieved a further milestone with the commencement of close-headway testing of multiple trains in June.

Fifteen new Class 345 trains are in operation on the eastern and western parts of the route, building reliability and achieving a high standard of performance. Testing of the trains in the Heathrow tunnels is continuing and a TfL Rail service between Paddington and Reading is planned to commence in December of this year. This will be another important stepping stone to the opening of the full railway as soon as possible after the central section is completed.

The Network Rail (NR) On Network works on the eastern and western sections of the Crossrail route are well advanced. Over the past year, work completed has included the installation of the steelwork for new accessible footbridges, stairs and lift shafts at Ealing Broadway, West Ealing and Acton Main Line. The contracts to build and upgrade six ticket halls between Acton Main Line and West Drayton have been awarded, and the new ticket halls at Forest Gate and Gidea Park have now opened to the public.

Updated costings for Network Rail's programme show that the costs are now forecast at around £2.8bn. The additional costs are the result of some work taking longer than planned and have been managed by Network Rail from within its own internal budgets. No further funding has been provided from Government, and this has not had an impact on any other programmes.

Further details on Crossrail Limited's funding and finances in the period to 29 May 2019 are set out in the table below.

The coming months will be critical for the project as Crossrail Ltd work to complete the installation and integration of the tunnel, stations and signalling systems, and Network Rail continue their works on surface sections of the route. It remains a hugely complex project and uncertainty and risk remains across the programme, with significant testing and integration work remaining. The new leadership team has committed to being fully open and transparent as it works through the final stages of the project, which is supported by the Department and TfL. However, it is positive that Crossrail Ltd now has a new plan in place to complete the outstanding works and bring the Elizabeth line into passenger service at the earliest possible date. When complete, the Elizabeth line will transform the rail network in London, reducing overcrowding and increasing central London rail capacity by 10%.

During the passage of the Crossrail Bill through Parliament, a commitment was given that an annual statement would be published until the completion of the construction of Crossrail, setting out information about the project's funding and finances. The relevant information is as follows:

TOTAL FUNDING AMOUNTS PROVIDED TO CROSSRAIL LIMITED BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT AND TFL IN RELATION TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF CROSSRAIL TO THE END OF THE PERIOD (22 JULY 2008 TO 29 MAY 2019)	£ 13,165,913,790
---	------------------

---

Expenditure incurred (including committed land and property spend not yet paid out) by Crossrail Limited in relation to the construction of Crossrail in the period (30 May 2018 to 29 May 2019) (excluding recoverable VAT on Land and Property purchases)	£ 1,481,243,170
--	-----------------

Total expenditure incurred (including committed land and property spend not yet paid out) by Crossrail Limited in relation to the construction of Crossrail to the end of the period (22 July 2008 to 29 May 2019) (excluding recoverable VAT on Land and Property purchases)	£ 13,958,459,007
---	------------------

TOTAL FUNDING AMOUNTS PROVIDED TO  
CROSSRAIL LIMITED BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR  
TRANSPORT AND TfL IN RELATION TO THE  
CONSTRUCTION OF CROSSRAIL TO THE END OF  
THE PERIOD (22 JULY 2008 TO 29 MAY 2019) £ 13,165,913,790

---

The amounts realised by the disposal of any land or property for the purposes of the construction of Crossrail by the Secretary of State, TfL or Crossrail Limited in the period covered by the statement. £ 143,778,674

The numbers above are drawn from Crossrail Limited's books of account and have been prepared on a consistent basis with the update provided last year. The figure for expenditure incurred includes monies already paid out in relevant period, including committed land and property expenditure where this has not yet been paid. It does not include future expenditure on contracts that have been awarded.