



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 26 October 2021 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:42 P.M., 26 October 2021). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

CONTENTS

ANSWERS	8		
BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY	8		
■ Animal Experiments	8	■ Geothermal Power: Carbon Emissions	15
■ Buildings: Environment Protection	8	■ Geothermal Power: Mining	15
■ Carbon Capture and Storage	9	■ Green Homes Grant Scheme	16
■ Carbon Capture and Storage: Capital Investment	9	■ Heating: Finance	17
■ Carbon Capture and Storage: Employment	10	■ Heating: Housing	17
■ Carbon Capture and Storage: Exports	10	■ Hitachi: Wylfa Power Station	18
■ Carbon Emissions	11	■ Housing: Insulation	18
■ Cars: Fuels	11	■ Hydrogen: Employment	18
■ Climate Change	12	■ Nuclear Power Stations: Regional Planning and Development	19
■ Climate Change: Scholarships	12	■ Nuclear Power Stations: Somerton and Frome	19
■ Coronavirus: Vaccination	12	■ Nuclear Power: National Security	20
■ Energy: Costs	13	■ Offshore Industry: Employment	20
■ Environment Protection: Foreign Investment in UK	13	■ Offshore Industry: North Sea	20
■ Fuel Oil: Greenhouse Gas Emissions	13	■ Oil: North Sea	21
■ Fuel Oil: Vegetable Oils	14	■ Private Sector: Recruitment	21
■ Fuel Poverty	15	■ Property: Ownership	22
		■ Renewable Energy: Feed-in Tariffs	22
		■ Renewable Energy: Finance	22

■ Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme	23	■ Exercise and Obesity	38
■ Serum Institute of India: Coronavirus	23	■ Football: World Cup	39
■ Small Businesses: Carbon Emissions	24	■ Horticulture	39
■ Smart Data Communications Company: Standards	26	■ Museums and Galleries: Telephone Services	40
■ Toys and Games: Internet	26	■ Public Lending Right: Wales	40
■ Toys and Games: Safety	27	EDUCATION	41
■ Trading Standards	28	■ Apprentices and Training	41
■ Trading Standards Scotland	28	■ Children: Disability	41
■ Trading Standards: Finance	29	■ Education: Business	41
■ Training: Carbon Emissions	29	■ Education: Males	42
■ Utilities: Licensing	30	■ Family Hubs	43
■ Warm Home Discount Scheme	30	■ National Tutoring Programme: Stockport	43
■ Wind Power	31	■ Post-18 Education and Funding Review	44
■ Wylfa Power Station	31	■ Pupil Exclusions	44
■ Wylfa Power Station: Ynys Mon	31	■ Pupils: Absenteeism	44
CABINET OFFICE	32	■ School Leaving: Special Educational Needs	45
■ National Income: Per Capita Costs	32	■ Special Educational Needs	46
■ Taxation: Scotland	33	■ Students: Finance	46
DEFENCE	34	■ Students: Loans	47
■ Armed Forces: Young People	34	ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS	47
■ Military Aid: Scottish Ambulance Services	35	■ Air Pollution	47
■ Veterans: Radiation Exposure	35	■ Chelsea Flower Show: Carbon Emissions	48
DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT	36	■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Flags	48
■ Alcoholic Drinks: Advertising	36	■ Environment Protection: Employment	49
■ Broadband: Banff and Buchan	36	■ Farms	50
■ Channel Four Television	37	■ Fishing Catches	50
■ Channel Four Television: Privatisation	37	■ Fishing Vessels: Marine Environment	51

■ Forestry: Finance	51	■ Kashmir: Human Rights	63
■ Recycling	52	■ Livestock: Environment Protection	64
■ River Wye: Pollution	52	■ Members: Correspondence	64
■ Seasonal Workers: Pilot Schemes	53	■ Nigeria: Christianity	65
■ Sewage: Water Treatment	54	■ Overseas Aid	65
■ Shellfish: Conservation	54	■ Racial Discrimination: UN Resolutions	66
■ Textiles: Waste Disposal	54	■ School Meals	66
■ UK Trade with EU: Northern Ireland	55	■ Somalia: Police	67
■ Washing Machines: Microplastics	55	■ Syria: Interpol	67
■ Water: Conservation	56	■ Travel: Coronavirus	68
FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE	56	■ Yemen: Food Aid	68
■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]	56	■ Yemen: Malnutrition	68
■ Abduljalil Abdulla al-Singace	57	HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	69
■ Afghanistan: Overseas Aid	57	■ Accident and Emergency Departments: Surgery	69
■ Afghanistan: Refugees	58	■ Ambulance Services: Greater London	69
■ Afghanistan: Taliban	58	■ Autism and Learning Disability: Mental Health Services	70
■ Armed Conflict: Civilians	58	■ Brain: Tumours	70
■ AUKUS: Disclosure of Information	59	■ Cancer	71
■ Colombia: Environment Protection	60	■ Cancer: Health Education	71
■ Conferences: United Nations	61	■ Cancer: Health Services	71
■ Democratic Republic of Congo: Rainforests	61	■ Carers: Qualifications	72
■ Democratic Republic of Congo: Tree Felling	62	■ Chemotherapy and Radiotherapy: Finance	72
■ Developing Countries: Climate Change	62	■ Continuing Care	72
■ Developing Countries: HIV Infection	63	■ Coronavirus: Contact Tracing	73
■ Education: Females	63	■ Coronavirus: Protective Clothing	73
		■ Coronavirus: Vaccination	74
		■ Coronavirus: Vitamin D	75
		■ Counselling: Young People	75

■ Dementia	76	■ Mental Health Services: Children and Young People	86
■ Dental Services: Children	76	■ Mental Health Services: Out of Area Treatment	86
■ Dental Services: Internet	76	■ Mental Health Services: Schools	87
■ Department of Health and Social Care: Departmental Responsibilities	77	■ Mental Health Services: Waiting Lists	87
■ Disability: Children	77	■ Motor Neurone Disease: Research	88
■ Eating Disorders: Mental Health Services	77	■ NHS	88
■ Elective Recovery Fund	78	■ NHS and Social Services: Staff	89
■ Fibrodysplasia Ossificans Progressiva	78	■ NHS: Negligence	89
■ Fibrodysplasia Ossificans Progressiva: Research	78	■ NHS: Pensions	90
■ Food: Advertising	79	■ Parkinson's Disease: Mental Health Services	90
■ General Practitioners	79	■ Polycystic Ovary Syndrome	91
■ Genito-urinary Medicine	80	■ Public Health: Leeds	91
■ Global FOP Awareness Day	80	■ Rare Cancers	92
■ Gynaecology	80	■ Self-harm and Suicide	92
■ Health Services: Waiting Lists	80	■ Shoulder Replacements	92
■ Heart Diseases: Health Services	81	■ Social Services: Conditions of Employment and Pay	93
■ Home Care Services	81	■ Social Services: Fees and Charges	93
■ Hospices: Coronavirus	82	■ Social Services: Reform	93
■ Hospitals: Coronavirus	82	■ Terminal Illnesses: Social Services	94
■ Hospitals: Shropshire	82	■ Tonsils: Surgery	95
■ Infant Mortality: Ethnic Groups	83	■ Trodelvy	95
■ Joint Replacements: Waiting Lists	83	■ Urology: Nurses	95
■ Kidney Diseases: Health Services	83	■ WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control	95
■ Long Covid: Health Services	84	■ World Health Organization	96
■ Members: Correspondence	84		
■ Mental Health Services	85		
■ Mental Health Services: Children	85		

■ Yorkshire Ambulance Service		■ Prisons: Drugs	113
NHS Trust: Complaints	96	■ Probate	113
HOME OFFICE	96	■ Reoffenders	114
■ Afghanistan	96	■ Reparation by Offenders	114
■ Asylum: Standards	97	■ Sexual Offences: Convictions	115
■ Carers: Migrant Workers	97	■ Stoke Heath Prison: Education and Training	116
■ Crimes of Violence: Females	98	■ Wakefield Prison: Psychiatry	116
■ Extradition	99	■ Wealstun Prison: Food Allowances	117
■ Fire and Rescue Services: Aircraft	99	LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES	117
■ Firearms: Licensing	100	■ Affordable Housing: Construction	117
■ Fraud	100	■ Building Safety Fund	118
■ Immigration: EU Nationals	101	■ Building Safety Fund: West Midlands	118
■ Prevent Review	102	■ Community Care: Autism and Learning Disability	119
■ Refugees: Afghanistan	102	■ Community Development	119
■ Sexual Offences: Criminal Investigation	105	■ Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities: Local Government	120
■ UK Border Force: Staff	106	■ Horticulture	120
■ Visas: Married People	107	■ Housing First	121
INTERNATIONAL TRADE	107	■ Housing: Ilford	121
■ Department for International Trade: Public Expenditure	107	■ Leasehold: Reform	122
■ Mubadala	108	■ Listed Buildings: Energy Performance Certificates	123
JUSTICE	108	■ Local Government Finance	123
■ Compulsorily Detained Psychiatric Patients	108	■ Local Government: Carbon Emissions	123
■ Crime	108	■ Local Government: Coronavirus	124
■ Legal Aid Scheme: Family Law	109	■ Local Government: Meetings	124
■ Low Newton Prison: Vocational Education	109		
■ Prisoners' Transfers: Property	110		
■ Prisoners: Crime	110		
■ Prisoners: Obesity	110		
■ Prisoners: Pregnancy	111		
■ Prisoners: Self-harm	113		

■ Local Government: Planning Permission	125	■ Railways: Diesel Fuel	135
■ National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service: Costs	125	■ Railways: Electrification	136
■ Property: Auctions	125	■ Railways: Freight	136
■ Rented Housing: Pets	126	■ Railways: Greater Manchester	136
■ Social Rented Housing: Construction	126	■ Railways: Pay	137
■ Temporary Accommodation: Bethnal Green and Bow	127	■ Railways: Weather	137
■ Voting Methods: Visual Impairment	127	■ Roads: Snow and Ice	138
NORTHERN IRELAND	128	■ Shipping: Carbon Emissions	138
■ Coronavirus: Vaccination	128	■ Shipping: Exhaust Emissions	141
■ UK Shared Prosperity Fund	128	■ South Eastern Rail Franchise	141
TRANSPORT	129	■ Taxis: Government Assistance	142
■ Cars	129	■ Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern Rail Franchise	142
■ Civil Aviation Authority: Environment Protection	129	■ Travel Restrictions: Colombia	143
■ Cycling: Older People	130	TREASURY	143
■ Driving Licences	130	■ Beer: Excise Duties	143
■ Electric Vehicles: Charging Points	131	■ Defibrillators: VAT	144
■ High Speed 2 Railway Line	132	■ Electronic Cigarettes: Excise Duties	144
■ Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Recruitment	132	■ Inheritance Tax	145
■ Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Vacancies	133	■ Members: Correspondence	145
■ Large Goods Vehicles	133	■ Petroleum Revenue Tax	145
■ Local authorities: Renewable Fuels	133	■ Public Houses: Fiscal Policy	146
■ M49	134	■ UK Internal Trade	146
■ Parking: Pedestrian Areas	134	■ Universal Credit	146
■ Passenger Ships: Coronavirus	135	WORK AND PENSIONS	147
■ Ports: Charging Points	135	■ Child Maintenance Service	147
		■ Employment and Support Allowance	149
		■ Job Centres: Coronavirus	150
		■ Kickstart Scheme: Hospitality Industry	150
		■ Private Sector: Recruitment	151
		■ Restart Scheme	151

■ Self-employed	153	■ Universal Credit: Mental	
■ State Retirement Pensions:		Illness	156
Scotland	153	■ Vocational Guidance:	
■ Unemployment	154	Hospitality Industry	156
■ Universal Credit	154	■ Workplace Pensions	157

Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Animal Experiments

Feryal Clark:

[59104]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent steps his Department has taken to (a) promote the availability and (b) provide investment for non-animal alternatives to tests including organoids, organ-on-a-chip technology and computational and stem cell technology.

George Freeman:

The Government actively supports and funds the development and dissemination of techniques that replace, reduce, and refine the use of animals in research (the 3Rs). This is achieved primarily through funding for the National Centre for the 3Rs (NC3Rs), which works nationally and internationally to drive the uptake of 3Rs technologies and ensure that advances in the 3Rs are reflected in policy, practice, and regulations on animal research.

The NC3Rs receives its core funding from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)'s Medical Research Council, and Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC). Since the NC3Rs was launched in 2004, it has committed £100 million in research to develop 3Rs technologies.

In addition to funding the NC3Rs, UKRI also funds a portfolio of research projects involving humans, human materials, animal models, and non-animal technologies. The principles of the 3Rs are embedded in all the research within UKRI's remit involving (or potentially involving) animal use. UKRI also encourages grant applicants, including those whose research does not involve animals but could contribute to greater reduction and replacement, to consider further opportunities to advance the 3Rs.

Between 2015-2019, the BBSRC spent over £7 million on research grants aimed at developing and applying innovative methodologies to studying human and animal physiology, including in silico approaches, organ-on-a-chip, organoid and other advanced cell culture systems.

■ Buildings: Environment Protection

Emily Thornberry:

[58337]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the number of jobs that (a) have been or (b) will be created as a result of (i) UK private, (ii) Government and (iii) inward investment as part of the Government's plans to develop greener buildings between November 2020 and November 2030.

Greg Hands:

Around 56,00 high quality green jobs have been secured and created across the UK since November 2020.

The policies and proposals announced in the Net Zero Strategy could also support up to 440,000 jobs in 2030 across power, fuel supply and hydrogen, industry, heat and buildings, transport, and natural resources.

Carbon Capture and Storage**Richard Thomson:**[\[56128\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department will take to monitor delivery against the economic benefits proposed by carbon capture, usage and storage clusters in their Phase 1 applications.

Greg Hands:

Information in Phase 1 submissions has been used to identify those clusters to be sequenced onto Track-1 for deployment in the mid-2020s. This will be subject to negotiations to determine whether they represent value for money to the taxpayer and affordability considerations. Deviations from benefits presented in Phase 1 submissions will be considered within this process.

Any agreements to provide government support will require regular reporting on benefits by recipients and BEIS will ensure to follow best practice in government monitoring and evaluation requirements.

Richard Thomson:[\[57423\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what powers his Department has to ensure that carbon capture, usage and storage clusters selected onto track 1 in the cluster sequencing process deliver the economic benefits proposed in their Phase 1 applications.

Greg Hands:

Information in Phase 1 submissions has been used to identify those clusters to be sequenced onto Track-1 for deployment in the mid-2020s. This will be subject to negotiations to determine whether they represent value for money to the taxpayer and affordability considerations.

Carbon Capture and Storage: Capital Investment**Alex Cunningham:**[\[58393\]](#)

To ask the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential financial benefits of investing in carbon, capture, utilization and storage technology.

Greg Hands:

As highlighted in the Government's Net Zero Strategy, investing in carbon, capture, usage and storage will create transformative 'SuperPlaces' in areas such as the

Humber, North East, North west and southern England, as well as in Scotland and Wales, bringing with it a range of financial benefits.

The deployment of CCUS clusters from the mid-2020s will also be a strong enabler for UK exports globally, building UK CCUS expertise and driving international demand for UK CCUS goods and services.

Alex Cunningham:

[\[58394\]](#)

To ask the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions his Department has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the potential merits of investing in carbon, capture, utilization and storage technology.

Greg Hands:

As outlined within the recently published Net Zero Strategy, carbon, capture, usage and storage will be an exciting new industry to capture the carbon we continue to emit and revitalise the birthplaces of the first industrial revolution. It has the ability to capture CO₂ from power generation, hydrogen production and industrial processes to store it underground or reuse it. In addition, carbon, capture, usage and storage could help support up to 50,000 jobs in 2030, split across industry, power and the transport and storage network.

■ Carbon Capture and Storage: Employment

Richard Thomson:

[\[56130\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the number of jobs that will be (a) created and (b) supported in (i) Scotland and (ii) the UK as a result of his policy to deploy carbon capture, usage and storage at two industrial clusters by the mid-2020s.

Greg Hands:

Following a methodology pilot phase in 2016 to 2018, BEIS commissioned a consortium led by Vivid Economics to provide analysis on future energy innovation needs. The work, and the suite of reports, is referred to as the Energy Innovation Needs Assessments (EINAs).

As set out in the Government's landmark Net Zero strategy carbon capture usage and storage industry could support up to 54,000 jobs across the UK by 2030.

■ Carbon Capture and Storage: Exports

Richard Thomson:

[\[57424\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on the value of exports from (a) Scotland and (b) the UK of the policy to deploy carbon capture, usage and storage at two industrial clusters by the mid-2020s.

Greg Hands:

The carbon capture, usage and storage (CCUS) industry could support £4.3 billion in GVA and 48,000 jobs per annum by 2050. Deploying CCUS clusters from the 2020s

will be a strong enabler for UK exports globally, building UK CCUS expertise and driving international demand for UK CCUS goods and services.

■ Carbon Emissions

Dr Julian Lewis:

[\[58711\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether it is Government policy to proceed unilaterally with its current timetable for achieving net zero emissions in the event that (a) the United States and (b) China fail to take similar steps on a multilateral basis.

Greg Hands:

[Holding answer 22 October 2021]: In June 2019, following advice from the Climate Change Committee, the UK Government became the first major economy to set a legally binding target to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. This will bring an end to the UK's domestic contribution to climate change.

The Net Zero Strategy outlines measures to transition to a green and sustainable future, helping businesses and consumers to move to clean power, supporting hundreds of thousands of well-paid jobs and leveraging up to £90 billion of private investment by 2030.

When the UK took the role of incoming COP Presidency in December 2019, coverage was less than 30% of world GDP. Countries that are covered by a commitment to net zero or carbon neutrality now account for around 75% of global GHG emissions, and around 80% of global GDP, this includes both US and China.

■ Cars: Fuels

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[56339\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that people are able to access fuel for their cars.

Greg Hands:

The temporary reduction to the availability of fuel in September was driven by a sudden increase in demand. There was never a national shortage of fuel, as the industry made clear. Fuel supplies have now returned to normal levels.

The Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has taken three main steps to assist industry to return forecourt stocks to normal levels:

- A temporary exemption of industry from the Competition Act 1998 for the purpose of sharing information and optimising supply in the event of a disruption (Downstream Oil Protocol).
- Deploying the Department's Reserve Tanker Fleet of fuel tanker vehicles to provide additional capacity to industry; 37 tankers have been made available to hauliers.
- Working with the Armed Forces to make fuel deliveries; 248 trained Military drivers, along with other support staff, have been made available to hauliers.

■ Climate Change

Caroline Lucas:

[\[56947\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the need to finance local climate solutions; and if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of setting up a national just transition commission tasked with coordinating regional bodies with devolved powers for identifying local needs for the just transition.

Greg Hands:

The Government is committed to supporting local areas to deliver net zero.

■ Climate Change: Scholarships

Geraint Davies:

[\[59704\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make it his policy to match funding for COP26 scholarships recently announced by universities.

Greg Hands:

[Holding answer 26 October 2021]: The Government has been ensuring that science and research for climate action is part of our work towards a high ambition outcome at COP26. As such, the UK Presidency has been working closely with universities and academics all over the world, including the COP26 Universities Network (over 80 Universities across the UK) to mobilise research and academic knowledge in support of the COP26 Goals. The Government welcomes the great work they are doing to bring research to governments and the public, and to support action on climate change.

■ Coronavirus: Vaccination

Caroline Lucas:

[\[58366\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will publish weekly data on how many covid-19 vaccine doses are delivered to (a) the UK, (b) countries with low vaccination rates requiring help from the international community via (i) Covax and (ii) other routes; and if he will make a statement.

Caroline Lucas:

[\[58368\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent discussions he has had with vaccine manufacturers in the UK on a policy of prioritising orders for countries with low vaccine rates; and if he will make a statement.

Caroline Lucas:

[\[58370\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what information he holds on the number of vaccines discarded by G7 countries as a result of those vaccines having passed their expiry date; what steps he is taking to prevent waste of covid-19 vaccines in the UK; and if he will make a statement.

George Freeman:

UK vaccine supply continues to be an efficient distribution process, where vaccine is procured, supplied and deployed to meet UK requirements to offer all those eligible the opportunity to be vaccinated as soon as possible and as efficiently as possible. We have put in place robust mitigations throughout the vaccination programme to reduce wastage, manage expiry dates, and avoid vaccine destruction, including, where there is data to support it, looking at the extension of expiry dates. We have been assured by NHS England that unused stock which remains 'in date' should not be destroyed locally and that efforts should be made to vaccinate eligible patients.

We are not able to disclose details of vaccine deliveries to the UK, due to the commercially confidential nature of the contracts between the Government and vaccine manufacturers and for national security reasons.

Energy: Costs**Justin Madders:**[\[57082\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on the impact of increased energy costs on households in the UK.

Greg Hands:

My Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State is working closely with Ministers across government on the impact of global gas price rises and that will continue.

Environment Protection: Foreign Investment in UK**Emily Thornberry:**[\[58792\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the news release published by the Government on 15 October 2021, entitled, Prime Minister's Ten Point Plan kickstarts green investment boom, if he will publish a breakdown of the 56,000 jobs referenced in that release by (a) location, (b) sector and (c) project.

Greg Hands:

[Holding answer 22 October 2021]: Around 56,000 high-quality green jobs have been secured and created across the UK since November 2020.

The policies and proposals announced in the Net Zero Strategy could also support up to 440,000 jobs in 2030 across power, fuel supply and hydrogen, industry, and heat & buildings.

Fuel Oil: Greenhouse Gas Emissions**Liz Saville Roberts:**[\[57215\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the greenhouse gas emissions generated by the use of residential heating oil are in (a) Wales, (b) Scotland, (c) Northern Ireland, (d) England and (e) the UK.

Greg Hands:

The following table shows estimated greenhouse gas emission from the domestic combustion of oil in the UK in 2019 by country, measured in million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (MtCO₂e), from the UK's Greenhouse Gas Inventory.

Greenhouse gas emission from the domestic combustion of oil in the UK in 2019 (MtCO₂e)

ENGLAND	3.1
Northern Ireland	1.8
Scotland	0.6
Wales	0.6
UK total	6.2

Source: UK Greenhouse Gas Inventory,
BEIS Note: figures do not add up to total due
to rounding

■ **Fuel Oil: Vegetable Oils**

Ben Lake:[\[56431\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of using hydrated vegetable oil to decarbonise off-grid residential properties which use standard residential heating oil.

Greg Hands:

The Government is consulting on new regulations to phase out heating systems using high carbon fossil fuels in homes, businesses and public buildings in England off the gas grid, during the 2020s.

Although the Government view, heat pumps as being the primary technology for decarbonising these homes and businesses, not all off-grid properties will be suitable for a heat pump and that biofuels such as bio-LPG and hydrotreated vegetable oil biodiesel (HVO) may play a role in future off-gas-grid decarbonisation. However, further evidence is needed to consider what role these biofuels could play, and to help, develop the policy framework which would support such a role.

A Call for Evidence was recently published by the department to inform the development of a Biomass Strategy. This strategy will review the amount of sustainable biomass available to the UK, including liquid biofuels, and how this could be best used across the economy to achieve the net zero target.

■ Fuel Poverty

Stephanie Peacock:

[\[53989\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the (a) number and (b) proportion of households in England that will experience fuel poverty after the energy price cap raise has been enforced.

Greg Hands:

The Government is committed to ensuring fair energy prices for consumers. We therefore introduced the energy price cap in 2019, which saves 15 million households on default tariffs up to £100 a year on average.

Alongside this support, eligible low income and vulnerable households will have access to energy bill support through the Warm Home Discount, Winter Fuel Payment and Cold Weather Payment. Energy efficiency schemes are also available, including the Energy Company Obligation, the Local Authority Delivery scheme and the Home Upgrade Grant.

■ Geothermal Power: Carbon Emissions

Owen Thompson:

[\[57172\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what targets exist for the delivery of geothermal heat projects in order to help meet the UK's net zero emissions target.

Greg Hands:

The Government supports the development of geothermal projects provided it can be done at an acceptable cost to consumers. The most promising use of geothermal energy in the UK is for heat applications such as in district heating network schemes. The Government is supporting the development of low carbon heat networks and thereby building the UK's capability to harness heat from sources such as geothermal energy. Electricity generated from geothermal heat is able to be included in the Contracts for Difference scheme.

■ Geothermal Power: Mining

Owen Thompson:

[\[56674\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many projects to deliver geothermal heat from minewater are in receipt of Government support as at 18 October 2021.

Greg Hands:

The Heat Networks Investment Project has made 2 awards totalling £9.7 million for the construction of projects which use geothermal heat from minewater.

■ Green Homes Grant Scheme

Justin Madders: [\[57084\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with stakeholders on the difficulties Green Home Grant Scheme Voucher holders have experienced redeeming their vouchers.

Greg Hands:

BEIS officials have worked collaboratively with ICF, the scheme administrator, and partners within industry.

This has included regular roundtable and working group meetings with stakeholders chaired by senior officials, and senior official attendance of meetings hosted by installer trade bodies.

Ensuring customers and installers are clear on the information and checks required has been a top priority.

As of 27 September, 36,441 vouchers with a value of £161.9 million have been paid.

Justin Madders: [\[57085\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many Green Home Grant Scheme vouchers have been issued in Ellesmere Port and Neston constituency; and what proportion have been redeemed.

Greg Hands:

[Official statistics](#) published on 23rd September for the Green Homes Grant Voucher scheme describe the status of applications prior to 6th September

This includes vouchers issued and measures installed in Ellesmere Port and Neston constituency. To be recorded as installed, the customer must have begun the process of redeeming their voucher.

The next statistical release will be published on 18th November.

Justin Madders: [\[57086\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what proportion of Green Home Grant Scheme vouchers have been redeemed as of August 2021.

Greg Hands:

[Official statistics](#) published on 23rd September for the Green Homes Grant Voucher scheme describe the status of applications prior to 6th September.

Statistics include figures on measures installed and vouchers paid. In order to be recorded as measure installed, the customer must have begun the process of redeeming a voucher. Redemption is complete on payment of the voucher.

The next statistical release will be published on 18th November 2021.

Charlotte Nichols:

[\[57429\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make it his policy to extend the Green Homes Grant to static caravans.

Greg Hands:

The Green Homes Grant Voucher Scheme closed for new applications on 31st March 2021. Park home residents who own their park home were eligible to apply.

Nadia Whittome:

[\[57487\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department plans to return to a centrally-funded Green Home Grant Scheme.

Greg Hands:

[Holding answer 20 October 2021]: The Government commitment to investing in decarbonising buildings remains unwavering, and to the importance of long-term funding to sustainably grow the green installer base and supply chain.

In order to deliver on net zero ambitions and support a thriving building retrofit industry, the Government will be expanding its funding commitment for both the Home Upgrade Grant scheme and the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund with up to £950m and £800m in additional funding respectively over 2022/23 to 2024/25.

■ Heating: Finance

Ronnie Cowan:

[\[57137\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions his Department has had with industry stakeholders on funding for an equitable and affordable switch to greener and cleaner heating ahead of the upcoming Spending review.

Greg Hands:

The Government has been engaging with a range of industry and consumer groups on funding options to enable an equitable and affordable switch to greener and cleaner heating. Further details of these policies are set out in the [Heat and Building Strategy](#).

■ Heating: Housing

Justin Madders:

[\[57098\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to publish the outcome of the consultation on further policy designs for the Clean Heat Grant.

Greg Hands:

The Government Response for the Boiler Upgrade Scheme, previously the Clean Heat Grant, has now been published alongside the Heat and Building Strategy.

■ Hitachi: Wylfa Power Station

Mr David Jones: [\[59730\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to secure the development of the Wylfa nuclear site on a sustainable basis, in the context of the withdrawal of interest from Hitachi.

Greg Hands:

[Holding answer 26 October 2021]: The Government is aware of the strong interest and support in North Wales for the development of this site and continues to discuss new projects with other viable companies and investors wishing to develop sites including Wylfa Newydd.

The Government has also set out a new £120 million Future Nuclear Enabling Fund towards the development of nuclear projects. There remain a number of optimal sites for new nuclear, including the Wylfa Newydd.

■ Housing: Insulation

Owen Thompson: [\[56697\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to reduce the cost of household insulation in the context of rising energy prices and the climate emergency.

Greg Hands:

The Energy Company Obligation has already installed 3.3 million measures in 2.3 million homes. Government is increasing the amount energy suppliers invest in energy efficiency measures for low-income households and recently consulted on a successor scheme ECO until 2026, boosting its value from £640 million to £1 billion a year. This will help an extra 305,000 families with green measures such as insulation, with average energy bill savings of around £300 a year.

The Government is also working to catalyse attractive and affordable green home finance to support homeowners to improve the energy performance of their homes. Government has consulted on proposals for mortgage lenders to improve the energy performance of homes they lend to and will publish a Government Response in due course.

The Government is also expanding its funding commitment for both the Home Upgrade Grant scheme and the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund with up to £950m and £800m respectively over the next three years.

■ Hydrogen: Employment

Richard Thomson: [\[56131\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the number of jobs that will be (a) created and (b) supported in (i) Scotland and (ii) the UK as a result of the development of blue hydrogen.

Greg Hands:

As set out in the UK Hydrogen Strategy, published in August 2021, current evidence suggests the UK hydrogen economy could support over 9,000 jobs by 2030 – and up to 100,000 jobs by 2050. Estimates, including those related to specific locations and production types, will improve over time as the project pipeline for both CCUS-enabled and electrolytic hydrogen develops. The UK wide Hydrogen Strategy is clear that the Government expect, to see support economic benefits across the Union and the industrial heartlands.

■ Nuclear Power Stations: Regional Planning and Development**Mr David Jones:**[\[59731\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what role the development of nuclear power stations will have in the Government's levelling up agenda; and whether regional disparities will be considered when determining which sites to prioritise for development.

Greg Hands:

[Holding answer 26 October 2021]: New nuclear can bring significant economic benefits, including high-skilled employment, to regions across the UK. The construction of Hinkley Point C has to-date seen EDF spend £3.5 billion in the south-west and create well over 10,000 job opportunities. It is for private developers to propose and develop projects at suitable sites, however in recognising the importance of nuclear, the government has set out a new £120 million Future Nuclear Enabling Fund towards the development of nuclear projects. More details of the Fund and how it will operate will be released in due course. Government would expect to see similar levels of economic impacts to those at Hinkley in the regions where future power stations might be built.

■ Nuclear Power Stations: Somerton and Frome**David Warburton:**[\[57222\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he plans to take to help ensure that the businesses in Somerton and Frome constituency that have benefited from the construction of Hinkley Point C will have a future pipeline of contracts to move on to through the development of further gigawatt nuclear new build in the UK.

Greg Hands:

The Government has been clear that it wants more new nuclear power. Our Net Zero Strategy confirms plans for at least one large-scale nuclear project brought to the point of Final Investment Decision by the end of this Parliament, subject to clear value for money and all relevant approvals. Any large-scale nuclear new build project would be expected to offer similar opportunities for the supply chain as at Hinkley Point C.

■ Nuclear Power: National Security

Mr David Jones: [\[59728\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to ensure that future participants in the UK's nuclear energy sector do not pose a threat to national security.

Greg Hands:

[Holding answer 26 October 2021]: The Government takes nuclear security extremely seriously. All civil nuclear operators must comply with the UK's world-leading nuclear security regulatory regime, overseen by a robust and independent regulator - the Office for Nuclear Regulation.

Furthermore, all investment involving critical infrastructure is subject to thorough scrutiny and needs to satisfy our robust legal, regulatory and national security requirements. The National Security & Investment Act gives the Government powers to scrutinise and intervene in acquisitions that may pose national security risks.

■ Offshore Industry: Employment

Richard Thomson: [\[56133\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what training or other support his Department is making available to workers in the oil and gas sector to assist them to transition to roles in the hydrogen sector.

Greg Hands:

The North Sea Transition Deal recognises that the upstream oil and gas workforce has the transferrable skills needed to support the energy transition, including the development of a hydrogen economy. The Deal supports the work of the Energy Skills Alliance, which aims to prepare the energy industry to meet the future demand for skills in new technologies. The Deal also contains a commitment for OPITO, the sector skills body, to develop an integrated people and skills plan with measurable objectives, by March 2022, to support the sector's diversification. The Government Net Zero Strategy, recently published, further commits to reform the skills system, so that training providers, employers and learners are incentivised and equipped to help deliver our net zero aims.

■ Offshore Industry: North Sea

Richard Thomson: [\[57421\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to ensure the delivery of the target of 50 per cent local UK content in the North Sea Transition Deal published by his Department in March 2021.

Richard Thomson: [\[57422\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department will take to monitor progress towards achieving the target of 50 per cent local UK content in the North Sea Transition Deal published by his Department in March 2021.

Greg Hands:

Through the North Sea Transition Deal, the sector committed to voluntary, industry-led UK content targets for related new energy projects and decommissioning as well as for locally provided technology. The sector is considering how they will meet these targets and this month have appointed an Industry Supply Chain Champion, Sian Lloyd-Rees, to raise the profile of the UK's energy supply chain capability. BEIS regularly engages with the Scottish Government alongside industry and regulators through the Deal Delivery Group and North Sea Transition Forum to discuss all aspects of the delivery of the Deal. The Oil and Gas Authority, as the independent regulator, will monitor the voluntary supply chain targets utilising existing tools such as their Supply Chain Action Plans.

Oil: North Sea**Kenny MacAskill:**[\[58521\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many applications he has received for an oil exploration licence in the North Sea in each calendar year between 2014 and 2021; and how many and what proportion of those applications were (a) approved and (b) rejected.

Kenny MacAskill:[\[58522\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many oil production licences he has issued in each year between 2004 and 2020; and how many such licences are under consideration in the current year.

Greg Hands:

The Oil and Gas Authority (OGA) issue grants to Licensees to search and bore for, and get, petroleum in the seabed and subsoil under the area.

These figures are publicly available from the Oil and Gas Authority and in historic annual reports.

Private Sector: Recruitment**Rebecca Long Bailey:**[\[58421\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to promote inclusive recruitment practices in the private sector.

Paul Scully:

All employers should be fair and objective in their selection of successful candidates and must not discriminate unlawfully, for example on grounds of race, sex or disability, in their recruitment methods.

■ Property: Ownership

Charlotte Nichols:

[\[58534\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when his Department plans to bring forward legislative proposals on implementing a register of beneficial owners of UK property.

Paul Scully:

The Government remains committed to establishing a new beneficial ownership register of overseas entities that own UK property in order to combat money laundering and achieve greater transparency in the UK property market. We will legislate when parliamentary time allows. When we do implement these proposals, they will reflect the pre-legislative scrutiny Committee's recommendations and will be more effective because of the broader powers we have since announced for Companies House, which also require primary legislation.

■ Renewable Energy: Feed-in Tariffs

Justin Madders:

[\[57083\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of increasing the feed in tariff in line with the increase in energy costs.

Greg Hands:

Support under the FIT scheme, which is closed to new entrants, aims to deliver returns of approximately 5-8% for investors in small-scale low-carbon generation. The methodology used to set the tariffs considers the technology costs and electricity generation expectations and not the retail price of electricity. The tariff rates are adjusted annually, in line with the Retail Price Index (RPI). FIT generators also benefit from a reduction in their electricity bills when the electricity is used onsite and import costs are avoided.

■ Renewable Energy: Finance

Ian Lavery:

[\[57042\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the potential impact of net negative generator payments on the Contracts for Difference Scheme.

Greg Hands:

Under the Contracts for Difference (CfD) scheme, a generator is paid the difference between the 'strike price' – a price for electricity reflecting the cost of investing in a particular low carbon technology – and the 'reference price' – a cost measure of the average GB market price for electricity. Generators have to pay back the difference to the Low Carbon Contracts Company (LCCC) when market prices are higher than the strike price.

■ Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme

Drew Hendry:

[\[56596\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of offsetting domestic Renewable Heat Incentive overpayments, where the original Energy Performance Certificate was undertaken incorrectly by the RHI systems original installer, in the event that that installer has since gone into liquidation.

Greg Hands:

In cases where Ofgem, the scheme administrator, finds that an EPC is inaccurate, and that the RHI scheme participant has been overpaid, Ofgem are required to request that the overpayment is repaid, in order to ensure that public funds are properly accounted for. Ofgem generally try to show flexibility with regard to how funds are recovered, and usually allow repayments to be offset against future RHI payments. RHI Payments are recovered from the participant (and not the installer or EPC assessor), because it was the scheme participant that entered a contractual obligation with Ofgem when the RHI application was made.

It is usually not directly relevant whether or not the installer has since gone into liquidation, because it is not the installer who usually carries out the EPC assessment. EPC assessments must be carried out by a qualified EPC assessor; therefore, unless the installer is both Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) certified and an accredited EPC assessor, the EPC assessment must be carried out by a different person or organisation.

Alex Sobel:

[\[59948\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what criteria are used when selecting contractors to implement the Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive scheme.

Greg Hands:

Under the Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) all contractors must be Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) certified. MCS is the leading standards and quality assurance organisation in the domestic renewable heating sector. For products to be eligible for the RHI, they must be MCS certified, and for installations to be eligible, they must be carried out to the relevant MCS installation standard for that technology. As part of MCS certification, installers must also be a member of a Chartered Trading Standards Institute approved consumer code, to which consumers will have access, should there be problems with the installation.

■ Serum Institute of India: Coronavirus

Caroline Lucas:

[\[58364\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many doses of the Oxford-AstraZeneca covid-19 vaccine manufactured at the Serum Institute

of India the Government has received to date; and on what dates those doses were received.

Caroline Lucas:

[\[58365\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many Oxford-AstraZeneca covid-19 vaccine doses the Government has received from all manufacturing sites (a) in the UK and (b) across the world by location, to date.

George Freeman:

We are not able to disclose details of vaccine deliveries because of the commercially confidential nature of the contracts between the Government and vaccine manufacturers.

The bulk of the UK's supply of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine is being manufactured in the UK, and some of the vaccines are made outside the UK.

■ Small Businesses: Carbon Emissions

Bim Afolami:

[\[56209\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to support small- and medium-sized enterprises to transition to net zero.

Greg Hands:

The Department is taking many steps to encourage SMEs to transition to Net Zero and to support SMEs through the barriers which prevent the transition.

Ahead of COP26, BEIS has launched the Together for Our Planet Business Climate Leaders' campaign, which has encouraged over 1,900 small and micro businesses across the UK to join the Race to Zero by making the SME Climate Commitment.

In order to help SMEs overcome barriers to investing in energy efficiency BEIS launched the Boosting Access for SMEs to Energy Efficiency innovation competition. The competition offered up to £6m to fund the development of new, innovative market solutions that can provide businesses with tailored energy efficiency advice, as well as simplifying the energy efficiency investment processes through the creation of one-stop-shop platforms.

I have recently given the British Business Bank a new mission to drive sustainable growth and prosperity across the UK, and to enable the transition to a net zero economy, by supporting access to finance for smaller businesses. Between 2014 and the third quarter of 2020 a total of £160m has been invested into clean technology businesses by equity funds backed by the British Business Bank.

Julian Knight:

[\[57072\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on providing support to SMEs to help them transition to net-zero.

Greg Hands:

My Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer and I have agreed to give the British Business Bank a new mission to drive sustainable growth and prosperity across the UK, and to enable the transition to a net zero economy, by supporting access to finance for smaller businesses. The Bank has already made good progress in this area. Between 2014 and the third quarter of 2020 a total of £160m has been invested into clean technology businesses by equity funds backed by the British Business Bank.

Ahead of COP26, BEIS has launched the Together for Our Planet Business Climate Leaders' campaign, which has encouraged over 1,900 small and micro businesses across the UK to join the Race to Zero by making the SME Climate Commitment.

Small and medium-sized businesses have a vital role in the transition to Net Zero. Smaller businesses make up 99% of the UK's 5.87 million enterprises and produce 50% of all UK business emissions. Small businesses will drive this transition through developing new technologies and ways of working.

Matthew Pennycook:[\[57211\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent discussions his Department has had with HM Treasury on provisions to support small and medium-sized enterprises that offset the carbon impact of their employees through the tax system.

Greg Hands:

The Government always looking at effective ways to support small and medium-sized enterprises to reduce their carbon emissions, and has worked closely with HM Treasury, and other Departments, on initiatives including my Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister's [Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution](#) and the [Net Zero Strategy](#) to decarbonise all sectors of the UK economy.

Ben Lake:[\[57253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to support small- and medium-sized enterprises to transition to net zero.

Greg Hands:

Ahead of COP26, BEIS has launched the Together for Our Planet Business Climate Leaders' campaign, which has encouraged over 1,900 small and micro businesses across the UK to join the Race to Zero by making the SME Climate Commitment.

To help SMEs overcome barriers to investing in energy efficiency the Government launched the Boosting Access for SMEs to Energy Efficiency innovation competition. The competition offered up to £6m to fund the development of new, innovative market solutions that can provide businesses with tailored energy efficiency advice, as well as simplifying the energy efficiency investment processes through the creation of one-stop-shop platforms.

The British Business Bank a new mission to drive sustainable growth and prosperity across the UK, and to enable the transition to a net zero economy, by supporting access to finance for smaller businesses. Between 2014 and the third quarter of 2020 a total of £160m has been invested into clean technology businesses by equity funds backed by the British Business Bank.

■ **Smart Data Communications Company: Standards**

Ian Blackford:

[\[57062\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the level of service delivery SmartDCC met of the UK network; and what plans his Department has for the introduction of smart meters in the Maryburgh, Dingwall area.

Greg Hands:

The Data Communications Company (DCC), the organisation responsible for the national smart metering data and communications infrastructure across Great Britain, has contracts in place for the provision of communications coverage to at least 99.5% of premises across its 'North Region' (which covers Scotland). Industry information shows that there is communications coverage in the Maryburgh, Dingwall area.

Energy suppliers are responsible for installing smart meters in households and small businesses. The Government will continue to work closely with the DCC and other industry parties to ensure that households across Great Britain can realise the benefits of smart meters.

■ **Toys and Games: Internet**

Martyn Day:

[\[58445\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to regulate the (a) listing and (b) sale of unsafe toys on online marketplaces.

Martyn Day:

[\[58446\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if his Department will undertake an assessment of the potential merits of imposing a contractual duty of care on online marketplaces to ensure that the products they allow to be listed for sale are fit for purpose and meet regulatory requirements.

Martyn Day:

[\[58447\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department has had discussions with the Office for Product Safety and Standards on safeguarding children from the sale of unsafe toys on online marketplaces.

Paul Scully:

Existing product safety legislation places obligations on manufacturers, importers and distributors to ensure that consumer products are safe before they can be placed on the UK market. This includes retailers selling toys via online marketplaces.

The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS), which is within the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, is taking forward a programme of work to help ensure the safety of products sold online. Where products are identified online that do not meet the UK's product safety requirements, OPSS works with colleagues in local Trading Standards to take action and expects online platforms to act quickly to remove them from sale. Since April 2021, OPSS interventions have led to the withdrawal of more than 10,000 unsafe products, including toys, previously listed and available in the UK via online marketplaces.

In addition, OPSS continues to run regular campaigns to improve consumer awareness of safety issues, including a Christmas Toys product safety information campaign which will run from 15th November 2021 until 17th December 2021.

OPSS is also currently conducting a review of the UK's product safety framework to ensure it remains robust and is future-proofed so that it continues to protect consumers while enabling businesses to safely innovate and grow. This includes reviewing the impact of the changes brought by eCommerce to the product safety framework to ensure that there is appropriate accountability and clear responsibilities throughout the supply chain. The Government has analysed submissions to the product safety review Call for Evidence and is now finalising its response, which will be published in due course. We will consider a full range of options to address the challenges identified by stakeholders and any proposals for legislative change would be subject to public consultation.

■ Toys and Games: Safety

Martyn Day:

[58452]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent discussions he has had with (a) National Trading Standards and (b) Trading Standards Scotland on tackling unsafe toys on online marketplaces.

Paul Scully:

The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) works closely with colleagues in local authority trading standards services to take action where products, including toys, are identified online that do not meet the UK's product safety requirements. This work includes sharing intelligence with the National Trading Standards regional intelligence network and Trading Standards Scotland, as well as working directly with the local authorities that have enforcement responsibilities for product safety, including at the ports.

OPSS is currently conducting a review of the UK's product safety framework to ensure consumers continue to be protected and that businesses are able to safely innovate and grow. As part of the review, officials have engaged with representatives from trading standards from across the UK, including Scotland. Representatives from trading standards have recently taken part in six roundtable events, which included reporting their experience of enforcement issues with online marketplaces. We will

continue to engage with them and a wide range of other stakeholders as the review progresses.

■ Trading Standards

Martyn Day: [\[58449\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of funding for the enforcement of trading standards following the impact of the (a) UK's departure from the EU and (b) recovery from the covid-19 outbreak.

Paul Scully:

Local authorities across England, Scotland and Wales are responsible for local Trading Standards services. Local authorities are independent from central government and are responsible for determining their resourcing priorities in accordance with the needs of the local electorate. The budget process of the Scottish and Welsh Governments results in the determination of the local government finance settlement which sets out the government grant. The Department for the Economy funds the Trading Standards Service in Northern Ireland.

■ Trading Standards Scotland

Martyn Day: [\[58448\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to support Trading Standards Scotland after the UK's departure from the EU.

Paul Scully:

The Consumer Protection Partnership (CPP), of which the department and Trading Standards Scotland are members, regularly meet to discuss consumer protection issues. The CPP brings together consumer protection organisations from across the UK jointly to identify and prioritise areas where there is greatest risk of harm to consumers and to agree and coordinate collective action to tackle detriment, making use of all available tools at the disposal of each member. This includes any EU Exit related issues.

In addition, BEIS officials hold regular discussions with Trading Standards Scotland to identify challenges any emerging areas of consumer harm.

In July 2021, the Department published the *Reforming Competition and Consumer Policy* consultation. The Department is currently analysing the responses and will respond to the consultation in due course.

■ Trading Standards: Finance

Martyn Day:

[58450]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if the Government will provide additional funding to (a) National Trading Standards and (b) Trading Standards Scotland.

Martyn Day:

[58451]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department plans to undertake a review of the enforcement powers of (a) National Trading Standards and (b) Trading Standards Scotland.

Paul Scully:

Local Trading Standards Services are funded solely by local authorities, which are independent from central government. These authorities are responsible for determining their spending priorities and they are accountable to their local electorate. Funding is not ringfenced, so local authorities make decisions according to their individual needs.

The Department provides funding to National Trading Standards (NTS) and Trading Standards Scotland (TSS), to enable local authorities to take coordinated action specifically on consumer harm issues that cross local authority boundaries; for instance, doorstep crime and mass-marketing scams. We have provided a single enforcement grant of £12,027,000 to National Trading Standards and £1,215,000 to Trading Standards Scotland for financial year 2021/22. We keep the funding needs of both organisations under constant review.

■ Training: Carbon Emissions

Caroline Lucas:

[56948]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the need to reskill workers in the (a) construction, (b) transport and (c) manufacturing sectors as part of the transition to a net zero economy; and if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of providing UK businesses with Government funding to deliver such retraining programmes at the earliest opportunity.

Greg Hands:

The Government convened the independent Green Jobs Taskforce and its analysis was published here in July 2021: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/green-jobs-taskforce-report>

- The ideas generated by the Taskforce contributed to the Government Net Zero Strategy, published 19 October, which sets out the measures being taken to support skills and retraining for the green economy.

■ Utilities: Licensing**Emma Hardy:** [\[59938\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has plans to review Ofgem's processes for awarding licences to energy supply companies (a) in general and (b) for Avro Energy.

Greg Hands:

The process for awarding supply licences is independently set by Ofgem. Ofgem are reviewing their approach to supplier licensing, to ensure that appropriate protections are in place against poor customer service and financial instability. New market entry requirements came into effect in January 2021 focussed on the ongoing requirements on suppliers operating in the market to promote responsible risk management, improved governance and increased accountability.

■ Warm Home Discount Scheme**Dan Carden:** [\[53332\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of the Warm Home Discount Scheme.

Greg Hands:

The Warm Home Discount currently helps over 2 million low-income and vulnerable households each year with a £140 rebate off their winter energy bill. This year the scheme is providing £354m of energy bills support.

As per the Energy White Paper in 2020, we are extending and expanding the Warm Home Discount scheme to £475m, to support 3 million households each year until 2026. The Government recently consulted on reforming the scheme to focus the support to fuel poor households and we will publish our response in the coming months.

Neale Hanvey: [\[56412\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will calculate what the level of the Warm Home Discount Scheme would be in the event that it had been uprated in line with inflation in each subsequent year in which that scheme has been in operation.

Greg Hands:

In 2011, the Warm Home Discount scheme rebates were set at £120 per household. The rebates were subsequently increased in 2012 to £130, in 2013 to £135, and in 2014 to £140.

The rebate for winter 2021/22 is worth £140. The Government has proposed to increase the value of the rebate to £150 for winter 2022/23.

■ Wind Power

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[56323\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department has undertaken an assessment of the potential merits of increasing the UK's floating wind targets ahead of COP26.

Greg Hands:

A Government priority is the growth of offshore wind to 2030 and beyond. The Government is committed to supporting the development of floating offshore wind, as reflected in the ambitious target of 1GW of floating wind by 2030. As announced in the Net Zero Strategy, this will put the UK at the forefront of this new technology that can utilise the North and Celtic Seas – backed by £380 million overall funding for the UK's world-leading offshore wind sector.

Floating offshore wind projects will be eligible to bid in the next Contract for Difference allocation round, which will open in December 2021. The Government recently announced a minimum allocation for floating offshore wind in this round. This approach will provide the foundation for investment in a sustainable, competitive UK based supply chain.

■ Wylfa Power Station

Sarah Atherton:

[\[60525\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of the Wylfa Nuclear Power site in North Wales to the Government's (a) net zero strategy and (b) the commitment to source all the UK electricity from clean energy sources by 2035.

Greg Hands:

The Government is aware of the strong interest and support in North Wales for the development of this site and continues to discuss new projects with viable companies and investors wishing to develop sites including Wylfa Newydd.

The Net Zero Strategy is clear that nuclear is an important part of our plans to achieve net zero. Nuclear power stations provide firm low carbon power, which is required to complement variable renewable generation in order to ensure a low cost, stable, reliable, low carbon system in 2050.

The Government has set out a new £120 million Future Nuclear Enabling Fund towards the development of nuclear projects. More details of the Fund and how it will operate will be released in due course.

■ Wylfa Power Station: Ynys Mon

Mr David Jones:

[\[59729\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential economic merits of proceeding with the Wylfa

Nuclear Power plant project on Anglesey for (a) North Wales, (b) the Northern Powerhouse region and (c) the UK.

Greg Hands:

[Holding answer 26 October 2021]: New nuclear projects can deliver significant local, regional, and national economic benefits, including high-skilled employment, to the UK. Government would expect to see similar levels of economic impacts to those at Hinkley in the regions where future power stations might be built.

The construction of Hinkley Point C has to-date seen EDF spend £3.5 billion in the south-west, and it is estimated that a large-scale nuclear plant would support around 10,000 jobs at peak of construction.

The Government has set out a new £120 million Future Nuclear Enabling Fund towards the development of nuclear projects. More details of the Fund and how it will operate will be released in due course.

Mr David Jones:

[\[59732\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the suitability of the Wylfa site on Anglesey for redevelopment as a new, large-scale nuclear power plant.

Greg Hands:

[Holding answer 26 October 2021]: The Government believes there is an important role for large-scale nuclear in the UK and has been clear in its commitment to “at least one more” gigawatt power plant, subject to clear value for money for both consumers and taxpayers and all relevant approvals. The Wylfa Newydd site remains a candidate for new nuclear power, despite Hitachi’s withdrawal from the proposed nuclear project, and has the potential to host a range of nuclear technology – GW and/or small modular reactors – and the Government is continuing to discuss new projects with other viable companies and investors wishing to develop sites, including this one.

CABINET OFFICE

■ National Income: Per Capita Costs

Kenny MacAskill:

[\[58515\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will publish Gross Domestic Product on a per capita basis for the population of (a) Scotland, (b) Wales, (c) England, (d) North East of England and (e) North West of England for each year between 2000 and 2019.

Michael Ellis:

The information requested falls under the remit of the UK Statistics Authority. I have, therefore, asked the Authority to respond.

Professor Sir Ian Diamond | National Statistician

Kenny MacAskill MP House of Commons London SW1A 0PW

19 October 2021

Dear Mr MacAskill,

As National Statistician and Chief Executive of the UK Statistics Authority, I am responding to your Parliamentary Question regarding the publication of Gross Domestic Product on a per capita basis for the population of (a) Scotland, (b) Wales, (c) England, (d) North East of England and (e) North West of England for each year between 2000 and 2019 (58515).

Table 1 shows gross domestic product per head ¹ of population in pounds (£) for Scotland, Wales, England, North East of England and North West of England for each year between 2000 and 2019. The estimates in Table 1 are chained volume measures, which means the effects of inflation have been removed. These are often referred to as 'real terms' figures. Estimates in current prices, which include the effects of inflation, are also available ².

Yours sincerely,

Professor Sir Ian Diamond

¹ 'Per head' is used in this release. 'Per head' and 'per capita' mean per individual of the population

² [Regional gross domestic product in current prices, along with all our other estimates of regional economic activity are available.](#)

Attachments:

1. Gross domestic product per head [\[Table 1.pdf\]](#)

■ **Taxation: Scotland**

Kenny MacAskill:

[58513]

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the tax revenues raised in Scotland were from (a) tax on dividends, (b) corporation tax and (c) capital gains tax in each of the last 10 years.

Kenny MacAskill:

[58514]

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister of the Cabinet Office, how much tax revenue was raised from the (a) North East and (b) South East region of England from (a) tax on dividends, (b) corporation tax and (c) capital gains tax in each of the last 10 years.

Michael Ellis:

The information requested falls under the remit of the UK Statistics Authority. I have, therefore, asked the Authority to respond.

Professor Sir Ian Diamond | National Statistician

Kenny MacAskill MP House of Commons London SW1A 0AA

20 October 2021

Dear Mr MacAskill,

As National Statistician and Chief Executive of the UK Statistics Authority, I am responding to your Parliamentary Question asking what the tax revenues raised in Scotland were from (a) tax on dividends, (b) corporation tax and (c) capital gains tax in each of the last 10 years (58513); and how much tax revenue was raised from the (a) North East and (b) South East region of England from (a) tax on dividends, (b) corporation tax and (c) capital gains tax in each of the last 10 years (58514).

Tax revenues by region of the UK are published annually by the Office for National Statistics as part of the Country and Regional Public Sector Finances (CRPSF) ¹, and these include estimates for corporation tax and capital gains tax. Taxes on dividends are not presented separately within the CRPSF publication and are instead included within estimates of income tax. A breakdown of taxes on dividends is unavailable. I further note that corporation tax amounts quoted exclude Offshore / North Sea corporation tax. Therefore, a table showing income tax, corporation tax, capital gains tax and offshore corporation tax receipts for Scotland, the North East, and the South East for financial years 2010/11 to 2019/20 has been provided.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Sir Ian Diamond

1 [Country and Regional Public Sector Finances](#)

Attachments:

1. Table 1 [\[Table 1.pdf\]](#)

DEFENCE

■ Armed Forces: Young People

Martin Docherty-Hughes:

[56396]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether a separated parent may prevent their child's enlistment in the armed forces when the other separated parent has granted consent.

Leo Docherty:

Parental consent to join the Armed Forces must be obtained for those aged under 18. All persons who have parental responsibility must give their consent in writing before the application can proceed. If an agreement cannot be reached, a parent can apply for a Specific Issue Order or Prohibited Steps Order. A judge will then make a decision based on the applicant's best interests.

The Ministry of Defence takes its duty of care to all recruits extremely seriously, and those aged under 18 are treated with special consideration.

All Phase 1 and Phase 2 training organisations are subject to Ofsted inspection and the Army Foundation College (AFC) Harrogate was graded 'Outstanding' earlier this

year. Ofsted were particularly impressed by the strong ethos of emotional and psychological safety at AFC Harrogate, where dedicated safeguarding, mental health and wellbeing leads support students at the college.

Service personnel aged under 18 are not deployed on hostile operations outside the UK or on any operations where they could be exposed to hostilities. All new recruits, regardless of age, can discharge within their first three to six months of service.

■ **Military Aid: Scottish Ambulance Services**

David Duguid:

[\[58991\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what estimate he has made of the cost of deploying of military personnel to assist the Scottish Health and Scottish Ambulance Service during the covid-19 outbreak.

James Heappey:

Since 22 March 2020, the estimated cost of assisting the Scottish Government in support of Op RESCRIPT (MoD's COVID-19 response) is £15 million.

■ **Veterans: Radiation Exposure**

Crispin Blunt:

[\[58714\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department has taken to provide a priority service for nuclear test veterans since his Department's announcement of such a scheme on 26 August 2020.

Leo Docherty:

Veterans UK have worked with The British Nuclear Test Veterans Association (BNTVA) to develop enhanced guidance to support claimants belonging to the Veterans Nuclear Test community. Improved content, signposting, an additional claim form and a bespoke printable pdf leaflet are now available to assist Nuclear Test Veterans prior to submitting their application.

Crispin Blunt:

[\[58715\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many nuclear test veterans have (a) submitted claims under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme since the announcement of 26 August 2020, and (b) received compensation through a claim.

Leo Docherty:

The Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) was introduced by the Government to provide compensation to military personnel injured on or after 6 April 2005. As there have been no nuclear tests carried out since 2005, there is no eligibility for Nuclear Test Veterans (NTVs) to claim under the scheme.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ Alcoholic Drinks: Advertising****Ronnie Cowan:**[\[56542\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions she has had with the devolved Administrations on alcohol marketing and industry sponsorships during televised sporting events such as football and rugby matches.

Nigel Huddleston:

I communicate regularly with my counterparts at devolved administrations, including through our arm's length body for elite sport UK Sport, however I have not held discussions with them about this matter, or industry sponsorship, in relation to televised sporting events. There are already very stringent regulations in place for the marketing of alcohol through the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) codes of practice for advertising.

If new evidence emerges that clearly highlights major problems with the existing advertising Codes of practice, then the ASA has a duty to revisit the Codes and take appropriate action.

■ Broadband: Banff and Buchan**David Duguid:**[\[58989\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how many premises in Banff and Buchan constituency are not connected to superfast broadband.

Julia Lopez:

According to data from the latest [Ofcom Connected Nations report](#) (Summer 2021), there are 6,753 premises that are unable to access superfast broadband speeds of 30Mbps in the constituency of Banff and Buchan. The latest data from Thinkbroadband shows that 85% of premises in Banff and Buchan can access superfast broadband (>30Mbps), up from 74% in October 2016.

Superfast broadband coverage across Scotland will be extended further through the 'Reaching 100%' (R100) programme. The first funding commitment from the UK Government's £5 billion Project Gigabit was announced in the summer to enable upgrades to gigabit speeds for over 5,000 premises which were within scope for superfast coverage via R100. The government will continue to work with the Scottish Government to extend gigabit coverage as far as possible through Project Gigabit.

Communities and businesses in rural areas not in line for commercial coverage or government-funded projects to provide gigabit coverage are also eligible for immediate help with the costs of installing gigabit through the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme as part of Project Gigabit.

Those premises unable to access speeds of at least 10Mbps are likely to be eligible for support via the Universal Service Obligation, which gives every eligible premises

the legal right to request a decent, affordable broadband connection, providing download speeds of at least 10 Mbps and upload speeds of 1Mbps.

David Duguid:

[\[58990\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what estimate her Department has made of the geographical coverage of (a) 4G and (b) 5G mobile data in Banff and Buchan constituency.

Julia Lopez:

Ofcom is responsible for measuring 4G coverage and it does not currently report on 5G coverage. In Ofcom's Connected Nations summer update report, published on 9 September 2021, 87% of the Banff and Buchan constituency had 4G geographic coverage from all four mobile network operators, and 99.4% of the constituency had 4G coverage from at least one.

■ Channel Four Television

Simon Fell:

[\[59963\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what estimate her Department has made of the annual value of the intellectual property and exports generated for independent producers by working with Channel 4.

Julia Lopez:

Channel 4 has played an important role in supporting independent production in the UK. The government has been clear that we want Channel 4 to remain a public service broadcaster, with obligations and benefits similar to those all public service broadcasters have - including those PSBs that are currently privately-owned broadcasters - if there is a change of ownership.

We are clear that Channel 4's public service remit, and its strengths in working with independent producers are precisely the strengths we would expect to be attractive to a buyer, and that we would expect any buyer to be likely to nurture and develop through new investment.

We have consulted on a potential change of ownership of Channel 4. Our public consultation closed on 14 September. We are carefully considering the views and evidence we have received to inform the government's policy-making and final decision.

Whatever decision we make about the future ownership model of Channel 4 will not compromise this government's commitment to the independent production sector and to the wider creative economy.

■ Channel Four Television: Privatisation

Simon Fell:

[\[59962\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will make it his policy to maintain Channel 4's 50 per cent commissioning spend outside of London in the event that Channel 4 is privatised.

Julia Lopez:

Whatever decision is made about Channel 4's ownership, we are clear that any changes will not compromise our commitment to the independent production sector or the wider creative economy, including our creative powerhouses across the UK. We are clear that we want Channel 4 to remain a public service broadcaster, with public service obligations.

We have consulted on the best ownership model to support Channel 4 for years to come. Our public consultation ran for 10 weeks before closing on 14 September. We are carefully considering the views and evidence we have received to inform the government's policy-making and final decision.

■ Exercise and Obesity**Feryal Clark:**[\[59096\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of Sport England's Active Lives Survey November 2019-20 Report published in April 2021; and what steps she has taken to tackle the causes of obesity in (a) Enfield North, (b) Greater London, and (c) England.

Feryal Clark:[\[59099\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent steps she has taken to provide Enfield North the adequate funding necessary to tackle the deteriorating sport-related activity levels referred to in Sport England's Active Lives Survey November 2019/20 Report published in April 2021.

Nigel Huddleston:

Sport and physical activity play a fundamental role in improving and maintaining public health, and a transformative role in creating a healthy, happy nation. For these reasons sport and activity are at the centre of the national response to improving people's health, including tackling obesity. Sport England's Active Lives Survey is a very important tool to understand the levels of activity across the nation and underline the importance of sport and physical activity to the people of this country.

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities published 'Tackling obesity: empowering adults and children to live healthier lives' in July 2020. The strategy reflects the significant work that we are undertaking across England to halve childhood obesity by 2030 and to help people achieve and maintain a healthier weight.

The government has provided over £1 billion worth of support into the sport and physical activity sector through the pandemic to help to maintain and support the sector. As part of this, Sport England has provided £270 million directly to support community sport clubs and exercise centres, via a range of funds including their £35 million Community Emergency Fund.

Sport England has invested £957,419 in the Enfield North constituency since April 2017. Of this, more than £22,000 was via Sport England's Community Emergency Fund to support grassroots sport clubs and community organisations to survive the coronavirus pandemic.

Alongside this through Sport England's new strategy, Uniting the Movement, they set out the importance of working in places to provide the ongoing support needed in communities. Sport England have tested and championed place-based solutions to tackle inactivity through their Local Delivery Pilots since 2017, including testing the role that tackling inactivity can play in reducing obesity and helping those living with obesity.

■ **Football: World Cup**

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[\[60357\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will make it his policy that a successful UK and Republic of Ireland bid for the 2030 FIFA World Cup would include venues in all parts of the UK.

Nigel Huddleston:

Hosting a FIFA World Cup would be an exciting opportunity for the whole of the UK and Ireland. UK Government - along with the Devolved Administrations, the Government of Ireland, and the five football associations - has committed to scoping a potential bid for the 2030 competition.

Although the final decision on host venues would be made by FIFA, it is our strong aspiration that matches (as well as other venues, such as training locations) would be hosted in all parts of the UK. We are working closely with all bid partners to assess the options for doing so.

■ **Horticulture**

Peter Dowd:

[\[60437\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the (a) Ornamental Horticulture Roundtable Group's action plan entitled Unlocking Green Growth: A plan for the ornamental horticulture and landscaping industry, published on 7 September 2021 and (b) proposals contained in that document that aim to support UK tourism.

Nigel Huddleston:

I am aware of the value of the garden tourism market, especially domestic ornamental horticulture and the positive impact it makes to the UK, through job creation, encouraging creativity and promoting people's well-being. The Ornamental Horticulture Roundtable Group (OHRG) report identifies how barriers to the sector's growth can be unlocked through a collaborative approach between the government and industry. This collaboration reflects the shared ambition for a truly vibrant and sustainable ornamental sector which can support the UK tourism industry.

The government is working with the OHRG and the sector to build on current good work already happening within the industry. The recently published Tourism Recovery Plan highlights our commitment to ensuring the tourism sector enhances the country's natural heritage, in a sustainable and inclusive manner.

■ Museums and Galleries: Telephone Services

Dr Rupa Huq:

[\[56356\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions she has had with representatives of public (a) galleries and (b) museums on the provision to customers of telephone numbers to ensure that those customers without access to the internet can find relevant information.

Nigel Huddleston:

The Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport recently met with representatives from museums and museum sector bodies and discussed the accessibility of museums amongst other topics.

Access policies are a matter for the museum in question, as they, including the DCMS sponsored museums, operate independently from the government. However, the government supports the Museum Accreditation Scheme, the UK-wide standard for the sector, via its arms-length body Arts Council England. Requirements for accreditation include that museums have an Access Policy and an Access Plan to maintain (and where possible to improve) the physical, sensory and intellectual access to their collections, information about their collections, and access to the buildings housing their collections. There are currently more than 1700 museums participating in the scheme across the UK.

The DCMS sponsored museums are also required to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty, and are expected to act in such a way as to maximise attendance and broaden audiences.

■ Public Lending Right: Wales

Ben Lake:

[\[57258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions she has had with the Welsh Government on increasing the Public Lending Right.

Nigel Huddleston:

There has been no recent discussion with the Welsh Government on increasing the Public Lending Right (PLR). My department will shortly consult with sector stakeholders, including the Welsh Government, on a revised PLR rate per loan for the PLR Scheme year 2020/21. It is intended that the revised PLR rate per loan be introduced in January 2022.

EDUCATION**■ Apprentices and Training****Sarah Olney:****[58471]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many (a) apprenticeships and (b) traineeships were started in each month of 2021 in the (a) HGV driver, (b) nursing, (c) home and other types of carer, (d) nursery and primary education, (e) professional chef, (f) sales and retail assistant, (g) cleaners and (h) butcher and slaughter professions.

Alex Burghart:

The attached table contains apprenticeship starts, reported to date, for the provisional 2020/21 full academic year for selected apprenticeship standards and frameworks.

Please note that these reflect the subject of the apprenticeship and do not necessarily align with the profession of the apprentice. These are provisional figures and subject to change – finalised figures will be published in November 2021. Figures for all apprenticeship starts are published here: <https://content.explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/api/releases/922d9d6b-8a91-428f-8133-0dc5425b9cd5/files/0785fe06-5be8-42b8-7aff-08d9826bde18>.

For traineeships, whilst our data allows us to identify learners undertaking work experience, it is not possible for us to identify the profession involved. In the first three quarters of the 2020/21 academic year (August to April), reported to date, there were 13,600 traineeship starts in England, an increase of 23.8% from the equivalent point in 2019/20.

Attachments:

1. [58471_table](#) [58471_apprenticeship_starts.xls]

■ Children: Disability**Alex Cunningham:****[60406]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to Scope and the Disabled Children's Partnership's report entitled The Gap Widens, published in October 2021, which found that there is a £573 million funding gap in disabled children's social care, what fiscal steps his Department is planning to take to support all families with a disabled child to access respite care and take short breaks.

Will Quince:

I refer the hon. Member for Stockton North to the answer I gave on 20 October 2021 to Question [56976](#).

■ Education: Business**Holly Mumby-Croft:****[58574]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what resources are available for education institutions to engage with local businesses and employers in their community.

Alex Burghart:

We want to create quality interactions between schools, colleges, and businesses. The Careers and Enterprise Company supports schools and colleges to make links with local employers. Over 3,500 volunteer business professionals are now working with schools and colleges through the Enterprise Adviser Network to help open young people's eyes to a range of different career possibilities, challenge stereotypes and help prepare them for the workplace. We also have over 300 major employers, known as cornerstone employers, driving the delivery of encounters for young people in opportunity areas and careers hubs across England.

As part of the Skills for Jobs white paper, a £65 million Strategic Development Fund is being piloted in several areas across the country to test a new collaborative approach to skills planning and delivery. Some of the pilots are establishing college business centres to work with local employers to develop a joint understanding of the skills and technology needed to drive innovation and productivity, and to develop a more targeted response.

Education: Males**Henry Smith:**[\[56968\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 4 June 2021 to Question 10325 on Education: Gender, what additional steps his Department is planning to take to help improve the average outcomes for boys to match those of girls given that the gender learning gap remains high at KS2 and KS4 levels.

Mr Robin Walker:

The department does not design education policy that exclusively targets certain groups of pupils with characteristics that are protected by the Equality Act 2010, including policy based on gender. We are committed to providing high quality education and training for everyone, whatever their background or personal characteristics.

Since 2010, the government has pursued a reform agenda to drive up academic standards for all and level up for the most disadvantaged pupils. When it comes to raising standards, evidence shows that teachers are the most important in-school factor affecting pupils' education. In June 2021, the department announced an investment of over £250 million in the National Professional Qualifications and Early Career Framework programmes which are based on the best available evidence and have been developed in partnership with the Education Endowment Foundation. In addition, in October the department announced a Levelling Up Premium worth up to £3,000 tax-free for maths, physics, chemistry and computing teachers in years 1 to 5 of their careers. This will support recruitment and retention of specialist teachers in these subjects and in the schools and areas that need them most. Through this, the department is committed to helping tackle the education gap for all pupils.

■ Family Hubs

Rachael Maskell: [\[59843\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the level of funding for (a) Family Hubs and (b) and other such partner organisations.

Rachael Maskell: [\[59844\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has plans for Sure Start Children Centres to become Family Hubs.

Rachael Maskell: [\[59845\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to monitor the outcomes of Family Hubs.

Rachael Maskell: [\[59846\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will publish guidelines on how Family Hubs differentiate themselves from Sure Start Children Centres.

Rachael Maskell: [\[59847\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment he has made of (a) staffing and (b) capacity challenges experienced by Family Hubs.

Rachael Maskell: [\[59848\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he plans to propose a workforce plan for Family Hubs.

Will Quince:

The government is investing over £34 million to champion family hubs as a way of improving access to services. This investment includes a £10 million transformation fund to open family hubs in at least 10 new areas in England; a new national centre for family hubs to provide expert advice, guidance and advocacy; data and digital products that will support the practical implementation of family hubs; and an evaluation innovation fund to build the evidence base.

The department will be publishing further detail on our approach to family hubs shortly.

■ National Tutoring Programme: Stockport

Navendu Mishra: [\[58538\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the financial allocation from the National Tutoring Programme to schools in Stockport constituency was in the academic year 2020-21.

Mr Robin Walker:

The department does not hold data broken down by constituency.

In June 2020, £350 million was allocated to the National Tutoring Programme as part of the £1 billion COVID-19 catch-up package. In November 2020, it was confirmed that this would fund the programme for the 2020/21 and 2021/22 academic years.

The department awarded the Education Endowment Foundation funding of up to £80 million to deliver the Tuition Partners pillar of the programme. Teach First were given up to £8.5 million to deliver the Academic Mentors pillar of the programme last academic year (2020/21).

■ Post-18 Education and Funding Review

Zarah Sultana:

[59079]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 21 September 2021 to Question 49129, on Students: Loans, when his Department plans to publish the conclusion to the Post-18 education and funding review.

Michelle Donelan:

Further to the Interim Conclusion to the Review of Post-18 Education and Funding published in January of this year, we continue to consider the recommendations made by the independent panel that reported to the review, and plan to conclude it in full in due course.

■ Pupil Exclusions

Peter Kyle:

[60473]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the rate of school exclusions has been in (a) local authority maintained schools and (b) academies in each of the last five years.

Mr Robin Walker:

The requested data is in the attached table. Rates of permanent exclusion and suspension for local authority maintained schools and academies are affected by the mix of schools in each group. Comparisons across years are affected by the increasing numbers of academy schools.

Attachments:

1. [60473 table](#)

[60473_table_showing_permanent_exclusions_in_maintained_schools_and_academies.xls]

■ Pupils: Absenteeism

Peter Kyle:

[60474]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment his Department has made of trends in the level of unexplained pupil absence in England from (a) 16 September 2021 and (b) 14 October 2021.

Mr Robin Walker:

Nationally, education settings are open. Attendance is mandatory for schools and strongly encouraged for nurseries. The usual rules on school attendance continue to apply, including parents' duty to secure their child's regular attendance at school. Our

priority is for schools to deliver face-to-face, high-quality education to all pupils. The evidence is clear that being out of education can impact educational attainment, life chances, mental and physical health. As COVID-19 becomes a virus that we learn to live with, it is imperative that we reduce the disruption to children and young people's education. Schools should work closely with other professionals, where appropriate, to support school attendance. Where pupils are not able to attend school as they are following clinical or public health advice related to COVID-19, absence will not be penalised.

To maximise attendance within schools we have a comprehensive attendance strategy that has been implemented since the beginning of this academic year to ensure that any absence because of COVID-19 is minimised, and we are continuing to closely monitor absence levels and trends to ensure a focus on attendance remains throughout the rest of this academic year. The department has acted throughout the COVID-19 outbreak to help minimise the impact on pupils' education and provided extensive support for schools. COVID-19 has caused particular challenges for some children who may already have been disengaged from education. That is why we have been working closely with local authorities and schools to help them re-engage pupils, including providing best practice advice.

Daily on-site attendance data is collected through the educational setting status form (EdSet). EdSet monitors COVID-19 related absence specifically by design and a full breakdown on absence for all reasons is not included in the survey.

Reasons for not attending on-site, other than for COVID-19 related reasons, includes off-site educational activities, such as school trips or work experience, other authorised absences, such as non-COVID illnesses, and unauthorised absences.

More detailed absence data is collected in the termly School Census. In line with usual reporting timetable, Autumn term 2021 statistics are due to be published in mid-2022. Autumn term data is not collected daily and has different coverage and definitions to the EdSet data and so they are not directly comparable.

■ School Leaving: Special Educational Needs

Holly Mumby-Croft:

[\[58572\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Business, Enterprise and Industrial Strategy on additional incentives for employers to take on school leavers with Education, Health and Care plans.

Will Quince:

The ministerial team and officials from the Department for Education regularly engage with their counterparts across government to ensure that there is a joined-up approach in championing support for young people with special educational needs and disabilities. This includes working with businesses to encourage them to see the positive impact of employing and developing the skills of disabled people through programmes such as supported internships, traineeships and apprenticeships.

In July the government published the National Disability Strategy which confirmed our vision to transform the everyday lives of disabled people. As the Department for Education, we have committed to do more to support children and young people to receive an education that pushes and supports them to reach their full potential, including preparation for employment.

We will continue to work with other government departments to deliver the commitments in the strategy.

■ Special Educational Needs

Peter Kyle:

[60475]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, excluding pupils absent for covid-related reasons, how many pupils (a) with an Education, Health and Care Plan, (b) who had a social worker and (c) eligible for free school meals attended a state-funded school on (i) 15 October 2020 and (ii) 14 October 2021.

Will Quince:

The daily education setting (EdSet) survey asks schools and colleges to report data such as attendance at an institution level.

The department holds overall attendance data on the number of pupils attending state-funded schools on site, including for pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan, with a social worker, and since 30 March 2021, for pupils who are eligible for free school meals. Table 1b contains available data for 15 October 2020 at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/attendance-in-education-and-early-years-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/2020-week-42>. Available data for 14 October 2021 is available here: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/attendance-in-education-and-early-years-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/2021-week-42>.

Data is also collected daily on the number of pupils absent due to COVID-19 related reasons across all pupils overall. However, balancing data needs against reporting burdens, data is not collected on COVID-19 related absence for each of these pupil groups. Therefore, the department does not hold the figures requested. EdSet monitors COVID-19 related absence specifically by design and a full breakdown on absence for all reasons is not included in the survey.

■ Students: Finance

Ms Lyn Brown:

[58354]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent progress the Government has made on providing a sharia-compliant alternative student finance system.

Michelle Donelan:

I refer the hon. Member for West Ham to the answer I gave on 18 October 2021 to Question [53884](#).

■ Students: Loans

Dr Rupa Huq:

[\[59898\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of maintaining the student loan repayment threshold at its current level in England.

Michelle Donelan:

As part of the wider Review of Post-18 Education and Funding, we continue to consider carefully the recommendations made by the independent panel that reported to the review, including those around fees and funding for higher education. We plan to set out a full conclusion to the Review in due course.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Air Pollution

Daisy Cooper:

[\[57366\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to help ensure air pollution levels near (a) schools, (b) hospitals and (c) GP surgeries do not exceed the World Health Organisation's recommended limits.

Jo Churchill:

Air pollution is a particular threat to vulnerable groups, including the elderly, the very young and those with existing health conditions such as asthma. However, while targeted local action can be taken, this needs to form part of a wider programme of actions on air pollution. For example, we are continuing to drive forward the ambitious actions outlined in the Clean Air Strategy, such as phasing out the sale of house coal and small volumes of wet wood for domestic burning, which is a major source of PM 2.5; the pollutant known to have the most adverse health impacts.

Our landmark Environment Bill will improve air quality by establishing a duty to set a new concentration target for PM2.5, which will act as a minimum standard across the country. In addition, through the wider environmental target framework, we propose a long-term population exposure reduction target for PM2.5. These targets will work together to reduce PM2.5 in areas with the highest levels and drive continuous improvement across the country.

Government is committed to evidence-based policy making and we will consider the World Health Organization guideline level for PM 2.5 alongside independent expert advice and evidence and analysis considering a diversity of factors when setting these targets

We have also committed in the Environment Bill to review the National Air Quality Strategy with a key objective of promoting and supporting greater local action to identify and address air pollution inequalities, targeting action at vulnerable groups and communities.

Under the Local air Quality Management Framework, Local Authorities are required to review and assess local air quality and act where local air quality objectives are exceeded. Local authorities have a range of powers to take action to reduce pollution from road vehicles, such as introduce 20mph zones and enforcing anti-idling laws. Local authorities in England can install School Streets restricting vehicle access around schools using standard traffic signing. £338 million has been made available this year through active travel funding. This will enable LAs to deliver new safe cycling and walking routes in their areas, which could include the delivery of school streets. Defra's annual Air Quality Grant scheme provides funding to local authorities to tackle local air pollution and reduce emissions affecting schools, businesses and residents. It has awarded nearly £70 million in funding to a variety of projects since it started in 1997. This year £9 million has been allocated to the grant scheme to support local authorities to improve local air quality.

■ Chelsea Flower Show: Carbon Emissions

Andrew Bridgen:

[\[56160\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions he has had with the Royal Horticultural Society on the environmental impact of the Chelsea Flower Show in terms of reaching net zero.

Victoria Prentis:

Defra Ministers and officials undertake a wide range of discussions with stakeholders on the UK achieving its net zero ambitions. Whilst the Chelsea Flower Show is a key annual event in the horticultural calendar, its environmental impact has not been a topic covered in ministerial discussions with the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS). The RHS has recently published its sustainability strategy, which includes its target to be net climate positive by 2030.

■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Flags

Justin Madders:

[\[50059\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, which companies have supplied Union Jack flags to his Department since 2019.

Justin Madders:

[\[50060\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many and what proportion of Union Jack flags purchased by his Department in each of the last two years were manufactured in the UK.

Victoria Prentis:

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has purchased one Union Jack flag since 2019. This flag was made in the UK.

■ Environment Protection: Employment

Emily Thornberry:

[\[58336\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate he has made of the number of jobs that (a) have been or (b) will be created as a result of (i) UK private, (ii) Government and (iii) inward investment as part of the Government's plans to protect the natural environment between November 2020 and November 2030.

Emily Thornberry:

[\[58338\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent estimate he has made of the number of jobs that (a) have been or (b) will be retained as a result of (i) UK private, (ii) Government and (c) inward investment as part of the Government's plans to protect the natural environment between November 2020 and November 2030.

Rebecca Pow:

The Government's Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution is mobilising significant investment in protecting the natural environment in England over the coming years. This will create and retain a range of green jobs while safeguarding our cherished landscapes and restoring habitats for wildlife in order to combat biodiversity loss and adapt to climate change.

As part of this, the £80 million Green Recovery Challenge Fund (GRCF) has already attracted £17.6 million in match funding across 159 projects and will create and retain around 2,500 jobs. The Government's £5.2 billion flood defence investment programme will create approximately 2,000 jobs over the duration of the programme (April 2021 - March 2027) with private sector delivery partners involved in flood defence scheme design and construction.

The England Trees Action Plan committed to treble tree planting rates in England by the end of this Parliament, supported by over £500m from the Nature for Climate Fund. In the recently launched Net Zero Strategy, the Government has also announced that it will boost the Nature for Climate fund with a further £124 million of new money, ensuring total spend of more than £750 million by 2025 on peat restoration, woodland creation and management – above and beyond what was promised in the manifesto. This funding, along with increased private investment, will help to support up to 1,900 jobs by 2024 and 2,000 jobs by 2030 in new woodland creation, harvesting and restocking. It will also support additional jobs in tourism, seed supply and local farming.

The England Peat Action Plan includes a commitment to invest over £50 million of the Nature for Climate Fund to restore approximately 35,000ha of peatland by 2025, which will create or retain approximately 600 jobs.

This is a devolved matter and the information provided therefore relates to England only.

■ Farms

Chi Onwurah:

[\[59785\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans his Department has to (a) promote collaboration between land managers with stakeholders from the (i) private sector and (ii) Government and (b) incentivise better land management which balances the trade-off between sustainability and food provision.

Rebecca Pow:

We are working closely with stakeholders to investigate a range of mechanisms that can promote and support collaboration between land managers, government, and the private sector.

For example, our Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund is developing a pipeline of scalable and replicable nature projects that the private sector can invest in. We are also funding tests and trials on how to enable blending of public and private finance in our new environmental land management schemes and ensure that public money does not "crowd out" private investment. We are co-designing services alongside the community including stakeholders and farmers.

Our new environmental land management schemes will pay for sustainable farming practices, improving animal health and welfare, reducing carbon emissions, creating and preserving habitat, and making landscape-scale environmental changes. This is an important step towards achieving our 25 Year Environment Plan ambitions and our carbon net zero goals.

For example, we are currently proposing to open applications for our first Landscape Recovery pilot projects to sites between 500 to 5,000 hectares, which could be provided by collaborative groups of farmers and land managers, individuals, or organisations such as non-government organisations. This will build on the success of the Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund, which we announced a new round of funding for in September.

■ Fishing Catches

Peter Aldous:

[\[56310\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, for what reason his Department has removed catch limits for fly-shooters targeting non-quota species for 2021.

Victoria Prentis:

The UK EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) provides for each Party to grant access to fish non-quota species at the average tonnage fished in the reference period 2012-2016, for a five and a half year adjustment period. There are no catch limits for individual vessels fishing for non-quota species.

■ Fishing Vessels: Marine Environment

Peter Aldous: [\[56273\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many existing fishing vessel licences issued by the UK Single Issuing Authority entitle the vessels to use fly shooting equipment in the (a) southern North Sea and (b) English Channel.

Victoria Prentis:

Vessels are currently not required to have a specific permit for Scottish seining (fly shooting). Fishing licences issued to fish in UK water are not restricted by area other than for those vessels fishing in Territorial waters.

Peter Aldous: [\[56308\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if the Government will ban pelagic trawlers over 55 metres and fly-shooters from the English Channel and Southern North Sea.

Victoria Prentis:

The Government is currently reviewing its policy on fly-shooting vessels and large pelagic trawlers in UK waters. Any action taken needs to be evidence-based, and in line with the UK/EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement.

Peter Aldous: [\[56432\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the (a) length and (b) power is of the fishing vessels that have used fly shooting equipment in the (i) southern North Sea and (ii) English Channel in 2021.

Victoria Prentis:

The engine power of UK vessels fishing with fly seining equipment in the southern North Sea and English Channel ranges from 749kW to 1325KW. While the length of these vessels varies between 23.9 and 36.6 metres. European Commission vessels with fly seining equipment are listed on the public EC fleet register.

■ Forestry: Finance

Paul Maynard: [\[56644\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much his Department has paid the Woodland Trust for delivering tree-planting and forestry projects in each of the last five years.

Rebecca Pow:

Defra has paid the Woodland Trust £5.5 million in total, over the last five years, since 2016/17. This has funded a wide range of activities including research, surveying and assurance, as well as tree planting schemes. Of the total, £3.8 million has been spent on tree planting in the Northern Forest.

■ Recycling

Ruth Jones: [58496]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure that there is better separation of recyclable materials at source to minimise the contamination of flexible plastic waste by food waste.

Ruth Jones: [58497]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department is taking steps to increase the UK's domestic capacity for the disposal of flexible plastic waste.

Jo Churchill:

In our second consultation on 'Consistency in Household and Business Recycling in England' we consulted on proposals to require plastic films and flexible packaging be included in household and business recycling collections. We also asked for views on how plastic films should be collected to avoid contamination of other recyclables, contamination with food and to make sorting easier. The consultation closed on 4th July and we will publish our response in due course.

Through consistent household collections and extended producer responsibility in the Environment Bill, alongside measures such as the plastic packaging tax, we will significantly support the market for all plastics recycling, including flexibles, giving businesses the confidence to invest in enhanced domestic capacity. In pursuit of this, the government, through the UK Research and Innovation Industrial Strategy Challenge, has also invested £20m into four plastics reprocessing facilities to develop new technologies in this area.

■ River Wye: Pollution

Jesse Norman: [59999]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the (a) level of pollution in the river Wye and (b) impact of that pollution on aquatic life.

Rebecca Pow:

The Environment Agency (EA) carries out regular sampling of the River Wye to monitor chemical and biological quality. The main sampling season for the impacts on aquatic life is March to September. Recently collected data is available on the Defra Data Services Platform website here:

<https://environment.data.gov.uk/appgallery>

The last formal classification of ecological status for the River Wye was carried out in 2019. Overall waterbody classifications for the Wye Management Catchment within England were:

- 72% were at Moderate Status
- 22% were at Poor Status

- 6% were at Bad Status.

Where there is new data available a refresh of these classifications will be completed in 2022. Details of these assessments are published on the Catchment Data Explorer website here:

<https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/>

The EA has increased monitoring of water quality and aquatic life in the Wye Catchment in response to deteriorations identified in the 2019 assessments and recent algal blooms within the catchment. The EA is analysing data collected through the growing season this year (March – September 2021) to update its understanding of the sources, pathways and impacts of pollution in the catchment.

Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, the EA and other partners are working together to find effective solutions to restore the River Wye Special Area of Conservation (SAC) to a favourable condition with respect to phosphate. These measures are set out in the Nutrient Management Plan which is published here:

https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/directory-record/2097/nutrient_management_plan

■ Seasonal Workers: Pilot Schemes

Paul Blomfield:

[58820]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when the Government's evaluation of the Seasonal Workers Pilot scheme, produced in 2019, will be published; and what recent assessment he has made of the effect of (a) the expansion of the Seasonal Workers Pilot scheme and (b) use of short term work visas on levels of exploitation among seasonal workers.

Victoria Prentis:

On 22 December 2020, the Government extended the Seasonal Workers Pilot for one year and expanded the number of visas from 10,000 to 30,000.

The extension and expansion of the Pilot for 2021 allows for further review of the Pilot, including how growers will reduce their reliance on migrant labour now we have left the EU, whilst also easing some of the pressure experienced on farms when they are at their busiest.

The Government takes the safety and wellbeing of seasonal workers extremely seriously. The Home Office sponsor licencing system places clear and binding requirements and obligations on the operators of the Seasonal Workers Pilot to safeguard seasonal workers and prevent exploitation of them. Defra, the Home Office and the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA), work together to ensure that businesses adhere to the stringent requirements for ensuring safety and wellbeing of seasonal agricultural workers.

The Seasonal Workers Pilot requires the operators to ensure all seasonal workers, including those on short-term temporary visas recently announced for HGV drivers, poultry workers and butchers, have a safe working environment, are treated fairly and paid properly, and robust systems are in place for the reporting of concerns and rapid

action. A prerequisite for becoming an operator is that each organisation must hold and maintain licencing from the GLAA. Defra would be notified should an operator or farm not be meeting the required standards and appropriate action taken.

We intend to publish the first-year review later this year.

■ **Sewage: Water Treatment**

Luke Pollard:

[R] [\[56613\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he plans to take to help ensure that water company employees are safeguarded from being ascribed fault for incidents occurring as a result of the shortage of sewage treatment chemicals.

Rebecca Pow:

There is no shortage of sewage treatment chemicals, and precautionary mitigation measures have been put in place to reduce the risk of any such shortage.

■ **Shellfish: Conservation**

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[56430\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to help protect crustaceans and ensure that their use in seafood is ethical.

Victoria Prentis:

The Fisheries Act 2020 enshrines in law the Government's commitment to sustainable fishing - through its objectives and fisheries statements, and through the new legal commitment to produce Fishery Management Plans (FMPs) to ensure our stocks are being fished sustainably and the marine environment is protected. Our key commercial crustacean species will be covered by FMPs.

The Government is also committed to further strengthening our world-leading animal welfare standards. Defra has commissioned an independent external review on sentience in decapod crustaceans such as crabs and lobsters, as well as sentience in the cephalopod class, which includes octopus, cuttlefish and squid. The review will be published before the Animal Welfare (Sentience) Bill's Report stage in the House of Lords. Any future actions in this area will be led by evidence and informed by engagement with industry.

■ **Textiles: Waste Disposal**

Alberto Costa:

[\[57117\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to introduce an Extended Producer Responsibility Scheme for textiles.

Alberto Costa:

[\[57118\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if his Department will make an assessment of the potential merits of implementing a 1p levy per garment at the point of retail to fund improved clothing recycling and collection.

Jo Churchill:

The Government's Resources & Waste Strategy identified textiles as one of five priority sectors for consideration of an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) scheme. Our draft Waste Prevention Programme, recently consulted on, affirms this commitment and sets out our consultation approach.

We have commenced the process of developing options, with EPR at the core but also including complementary policies. We will consult with stakeholders on policy options by the end of 2022.

As part of this policy development, we will consider the fee levels required to drive industry change and support real reprocessing costs. We will take on board the experience in France, which has faced challenges in doing so.

■ **UK Trade with EU: Northern Ireland**

Simon Hoare:

[\[60466\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will (a) place in the Library and (b) publish a copy of the recent audit report by the EU Commission on the functioning of Border Control Posts in Northern Ireland.

Victoria Prentis:

The EU carried out a routine audit of various Border Control Posts in Northern Ireland from 21 to 30 June 2021. The purpose of the audit was to examine the system of official controls on the entry of animals and products of animal origin into Northern Ireland and verification of the compliance of border control posts in Northern Ireland with European Union requirements.

■ **Washing Machines: Microplastics**

Alberto Costa:

[\[57119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions his Department has had with the appliance industry on introducing microfibre catching filters in washing machines to help mitigate microfibre plastic pollution.

Rebecca Pow:

The Government currently has no plans to require manufacturers to install microfibre catching filters on new washing machines and is working with industry to encourage improved environmental outcomes and reduce water pollution on a voluntary basis.

In 2020 Defra published the outcome of research into the sources and pathways of synthetic fibres and vehicle tyre wear contamination into the marine environment. A key conclusion from this research was that there are a large number of textile fibres in the air close to roads, particularly those with pedestrians, which could settle into

waterways. This amount is much greater than the number of textile fibres entering the water environment from waste-water treatment plants, suggesting that washing machine filters would have a minimal effect on the number of microplastic fibres that enter the water environment.

Defra will continue to assess new and emerging evidence in this area to inform policy options for tackling microplastic pollution.

■ **Water: Conservation**

Luke Pollard: [\[56132\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he plans to announce a water demand target.

Rebecca Pow:

Protecting our water resources remains a priority for this government, which is why we are working to support the delivery of the ambitions set out in the Environment Agency's national framework to reduce personal water consumption to 110 litres per person per day by 2050, without affecting the quality of life and enjoyment of water used by households.

We are also considering the potential for a statutory target on overall demand for public water supply under the target framework set out in the Environment Bill, alongside other target options which we intend to consult on in early 2022.

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

■ **[Subject Heading to be Assigned]**

David Mundell: [\[903846\]](#)

When she plans to announce her strategy for the Nutrition for Growth Summit taking place in Tokyo in December 2021.

Wendy Morton:

The prevention and treatment of malnutrition remains important for the UK as part of our work on global health, humanitarian response and in support of our goals on girls' education.

The Government is actively considering its approach to the Nutrition for Growth (N4G) summit, including any new nutrition commitment, and will update the house following the conclusion of the Spending Review.

Chris Grayling: [\[903847\]](#)

What support she is providing to marine habitat restoration projects in the developing world.

Vicky Ford:

This Government is substantially increasing investment in protecting the ocean. Our Commonwealth Marine Economies Programme assists developing Caribbean and

Pacific island nations to safeguard their marine habitats, which are essential for sustaining coastal economies. The new £500 million Blue Planet Fund was launched by the Prime Minister in June. It will support, for example, protecting coral reefs and mangroves.

Alan Brown:

[\[903849\]](#)

What recent diplomatic steps her Department is taking to help promote international co-operation on tackling climate change.

Vicky Ford:

As the PM has said, Climate is the top priority for the UK. I am looking forward to COP next week which will be the key moment to promote international cooperation on tackling climate change.

The Foreign Secretary has reinforced that all countries must raise ambition during her engagements since her appointment. This includes speaking to over 40 of her counterparts, attending the UK General Assembly, and visiting the US, Mexico, India, Saudi Arabia and Qatar. I have also raised with my counterparts in Africa.

Climate change is an issue for everyone. Tackling it needs everyone to work together.

■ **Abduljalil Abdulla al-Singace**

Wayne David:

[\[59716\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether the Government has made representations to the Government of Bahrain on the hunger strike being carried by Dr Abduljalil al-Singace.

James Cleverly:

We continue to monitor and raise the case of Dr Abduljalil al-Singace, as necessary, with the Bahraini Government as well as with the oversight bodies.

■ **Afghanistan: Overseas Aid**

Caroline Lucas:

[\[59767\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps she is taking to ensure that aid is reaching safehouses and gender based violence services for (a) women, (b) girls and (c) their families who cannot flee from Afghanistan; what information she holds about how humanitarian support is reaching internally displaced persons in Afghanistan; if she has taken steps to allow flexible reallocation of existing funding to meet urgent needs as identified by frontline women led NGOs that have community acceptance in Afghanistan; and if she will make a statement.

James Cleverly:

The protection of women and girls in Afghanistan is a priority for the UK. After the takeover of the Taliban, many safehouses and their staff faced security risks. We are consulting with women's organisations to understand how best to support their needs, in safety and with dignity.

Support to internally displaced people is coordinated by the UN, who estimate that, as at 17 October, there were around 677,832 internally displaced people, of whom the UN has provided assistance to 312,182 people. We are working closely with the UN and with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to understand the situation on the ground and ensure that our funding responds flexibly to the changing conditions.

■ Afghanistan: Refugees

Ms Marie Rimmer:

[\[56144\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will make it his policy to offer a place of sanctuary to people fleeing the violence in Afghanistan by expanding the Afghan Interpreters Scheme to include people engaged in UK-linked initiatives and human rights activists that mean they are at risk of targeting by the Taliban.

James Cleverly:

The Home Office administered Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) will provide protection for people at risk and identified as in need. It will prioritise those people who have assisted the UK efforts in Afghanistan who face a particular risk from the Taliban, including because of their stand for democracy and human rights. The Government has committed to welcome around 5,000 people in the first year and up to 20,000 over the coming years.

■ Afghanistan: Taliban

Catherine West:

[\[58462\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions the Prime Minister's special envoy has had with members of the Taliban government in Afghanistan on the safe evacuation of Afghan nationals to the UK.

James Cleverly:

On 5 October, Sir Simon Gass (the Prime Minister's Special Representative for the Afghan Transition) and Dr Martin Longden (Chargé d'Affaires of the UK Mission to Afghanistan in Doha) visited Kabul where they met senior members of the Taliban. On 12 October, Dr Longden met a senior-level Taliban delegation with other international partners in Doha. During these conversations the UK underlined the importance of safe passage to the UK for British Nationals and eligible Afghans, as well as the UK's key interests on counterterrorism, humanitarian issues, and human rights (including girls' education).

■ Armed Conflict: Civilians

Kim Leadbeater:

[\[56686\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will make an assessment of the effectiveness of the steps taken by the Government to meet the commitments in Section 2 of the 2020 UK Approach to the Protection of

Civilians in Armed Conflict Situations, with particular reference to the monitoring and reporting of human rights.

Vicky Ford:

The UK Government continues to be guided by principles set out in the updated Approach to Protection of Civilians paper published in August 2020. By way of example, in the past year, the UK has supported strengthening human rights provisions in the mandates for the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) peacekeeping operations. Our deployment to MINUSMA has provided assurance enabling civilian UN human rights teams to conduct their investigations. We have supported human rights monitors in Syria and encouraged the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to promote humanitarian coordination there. We have drawn on UN Human Rights Council (UNHCR) mandated investigations to inform and structure our approach to promoting civilian protection in Yemen and been consistent in our support for the work of the UNHCR Fact Finding Mission on Libya.

■ **AUKUS: Disclosure of Information**

Dr Julian Lewis:

[\[59699\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will publish the obligations of the countries participating in the AUKUS agreement towards one another; whether those obligations (a) have been or (b) will be included in a formal treaty document; and whether those obligations include an obligation to consider an attack upon one as an attack against all participating states.

James Cleverly:

Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States (AUKUS) is a concrete articulation of the UK's ambition, made in the Integrated Review, to deepen defence, security and foreign policy ties with like-minded allies across the globe.

The first step is an 18-month programme of work to identify the optimum way to deliver a nuclear-powered (not armed) submarine capability to the Royal Australian Navy. The exact nature of any future agreement on submarines will be worked out as part of this feasibility study.

In addition, our three countries have committed to enhance the development of joint capabilities and technology sharing. And we will foster deeper integration of security and defence-related science, technology, industrial bases and supply chains.

AUKUS is an enhanced security partnership, reflecting the unique level of trust and cooperation between the UK, US and Australia. It does not include an obligation to consider an attack upon one as an attack against all participating states.

■ Colombia: Environment Protection**Patrick Grady:**[\[59825\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she is taking steps to prevent companies that are domiciled or listed in the UK from threatening environmental protestors in Colombia with legal action, following lawful and legitimate protest against activities on land owned by those companies.

Wendy Morton:

As set out in the Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office's Annual Human Rights Report, we expect British businesses to respect local and international law wherever they operate. The UK was the first country to create a National Action Plan to implement the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. This plan sets out what is expected of the conduct of UK businesses, including compliance with relevant laws and respect for human rights; treating the risk of causing human rights abuses as a legal compliance issue; adopting appropriate due diligence policies; and consulting those who could potentially be affected.

Through our Conflict, Stability, and Security Fund (CSSF) programme, which has provided £63 million in support of peace agreement implementation, security, and stability in Colombia since 2015, we will continue to prioritise funding interventions to protect human rights defenders, including environmental activists, and social leaders.

Patrick Grady:[\[59826\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what diplomatic steps she is taking to help protect environmental defenders in Colombia who potentially face threatening actions by international companies as a result of their lawful and legitimate protest against potential illicit activities on their land.

Patrick Grady:[\[59827\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what diplomatic steps she is taking to help protect environmental defenders in Colombia who may face threats and attacks for protecting their lands from corporate activity.

Wendy Morton:

UK ministers and senior officials regularly raise human rights issues, as well as specific cases of concern, with the Colombian Government. Most recently, the UK's Minister for the Environment, Lord Goldsmith, raised our concerns around violence and threats toward environmental defenders on a visit to Colombia from 5-8 October.

Colombia is a UK 'Human Rights Priority Country,' and we consistently raise our concerns regarding violence against human rights defenders and social leaders at the UN Security Council, as we did at meetings in July. and on 14 October. We will continue to raise our concerns with the relevant state actors in Colombia. Through our Conflict, Stability, and Security Fund (CSSF) programme, which has provided £63 million in support of peace agreement implementation, security, and stability in Colombia since 2015, we will continue to prioritise funding interventions to protect human rights defenders, including environmental activists, and social leaders.

■ Conferences: United Nations

Sir George Howarth:

[\[58309\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether representatives of the Government attend UN Conferences of the Parties on subjects of domestic policy to which the media have been denied access.

Amanda Milling:

There are numerous international Conferences of the Parties (COPs) organised on a range of issues (e.g. Biodiversity COP, Desertification, Chemical Weapons).

Engagement and representation with COPs depends on the specifics of each. In general, inter-governmental negotiations, under UN treaties, are not commonly open to the media and the wider public.

■ Democratic Republic of Congo: Rainforests

Preet Kaur Gill:

[\[56595\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps she is taking to help protect tropical forests in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Vicky Ford:

The UK recognises the critical importance of the Congo Basin rainforests - 60% of which are located in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) - to global efforts to tackle climate change. As COP26 Presidents, we are determined to ensure that COP26 demonstrates the importance of forests and land-use to both limiting temperature rise to 1.5 degrees and supporting sustainable livelihoods around the world. To this end, the Prime Minister will host a Forest and Land Use event during the World Leaders Summit at COP26, which will include a spotlight on the Congo Basin's forests. This will convene ambitious governments and non-state leaders to raise ambition on forests and land use in a way that will deliver for the climate, people, economic development and biodiversity.

Moreover, through our seat on the Central African Forestry Initiative (CAFI) executive board, the UK is working to ensure DRC effectively addresses the direct and indirect drivers of deforestation and reduce poverty. CAFI works to protect the forest and maintain local people's sources of shelter, food and jobs. We remain committed to working with CAFI to ensure donors deliver on our promise to commit funds to tackle climate change and safeguard forests, and support Central African countries commit to policy reforms and actions that protect forests and livelihoods. We are currently involved in the process of agreeing milestones for the next DRC-CAFI 10-year partnership agreement with the Government of the DRC, which will further the UK's objective of protecting the DRC's tropical forests.

■ Democratic Republic of Congo: Tree Felling**Preet Kaur Gill:**[\[56594\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions she has had with her counterpart in the Democratic Republic of Congo on a moratorium on new logging concessions.

Vicky Ford:

In recent engagements with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)'s Vice-Prime Minister Bazaiba, the UK's Ambassador to DRC emphasised the need for greater transparency over future plans for DRC's forest governance, particularly in the context of the moratorium being lifted. We are in discussions regarding the ambitious commitments to governance reform that the DRC Government would make with the Central African Forestry Initiative (CAFI)'s support over the next 10 years. We remain engaged with DRC's Government, focusing support on results-based efforts that strengthen forest governance. We judge it important that we continue this engagement through programming as well as through policy dialogue. Current and future UK initiatives will help inform these policy discussions, including in support of progressive legal frameworks that both protect the rainforests and support sustainable development. We welcome the President's recent decision to suspend all illegal forestry concession contracts pending the final results of the ongoing audit.

■ Developing Countries: Climate Change**Sam Tarry:**[\[58561\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what support the Government is providing to third world countries to tackle climate change.

Vicky Ford:

As the Prime Minister has said, Climate is the top priority for the UK. I am looking forward to COP next week which will be the key moment to promote international cooperation on tackling climate change.

Since 2011 UK International Climate Finance has helped over 88 million people cope with the effects of climate change, installed 2,400 megawatts of clean energy and reduced or avoided 180 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions in developing countries.

We remain committed to our pledge to spend £11.6 billion on international climate finance between 2021 and 2026 and to continuing to support developing countries to adapt to the impacts of climate change, adopt clean growth pathways and reduce carbon emissions.

Kirsten Oswald:[\[59823\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 21 April 2021 to Question 180543 on Overseas Aid, how much of the £5.8 billion in international climate finance to developing countries has been drawn down by the most recent dates for which (a) interim and (b) final figures are available.

Vicky Ford:

UK International Climate Finance (ICF) is spent by the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra). In 2015 the UK committed to spend £5.8 billion of ICF between 2016/17 and 2020/21, supporting developing countries adapt and build resilience to the effects of climate change, pursue low-carbon development and sustainably manage natural resources. Between 2016/17 and 2019/20, £4.4 billion of ICF was spent. Final figures for the full five year period are not yet available but we expect the commitment of £5.8 billion to be met.

■ Developing Countries: HIV Infection**Sarah Champion:**[\[58886\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what plans her Department has to help countries implement the UNAIDS political declaration of July 2021.

Wendy Morton:

At the UN High Level Meeting on HIV and AIDS earlier in 2021, the UK worked with others to fight hard for a progressive and ambitious Political Declaration, to ensure the highest level of commitment to deliver the UNAIDS Global AIDS Strategy 2021-26 so the world has the best chance of meeting the 2030 goal to end the AIDS pandemic.

The UK continues to support the global AIDS response with major investments such as to the WHO and the Global Fund. These UK investments support countries to help implement actions under the political declaration to prevent new HIV infections and stop AIDS related deaths.

■ Education: Females**Mrs Maria Miller:**[\[903851\]](#)

What steps her Department is taking to help ensure that girls throughout the world receive a high-quality education.

Wendy Morton:

2021 is a year of UK leadership. With the G7, we agreed new targets to get 40 million more girls in school and 20 million more girls reading by 2026.

We raised \$4 billion [£2.9 billion] for the Global Partnership for Education, boosting the world's poorest countries' COVID recovery. At COP26, we will show girls' education is essential for responding to the climate crisis.

■ Kashmir: Human Rights**Matt Vickers:**[\[903852\]](#)

What recent assessment she has made of the human rights situation in Kashmir.

Amanda Milling:

We recognise there are human rights concerns in both India-administered-Kashmir and Pakistan-administered-Kashmir and have raised these concerns with both governments. The continued use of some temporary restrictions is worrying: we are clear on the importance of rights being respected. The UK welcomes reports that some detainees have been released and calls for all remaining political detainees to be released. The UK condemns recent killings of civilians in Kashmir.

■ Livestock: Environment Protection**Kate Osborne:**[\[57392\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what plans she has to include the environmental impact of livestock farming on the agenda for COP26.

Vicky Ford:

Livestock farming is essential to the livelihoods of millions of people, in both developed and developing countries, and makes a vital contribution to global food security and diets. Livestock farming is also a major cause of greenhouse gas emissions and nature loss, with rising global demand for meat and livestock products set to exacerbate these pressures. Sustainable solutions are needed urgently, to mitigate emissions and address adverse environmental impacts, while protecting the livelihoods of those who depend on livestock farming and ensuring nutritious diets for all.

The UK is working to mobilise action to address these challenges through the COP26 Presidency with a policy dialogue focused on accelerating the transition to sustainable agriculture. Governments provide over US\$700 billion annually in public support to agriculture. A significant proportion of this spending contributes to climate change and environmental damage, and the dialogue aims to encourage countries to redirect this expenditure in ways that are more closely aligned with development, climate and nature objectives. Solutions to be highlighted at COP26 include an approach to low-carbon cattle ranching which increased livestock productivity while reducing the environmental footprint.

The COP26 Presidency has been calling for action on methane and is working with close partners, the US and EU, to gather support behind their Global Methane Pledge, which commits signatories to cut global methane emissions by 30 per cent from 2020 levels by 2030. This includes methane sources in the agriculture sector.

■ Members: Correspondence**Feryal Clark:**[\[57443\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, when she plans to respond to the correspondence addressed to her predecessor dated 25 August 2021 from the Hon. Member for Enfield North on the rights of women and girls in Afghanistan, following the takeover of that country by the Taliban, reference FC10315.

James Cleverly:

Supporting education for children, and particularly girls, in Afghanistan, is a priority for the government. We continue to work with the international community to secure women's and girls' rights, including the right to education and jobs and to participate in public life. During the evacuation Operation Pitting alone, the FCDO received over 240,000 emails. Along with the Home Office and the Ministry of Defence we are working to assess all cases as quickly as possible. All 30,000 emails received from MPs on Afghanistan before 11 September have been processed and a response has been issued to the letter sent by the Hon Member on 25 August.

■ Nigeria: Christianity**Jim Shannon:**[\[58855\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the killing of 3,240 Christians in Nigeria since January 2021 by Islamist groups; and what assistance she has offered to protect other Christians in similar situations.

Vicky Ford:

We condemn violence against civilians of all religions in Nigeria. In the North East, terrorist groups including Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa have killed individuals from Christian and Muslim communities. These groups target all those who do not subscribe to their extremist views. We are providing a comprehensive package of humanitarian and stabilisation assistance to support communities affected by the conflict.

We are committed to defending freedom of religion or belief for all, and promoting respect between different religious and non-religious communities. I restated this commitment in a Westminster Hall debate concerning freedom of religion or belief in Central Africa on 23 September. Promoting these rights is one of the UK's longstanding human rights priorities. The Prime Minister discussed a range of issues with President Buhari, including security, in the margins of the Global Education Summit in July. We continue to encourage the Nigerian Government to take urgent action to protect all those at risk of violence and implement long-term solutions that address the root causes of violence.

■ Overseas Aid**Preet Kaur Gill:**[\[59918\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions she has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the use of Special Drawing Rights to (a) support low income countries and (b) tackle the covid-19 pandemic.

Vicky Ford:

Through the UK's G7 Presidency, the UK has encouraged the channelling of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) by stronger economies to benefit low-income and vulnerable

countries including to further support health needs and to help enable greener, more robust recoveries in the most affected countries. The Chancellor has committed to channel around 20% of the UK's new allocation of SDRs, including a new loan of SDR 1 billion (approximately £1 billion) to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust.

Preet Kaur Gill:

[\[59919\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions she has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the impact on funding for existing projects of counting a percentage of the additional loan of over £1bn worth of Special Drawing Rights to the IMF's Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust as Official Development Assistance.

Vicky Ford:

The Foreign Secretary has been engaging with the Chancellor on the Spending Review Settlement. The outcomes of the spending review will be set out this week by the Chancellor.

■ Racial Discrimination: UN Resolutions

Sam Tarry:

[\[58562\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, for what reason the UK voted against the UN Resolution A/RES/75/237 calling for action for the total elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

Amanda Milling:

The UK Government is committed to tackling all forms of racism, including antisemitism. We could not agree with the multiple references to the Durban Conference in the UN resolution, given our historic concerns over antisemitism related to that Conference. We also could not accept language welcoming the recent commemorative event in New York, which the UK and many other states did not attend, because of those concerns.

■ School Meals

Mrs Sharon Hodgson:

[\[58326\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of the UK becoming a signatory member of the School Meals Coalition established at the 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit.

Vicky Ford:

The UK Government warmly welcomed the Secretary General's announcement of the UN Food Systems Summit. The Minister of State for Pacific and the Environment personally delivered a UK national statement at the September Summit and led the UK's pre-Summit delegation in July. The Minister of State for Pacific and the

Environment used both opportunities to highlight the UK's leadership commitments on famine prevention and nature as well as our COP26 ambition on sustainable agriculture.

The FCDO is monitoring several UN Food Systems Summit coalitions, including the School Meals Coalition, to understand their ambitions as well as the expectations of Member States who express support. While HMG supports school meals in the UK, the coalitions are international as well as domestic in scope and UK membership of the School Meals Coalition would have implications for our international development strategy. FCDO's assessment, based on evidence, is that supporting women and children from when they are conceived up to their second birthday is the most effective way to avert malnutrition and its long-term consequences.

■ **Somalia: Police**

Kenny MacAskil:

[\[59968\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether the Government has provided financial assistance to the Somali police's Goodir Unit.

James Cleverly:

The UK is working with the Somali Police to improve their capability and capacity for investigating and stopping terrorist threats, in line with international human rights standards. Our support builds on the Somali Police Force's capability to combat the threat from Al Shabaab and strengthens compliance with international human rights standards. It compliments other counter-terrorism work the UK conducts in the region in line with the UK's international counter-terrorism priorities.

■ **Syria: Interpol**

Wayne David:

[\[59715\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions she has had with the Home Secretary on the implications for her policy of the decision by Interpol to allow Syria to rejoin that organisation's information exchange network.

James Cleverly:

INTERPOL is an independent organisation and is politically neutral in fulfilling its mandate. The UK does not have any influence on the decision to readmit Syria to INTERPOL's information exchange network. The UK remains strongly opposed to any degree of normalisation with the Assad regime in light of the many crimes committed under its leadership. The FCDO will continue to advocate for sustained diplomatic pressure on the regime to force its serious engagement with the UN-led political process, which remains the only viable route to a lasting and inclusive peace in Syria.

On 9 September, the Home Secretary with her G7 counterparts committed to strengthening our collective efforts to deter the misuse of INTERPOL notices, to

improperly target and detain individuals for exercising their human rights and fundamental freedoms, including through supporting INTERPOL's use of corrective measures, as appropriate, and increasing outreach on this issue.

■ Travel: Coronavirus

Sara Britcliffe:

[\[903848\]](#)

What steps her Department has taken to safely reopen international travel to facilitate trade and tourism.

Amanda Milling:

The Government strongly supports the safe reopening of international travel. Only seven countries now remain on the red list and this is reviewed regularly. We now accept vaccination certificates from over 90 countries and territories and we are working to expand that list. These changes make travel abroad easier - boosting trade, tourism and reuniting friends and families.

■ Yemen: Food Aid

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[58352\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many people in Yemen were provided with food aid funded by UK Official Development Assistance in (a) 2019 and (b) 2020; and how many people in Yemen will be provided with food aid funded by UK Official Development Assistance in 2021.

James Cleverly:

In the financial year 2019/2020, the UK met the food needs of more than 1 million Yemenis each month during the year and treated at least 70,000 children for malnutrition. In the financial year 2020/2021, the UK provided support to at least 500,000 vulnerable people each month with cash transfers and enrolled 73,000 children on malnutrition programmes. This financial year we have already provided one-off cash support to 1.5 million of Yemen's poorest households to help them buy food and basic supplies given the devastating impacts of Covid-19. The UK will also feed around 240,000 of the most vulnerable Yemenis every month and enrol over 50,000 children in malnutrition programmes. Despite the financial pressures at home, the UK remains a leading donor to the UN Yemen appeal.

The UK is playing a leading diplomatic role, and we are using all our diplomatic and humanitarian expertise to coordinate international efforts to bring parties to the conflict to the negotiating table. An inclusive political settlement is the only way to bring long-term stability to Yemen and to address the worsening humanitarian crisis.

■ Yemen: Malnutrition

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[58351\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent estimate she has made of the number of people at risk of starvation in Yemen.

James Cleverly:

The latest projection that we have available on food insecurity in Yemen was published by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) on 3 December 2020. This estimated that nearly 50,000 Yemenis are currently living in famine-like conditions and at least 16.2 million people (54 per cent of Yemen's population) are at risk of starvation and death.

The UK has already disbursed 85 per cent of our £87 million commitment to Yemen this financial year which will feed around 240,000 of the most vulnerable Yemenis every month. We also provided one-off cash support to 1.5 million of Yemen's poorest households to help them buy food and basic supplies. Given the disproportionate impact on women and children, our funding to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has already supported over 2 million pregnant women and new mothers with nutrition counselling and education since 2018. We fully support the peace process led by the UN Special Envoy, Hans Grundberg, and urge the parties to engage constructively with this process and call on all states to release humanitarian funding commitments promptly. An inclusive political settlement is the only way to bring long-term stability to Yemen and to address the worsening humanitarian crisis.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**■ Accident and Emergency Departments: Surgery****Sam Tarry:**[\[58554\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what support he is providing to hospitals that have backlogs of patients awaiting emergency operations.

Edward Argar:

We expect all National Health Service trusts to prioritise patients based on clinical need and then by length of wait. We therefore expect there to be little to no backlog for emergency operations.

We have provided £2 billion to support the wider recovery of elective surgery and increase activity in addition to £8 billion over the next three years to transform elective services. This funding, together with the £1 billion Elective Recovery Fund, could deliver the equivalent of approximately nine million more checks, scans and procedures or the equivalent of 30% more elective activity by 2024-25.

■ Ambulance Services: Greater London**Catherine West:**[\[57219\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of London Ambulance Service proposals to replace 68 ambulance stations with 18 ambulance deployment hubs on (a) patient care and (b) response times.

Edward Argar:

No such assessment has been made. The London Ambulance Service (LAS) advises that it is at an early stage in developing its estates strategy, including understanding how any changes would impact patient care. The LAS will engage with the public and stakeholders on any proposed changes.

■ Autism and Learning Disability: Mental Health Services**Mr Mark Harper:****[R] [59741]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to then Minister for Care's oral contribution of 10 June 2021, Official Report, Column 491WH, when his Department will publish the delivery plan setting out how a 50 per cent reduction in occupancy of in-patient beds by people with learning disabilities and autism will be met.

Gillian Keegan:

[Holding answer 25 October 2021]: The Department is developing an action plan to achieve at least a 50% reduction in the number of people with a learning disability and autistic people who are inpatients in mental health hospitals by 2023/24. Once finalised, the action plan will set out the actions for the Department, other Government departments, the National Health Service, local government and other delivery partners to improve the treatment of autistic people and people with learning disabilities and support them to live well in the community, with clear ownership and timescales for delivery. We intend to publish the action plan before the end of the year, once we have concluded our engagement with stakeholders.

■ Brain: Tumours**Mr Gregory Campbell:****[60358]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress has been made to encourage more high quality applications for funding into brain tumour research.

Edward Argar:

In May 2018 the Government announced £40 million over five years for brain tumour research as part of the Tessa Jowell Brain Cancer Mission through the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). We are relying on researchers to submit high-quality fundable research applications in a difficult area with a small research community. We have released a public announcement making clear our desire to receive funding applications.

Working with the Tessa Jowell Brain Cancer Mission, we held customised workshops in October 2021 to support the research community in submitting more fundable research applications and we are funding training in research for specialist brain tumour oncologists. The NIHR has received 69 applications to date, of which 10 have already been successful with others still under consideration.

■ Cancer

Dan Jarvis:

[\[60427\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to help (a) reduce cancer death rates and (b) increase life expectancy.

Maria Caulfield:

The NHS Long Term Plan sets out the ambition that, the proportion of cancers diagnosed at stages 1 and 2 will rise from approximately 54% to 75% by 2028 and 55,000 more people each year will survive their cancer for at least five years after diagnosis.

The Long Term Plan focuses primarily on fast and early diagnosis for all cancers, raising greater awareness of symptoms of cancer, lowering the threshold for referral by general practitioners and accelerating access to diagnosis and treatment by investing in rapid diagnostic centres and targeted lung health checks.

■ Cancer: Health Education

Rachael Maskell:

[\[58944\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to improve public awareness of sarcoma cancer.

Maria Caulfield:

Public Health England, NHS England and NHS Improvement, ran a number of campaigns encouraging people aged over 50 years old who are experiencing key symptoms indicative of a broad range of cancers to contact their general practitioner as part of 'Help us help you'. This included symptoms of sarcoma cancer, such as a lump, pain, bloating, abdominal discomfort and a cough.

NHS England and NHS Improvement are planning a new campaign in the first quarter of 2022 to address the barriers to people presenting with symptoms of cancer and are developing plans for future campaign activity to raise awareness of key cancer symptoms in 2022/23.

■ Cancer: Health Services

Charlotte Nichols:

[\[57431\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he expects the percentage of NHS patients starting treatment within 62 days after GP Urgent Suspected Cancer Referral to rise above the 85% target; and what steps he plans to take to help tackle the cancer care backlog.

Maria Caulfield:

We are committed to the recovery of cancer services by the end of March 2022. We have dedicated an additional £1 billion for elective and cancer services and the National Health Service is expand diagnostic and treatment capacity to meet increasing levels of referrals and treatment.

■ Carers: Qualifications

Emma Hardy:

[\[56185\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 30 July 2021 to Question 29882, and the Answer of 13 September 2021 to Question 41177, what estimate he has made of the number of carers that hold a social care relevant qualification who are employed in roles that do not have formal qualification requirements.

Gillian Keegan:

Of the 1.09 million individuals employed in direct care roles which do not have formal qualification requirements, approximately 490,000 hold a social-care relevant qualification.

■ Chemotherapy and Radiotherapy: Finance

Tim Farron:

[\[50970\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to address the imbalance between chemotherapy and radiotherapy spending.

Maria Caulfield:

The differential level of spending between different services and treatments is a feature of cost and volume. Levels of spending on chemotherapy is due to greater activity, drug, staff, equipment and facility costs.

However, significant investment has been made in radiotherapy, including £32 million to replace 17 Linear Accelerators aged over 10 years by the end of March 2022.

Progress continues to be made in the range and availability of innovative radiotherapy, where the evidence base supports it through NHS England and NHS Improvement's clinical commissioning policy process.

■ Continuing Care

Dan Jarvis:

[\[58875\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of assessing (a) social care and (b) nursing care through NHS Continuing Healthcare on a need's basis rather than financial basis.

Gillian Keegan:

[Holding answer 22 October 2021]: NHS Continuing Healthcare (NHS CHC) supports those with the highest levels of complex, intense and unpredictable needs, arising as a result of disability, accident or illness, who have been assessed as having a 'primary health need'. A package of ongoing care is then arranged and funded solely by the National Health Service for those who have been assessed as eligible.

We are committed to ensuring that everyone who may be eligible is assessed as quickly as possible to make sure they receive an appropriate package of care to meet their assessed health and care needs. Eligibility is assessed on a case-by-case basis

by health and social care professionals, taking into account the totality of an individual's needs including ways in which these interact with one another. Eligibility for NHS CHC is not determined by age, clinical condition or financial means.

In all cases individuals should be considered for eligibility for NHS CHC before a decision is reached about the need for NHS-funded Nursing Care (FNC). FNC is provided to care homes with nursing, to support the provision of nursing care by a registered nurse for those assessed as eligible for FNC.

■ **Coronavirus: Contact Tracing**

Justin Madders:

[\[57094\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment the Government has made of the health effects of removing covid-19 contact tracing for schools.

Maggie Throup:

No specific assessment has been made.

As of 19 July 2021, schools are no longer required to conduct contact tracing. As with positive cases in other settings, NHS Test and Trace now identify the close contacts of that individual. Schools may be contacted by local teams in exceptional cases to assist with identifying close contacts, as with managing other infectious diseases.

Rachael Maskell:

[\[60447\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will provide further powers for local Directors of Public Health to undertake contact tracing in respect of covid-19.

Maggie Throup:

We have no plans to do so. NHS Test and Trace and local authorities work within a joint framework focused on preventing, identifying and managing local outbreaks and engaging with local communities to support effective testing, contact tracing and self-isolation. Within this framework, local Directors of Public Health and public health teams have control through community-led testing, expanded local tracing partnerships and the sharing of data, insight and analysis used to identify clusters of new infections and potential local outbreaks.

■ **Coronavirus: Protective Clothing**

John McNally:

[\[56367\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the commitment by the Prime Minister in October 2020 to make 70 per cent of PPE in the UK, how much and what proportion of PPE is being made in the UK; and how much and what proportion of Government spending on PPE is on PPE made in the UK.

Edward Argar:

'Personal protective equipment (PPE) strategy: stabilise and build resilience', published in September 2020, committed to ensure that for the following winter, the supply of United Kingdom manufactured PPE would be sufficient to meet 70% of

demand for all categories, except gloves. In that period, UK manufactured goods met 82% of demand. The Department has ordered over 36 billion items of PPE, of which 3.9 billion or approximately 11%, was ordered from UK manufacturers. The total cost was £14.4 billion, of which £1.3 billion or 9%, was for orders with UK manufacturers.

Fleur Anderson:

[\[56663\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, for what reason his Department supplies ordinary face masks to front line NHS and care staff as opposed to FFP3 and FFP2/N95 masks.

Edward Argar:

The Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) guidance makes recommendations for the appropriate respiratory protective equipment for staff in all health and care settings for COVID-19.

The Government currently provides free personal protective equipment to health and care providers in England, including a range of medical face masks. It is for health and care staff to determine which face mask is appropriate for the particular circumstance or treatment, in line with the recommendations in the IPC guidance and any local risk assessment.

■ Coronavirus: Vaccination

Rebecca Long Bailey:

[\[56604\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps he has taken to progress (a) the validation of non-UK vaccines for UK residents requiring the NHS COVID Pass, and (b) the NHS COVID app upgrade.

Maggie Throup:

Since 30 September a pilot has been in place for overseas vaccinations to be recorded in the National Immunisation Management Service (NIMS). The pilot involved three vaccination sites in England with further locations available since 11 October. By the end of October, there will be one vaccination site in every region in England offering this service. Subject to the pilot's findings, this service will be publicly available from mid-November. Currently any Pfizer, AstraZeneca, Janssen or Moderna vaccinations administered by the European Medicines Agency, the Food and Drug Administration or Swissmedic will be recorded on the NHS COVID Pass.

Once the pilot is complete an evidence review will take place which will consider timeframes for completion of the NHS App upgrade.

Catherine West:

[\[56684\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what support his Department is providing to people with a pathological fear of needles in order to support those people to get the covid-19 vaccination.

Maggie Throup:

Vaccinators at vaccine sites have received the appropriate training to make sure everyone feels safe. The process is overseen by clinicians who if required would be

able to provide further assistance. We recommend that individuals with a needle phobia contact the vaccination centre directly prior to attendance to determine what mitigations they have for relevant patients and if any special arrangements could be identified to help the recipient feel more comfortable.

Sir Charles Walker:

[\[56850\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans the Government has to recognise covid-19 vaccines administered to UK nationals who are living or resident overseas; and if he will make statement.

Maggie Throup:

Individuals, including United Kingdom nationals living overseas, vaccinated in over 100 countries and territories who have had a full course of the Oxford/AstraZeneca, Pfizer BioNTech, Moderna or Janssen vaccines from a relevant public health body are now recognised in the same way as returning fully vaccinated UK residents if they have not visited a 'red list' country or territory in the 10 days before arriving in England. We continue to work to expand the list of countries and territories whose vaccine certificates are recognised.

■ **Coronavirus: Vitamin D**

Dr Rupa Huq:

[\[59899\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of restarting the scheme to provide free vitamin D supplements for people at high risk from covid-19 on the NHS this winter.

Maggie Throup:

No assessment has been made. Last year, 2.7 million vulnerable individuals were offered a free vitamin D supply by the Government. The provision of free vitamin D supplements was undertaken to support those that were shielding or were living in care homes, as they were more likely to have remained indoors in spring and summer. However, the shielding programme has now concluded in England.

■ **Counselling: Young People**

Jim Shannon:

[\[58868\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to help ensure that counselling services are in place for young people in order to stop the rise in the prescription of antidepressants.

Gillian Keegan:

The prescription of antidepressants is a matter for clinicians based on the patient's individual clinical circumstances. We are expanding and transforming mental health services, for children and young people through the NHS Long Term Plan which will see an additional 345,000 children and young people a year receiving support by 2023/24.

On 5 March, we announced an additional £79 million to significantly expand children's mental health services in 2021/22. This will allow around 22,500 more children and young people to access community health services, 2,000 more children and young people to access eating disorder services and a faster increase in the coverage of mental health support teams in schools and colleges to approximately 400 teams or an estimated three million children and young people by 2023.

Mental health support teams work alongside and integrate with the mental health and wellbeing support that already exists, such as counselling, educational psychologists, school nurses, pastoral care, educational welfare officers, local authority provision and National Health Service children and young people's mental health services.

■ Dementia

Rachael Maskell: [\[58950\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, which (a) offices and (b) other Government departments officials working on dementia in his Department engage with as part of their roles.

Gillian Keegan:

Since work on the development of the new dementia strategy has resumed, officials have been engaging with a range of stakeholders including members of the Dementia Programme Board such as the Alzheimer's Society, NHS England and NHS Improvement and the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities. In addition, Departmental officials have engaged with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, the Department for Transport and the Department for Work and Pensions.

■ Dental Services: Children

Luke Pollard: [\[59024\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many children in England have been removed from NHS dental lists in the last year as a result of (a) not having attended regular check-ups and (b) other reasons.

Maria Caulfield:

The information requested is not held centrally. Patients are only registered with a dental practice during the course of their treatment.

■ Dental Services: Internet

Caroline Lucas: [\[56597\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the letter dated 20 July 2021 from his Department, NHS England, the Chief Dental Officer and Healthwatch to NHS Dental Contractors, what steps he is taking to ensure that all NHS dental practices comply with the request to review and update their profile information on the nhs.uk website to help patients find information about available care; what

assessment he has made of the number of NHS dentist profiles on the NHS website that are up to date; and if he will make a statement.

Maria Caulfield:

We are exploring what more could be done to ensure that patients are able to find information about available care. Approximately half of all dental practices with a NHS.UK profile are now updating their availability information every 90 days as requested.

■ **Department of Health and Social Care: Departmental Responsibilities**

Geraint Davies:

[\[56743\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, which Minister in his Department is responsible for (a) child health and (b) special educational needs and disabilities.

Maggie Throup:

I am the Minister responsible for child health policy while my hon. Friend the Minister of State for Care and Mental Health (Gillian Keegan MP) leads on the Department's policy responsibilities on special educational needs and disabilities.

■ **Disability: Children**

Marsha De Cordova:

[\[41239\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on adequately funding disabled children's health and care services in the long-term.

Gillian Keegan:

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and the Chancellor of the Exchequer regularly discuss a range of issues related to health and social care services.

■ **Eating Disorders: Mental Health Services**

Justin Madders:

[\[56243\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent progress has been made on the Adult Community Eating Disorder Waiting Times Pilots; and what his timetable is for the evaluation of those pilots.

Gillian Keegan:

The adult community mental health waiting time pilots, including those for eating disorders, have concluded and been evaluated by NHS England and NHS Improvement as part of the National Health Service clinically-led review of standards.

NHS England and NHS Improvement have held a public consultation on its proposals for five new waiting time standards, including a waiting time standard for adult eating disorder services, developed with the pilot and early implementer sites. This

consultation closed on 1 September 2021 and NHS England and NHS Improvement expect to publish the response to the consultation by the end of this year.

■ Elective Recovery Fund

Rachael Maskell: [\[56470\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effect of the Elective Recovery Fund on health inequality for Trusts in receipt of that funding.

Edward Argar:

NHS England's '2021/22 priorities and operational planning guidance: October 2021 – March 2022' which underpins the Elective Recovery Fund, places a continued focus on tackling health inequalities, including asking that all National Health Service Board performance reports include deprivation and ethnicity.

■ Fibrodysplasia Ossificans Progressiva

Sir Mike Penning: [\[58777\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to increase awareness of fibrodysplasia ossificans progressiva (FOP) among healthcare professionals (a) in general and (b) in relation to new-born screening.

Maria Caulfield:

The Government published the United Kingdom Rare Diseases Framework in January, to improve the lives of those living with rare diseases, such as Fibrodysplasia ossificans progressiva (FOP), including increasing awareness of rare diseases among healthcare professionals. This will be followed by action plans from each nation of the UK to implement the Framework. As part of the development of England's action plan, the Department is working with Health Education England and NHS England and NHS Improvement to raise awareness of rare diseases, through the development of integrated point of care resources for clinical staff and targeted education modules for trainee healthcare professionals, aligned to the NHS National Genomics Test Directory.

■ Fibrodysplasia Ossificans Progressiva: Research

Sir Mike Penning: [\[58781\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to improve international collaboration on research into (a) slowing the symptoms of and (b) finding a cure for fibrodysplasia ossificans progressiva.

Sir Mike Penning: [\[58785\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to improve innovative research into (a) slowing the symptoms of, and (b) finding a cure for fibrodysplasia ossificans progressiva.

Maria Caulfield:

We published the United Kingdom Rare Diseases Framework in January 2021, outlining a national vision for improving the lives of those living with rare diseases, such as Fibrodysplasia ossificans progressiva (FOP). Due to the small numbers of patients with individual rare diseases, international collaboration is essential to support research and patient care, particularly for very rare diseases. Further details regarding rare diseases research and international collaboration under the Framework will be provided in action plans which will be published by each of the four UK nations within two years.

Food: Advertising**Andrew Rosindell:**[\[56233\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has undertaken an assessment of the potential impact of new restrictions on the online advertising of products that are high in fat, salt and sugar on the revenue of food and drink manufacturers based in the UK whose reformulated healthier products will still be considered high in fat, salt and sugar.

Maggie Throup:

The restrictions on advertising for products high in fat, salt and sugar are designed to incentivise manufacturers to reformulate their products so they become healthier. This policy will apply to a selected list of product categories taken from Public Health England's sugar and calorie reduction programme and the soft drinks industry levy. The 2004/2005 Nutrient Profiling Model (NPM) must then be applied to determine whether a product is less healthy. Therefore, businesses can continue advertising their brand as well as any products that pass the 2004/2005 NPM.

The impact assessment for further advertising restrictions for products high in fat, salt and sugar shows a positive net value, meaning the health benefits outweigh the costs to business and the Government. The final impact assessment is at the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/996232/impact-assessment-hfss-advertising.pdf

General Practitioners**Justin Madders:**[\[56248\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many GPs there are in England.

Maria Caulfield:

As of June 2021, there were 34,726 full time equivalent and 44,386 headcount doctors working in general practice in England.

■ Genito-urinary Medicine

Andrew Gwynne: [\[56206\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the level of unmet need for sexual health services in England.

Maggie Throup:

No national assessment has been made. The Government has mandated local authorities to commission comprehensive open access sexual health services through the Public Health Grant. It is for individual local authorities to decide their spending priorities based on an assessment of local need, taking account of their statutory duties.

■ Global FOP Awareness Day

Sir Mike Penning: [\[58782\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to support International fibrodysplasia ossificans progressiva (FOP) Awareness Day on 23 April; and if he will make a statement.

Maria Caulfield:

The Department has no specific plans for Fibrodysplasia Ossificans Progressiva (FOP) Awareness Day. However, we work closely with Genetic Alliance UK, of which FOP FRIENDS is a member and will participate in events around Rare Disease Day on 28 February 2022.

■ Gynaecology

Mr Richard Holden: [\[58546\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the press release by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists on 16 August 2021, what plans he has to bring forward legislative proposals to ban hymenoplasty.

Gillian Keegan:

[Holding answer 20 October 2021]: In the Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, the Government committed to convening an independent expert panel on hymenoplasty to consider the clinical and ethical aspects of the procedure in more detail. We will carefully consider the panel's recommendations, including any potential legislative action.

■ Health Services: Waiting Lists

John Redwood: [\[58705\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to publish further details of the steps and budgets he is introducing to reduce waiting lists for treatment in the NHS.

Edward Argar:

We will publish the delivery plan for tackling the backlog in elective services later this year.

Heart Diseases: Health Services**Sir John Hayes:**[\[58294\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the British Heart Foundation's modelling which predicts that the number of people waiting for heart care and diagnosis could peak at around 550,385 in January 2024 unless the NHS in England receives long-term investment to clear the growing backlog.

Edward Argar:

No formal assessment has been made. However, the NHS Long Term Plan commits to improve the care and outcomes for those patients with cardiovascular disease. This includes enhanced diagnostic support in the community, better personalised planning and increasing access to cardiac rehabilitation.

The Department is providing an additional £1 billion this year, with the existing £1 billion Elective Recovery Fund, to tackle the backlog. We also plan to spend more than £8 billion in the following three years from 2022 to 2025. This could deliver the equivalent of approximately nine million more checks, scans and procedures, reducing waiting lists for cardiac services the equivalent of 30% more elective activity by 2024-25.

Home Care Services**Rachael Maskell:**[\[36676\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has taken steps to improve the processes for licensing domiciliary care companies; and whether the licensing process includes an assessment of the owner's business history.

Gillian Keegan:

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is responsible for registering services carrying out a regulated activity in England. Registration informs how the CQC inspects, rates, monitors and enforces against services once they are registered.

The CQC has developed a flexible and risk-based approach to registration, including developing a more efficient digital service for providers and staff which eases the burden on applicants. It has also made changes to better support innovative and new care models. The CQC's registration process also now ensures that key information about the ownership and regulatory history of a provider is published on their website. The process includes an assessment of the owner's business history, if the applicant had been registered with the CQC previously under the Health and Social Care Act 2008 or predecessor legislation.

Hospices: Coronavirus**Andrew Rosindell:**[\[49061\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of increasing the funding available to hospices where charitable donations have fallen during the covid-19 outbreak.

Gillian Keegan:

We have worked with HM Treasury and NHS England and NHS Improvement to support hospices, including through the provision of an additional £257 million of grant funding to charitable hospices in England in response to COVID-19. Many hospices have also benefitted from the financial support offered by HM Treasury to all charities and our commitment to either fund directly or reimburse all known personal protective equipment requirements until March 2022.

Hospitals: Coronavirus**Neil Coyle:**[\[58897\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to avoid a winter crisis in hospitals given the associated additional risks of a potential rise in covid-19 cases.

Edward Argar:

A range of measures are being employed to mitigate potential demand pressures on the National Health Service this winter, including COVID-19 booster vaccines for priority groups and the largest ever seasonal flu vaccination programme. NHS England and NHS Improvement are working with NHS providers to ensure appropriate operational plans are in place, including meeting potential increases in the demand for emergency care driven by seasonal flu and COVID-19.

The NHS will receive an extra £5.4 billion over the next six months to support its response to COVID-19. This includes £2.8 billion to cover related costs such as enhanced infection control measures and £478 million to continue the enhanced hospital discharge programme, to maintain capacity.

Hospitals: Shropshire**Daniel Kawczynski:**[\[56912\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the affordability of the Hospitals Transformation Programme was included in the plans to improve hospital services in Shropshire.

Edward Argar:

The Hospital Transformation Programme or 'Future Fit' scheme, was assessed for affordability as part of the bidding process to become one of the schemes within the sustainability and transformation partnership programme. Furthermore, any plans to improve hospital services that require significant Government funding, like the Future Fit scheme, will have their capital and revenue affordability assessed as part of the

Departmental and NHS England and NHS Improvement business case assurance process

■ **Infant Mortality: Ethnic Groups**

Catherine West:

[\[58467\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will establish an inquiry on the stillbirth and neonatal deaths of black and Asian babies.

Maria Caulfield:

The Department has no plans to establish an inquiry on the stillbirth and neonatal deaths of black and Asian babies. However, a confidential enquiry into perinatal deaths of black and black British babies is currently being undertaken by MBRRACE-UK's Maternal, Newborn and Infant Clinical Outcome Review Programme.

■ **Joint Replacements: Waiting Lists**

Paul Bristow:

[\[R\] \[59087\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he will take under the Elective Recovery Plan to ensure that new funding for tackling the backlog will reduce waiting times for hip and knee replacement operations.

Edward Argar:

The Department has provided £2 billion to the National Health Service to tackle the backlog, in addition to £8 billion over the next three years to increase activity and transform elective services. Trusts are encouraged to find innovative ways to deliver elective services, including high volume, low complexity approaches including surgical hubs for hip and knee replacements. The Department is also providing a £700 million Targeted Investment Fund to enable cutting edge technologies and to increase operating theatre capacity, thereby improving productivity in hospitals.

■ **Kidney Diseases: Health Services**

Dr Luke Evans:

[\[58528\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to tackle digital exclusion among patients undertaking kidney function tests who do not have smart phones.

Gillian Keegan:

The Artificial Intelligence in Health and Care Award currently supports the deployment and evaluation of one digital technology that enables patients to test their kidney function via a smartphone app. However, NHS England and NHS Improvement have stated that patients should continue to be offered a blended approach of face-to-face and remote appointments, with digital triage and testing where possible. Patients' input into the choice of consultation mode with their general practitioners should be sought and practices should respect preferences for face-to-face care unless there are good clinical reasons to the contrary, such as the lack of a smartphone or the presence of COVID-19 symptoms.

■ Long Covid: Health Services**Kim Leadbeater:****[57508]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure equitable access to clinics supporting patients with long covid.

Maria Caulfield:

Since November 2020, £104 million has been invested by NHS England and NHS Improvement in developing and expanding 90 'long' COVID-19 clinics and an Enhanced Service in general practice, to ensure the most underserved populations are reached. 'Long COVID: the NHS plan for 2021/22', published in June 2021, details a requirement to understand how 'long' COVID-19 services are meeting the needs of local populations. The plan is available at the the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2021/06/C1312-long-covid-plan-june-2021.pdf>

The Plan also committed £30 million to support an Enhanced Service for general practices. This one-year service will reduce inequity of access, variation in records and enable clinical management in primary care where appropriate. NHS England and NHS Improvement have established a 'long' COVID-19 health inequalities workstream on the potential impact of health inequalities and advise on mitigations.

■ Members: Correspondence**Rosie Cooper:****[56890]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to respond to the letter dated 28 July 2021 from the hon. Member for West Lancashire regarding the government's expenditure on Track and Trace, reference ZA57182.

Edward Argar:

We replied to the hon. Member on 18 October 2021.

Rosie Cooper:**[56897]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to respond to the letter dated 13 August 2021 from the hon. Member for West Lancashire, regarding water fluoridation, reference ZA55978.

Edward Argar:

We replied to the hon. Member on 19 October 2021.

John Penrose:**[58807]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to reply to the letters from the hon. Member for Weston-super-Mare of 12 August and 14 September 2021 on behalf of Avon LMC about the Health and Social Care Bill.

Edward Argar:

We replied to the hon. Member on 21 October 2021.

Robert Largan:

[\[59112\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to respond to the enquiry from the hon. Member for High Peak of 28 July 2021, reference RL25124.

Edward Argar:

We replied to the hon. Member on 20 October 2021.

■ **Mental Health Services**

Sir George Howarth:

[\[56564\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to improve access to mental health services.

Gillian Keegan:

We are investing an additional £2.3 billion a year to expand and transform services to enable two million more people to access mental health support by 2023-24. We have published our Mental Health Recovery Action Plan, supported by an additional £500 million in 2021-22, to address waiting times for mental health services. This includes £79 million to expand support in children and young people's mental health services and £110 million to expand adult mental health services, including psychological therapies.

In addition, NHS England and NHS Improvement have consulted on introducing five new waiting time standards developed with pilot and early implementer sites. The consultation closed on 1 September 2021 and NHS England and NHS Improvement expect to publish the response to the consultation on the proposals by the end of this year.

■ **Mental Health Services: Children**

Feryal Clark:

[\[57441\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many and what proportion of children referred to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) received a routine assessment within four weeks of referral in Enfield North constituency in the last 12 months; and what steps his Department is taking to reduce waiting times for CAMHS.

Gillian Keegan:

The information requested is not available as a national access and waiting times standard for child and adolescent mental health services has not yet been defined.

To help reduce waiting times, NHS England and NHS Improvement have consulted on the potential to introduce five new waiting time standards as part of its clinically - led review of access standards . This includes a standard that children, young people, and their families/carers presenting to community-based mental health services, should receive care within four weeks from referral. The consultation closed on 1 September 2021 and NHS England and NHS Improvement expect to publish the response to the consultation by the end of this year.

We have announced an additional £79 million to significantly expand capacity in children's mental health services in 2021/22. This will allow approximately 22,500 more children and young people to access community health services; 2,000 more children and young people to access eating disorder services; and a faster increase in the coverage of mental health support teams in schools and colleges.

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

Feryal Clark: [\[59106\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) service users there has been to CAMHS clinical staff in (a) London Trusts and (b) Trusts in England in each year over the last ten years.

Gillian Keegan:

The information requested is not held centrally.

■ **Mental Health Services: Out of Area Treatment**

Helen Hayes: [\[57205\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment has he made of the impact on families and individuals of the number of out-of-areas placements given to adults and children referred to mental health services in each year since 2015.

Helen Hayes: [\[57206\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to help ensure that mental healthcare patients are able to live and be treated in their own community.

Helen Hayes: [\[58969\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps she is taking to increase funding for community mental health provision to prevent patients being put in out of area placements.

Gillian Keegan:

[Holding answer 22 October 2021]: The NHS Long Term Plan is supported by an additional £2.3 billion a year by 2023/24 to expand community mental health support to avoid people going into crisis and the need for an inpatient admission wherever possible. While no formal assessment has been made of the impact of out of area placements, where inpatient stays are required, they should be short, close to home in a high quality, safe and therapeutic service.

The Mental Health Recovery Action Plan includes an additional £110 million in 2021/22 to expand adult community mental health services including psychological therapies, implementing the community mental health framework, investment in crisis services and suicide prevention programmes. We are also investing £87 million to provide enhanced discharge from inpatient mental health care, offering people who

are well enough to leave hospital with additional support to help them recover in the community.

■ Mental Health Services: Schools

Kate Green:

[\[46987\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much funding has been allocated for mental health support teams in schools and colleges in each year between 2018-19 and 2023-24; and what proportion of schools and colleges were covered by those teams in each year from 2018-19 to date.

Gillian Keegan:

[Holding answer 15 September 2021]: The funding profile for mental health support teams and four week waiting time pilots is shown in the following table.

2018/19 £ MILLION	2019/20 £ MILLION	2020/21 £ MILLION	2021/22 ¹ £ MILLION	2022/23 £ MILLION	2023/24 £ MILLION
24	76	115	136	185	249

Source: Mental Health Implementation Plan, NHS England

Note:

¹ Excludes funding provided as part of £79 million additional funding for children and young people's mental health services in 2021/22.

Information on the number of schools and colleges covered by mental health support teams is not held centrally.

■ Mental Health Services: Waiting Lists

Helen Hayes:

[\[56191\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what comparative assessment his Department has made of waiting times for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service referrals (a) as at 18 October 2021 and (b) before the covid-19 outbreak; and what steps he is taking to reduce waiting times for those services.

Gillian Keegan:

No comparative assessment has been made as a national access and waiting times standard for child and adolescent mental health services has not yet been defined. NHS England and NHS Improvement have consulted on the potential to introduce five new waiting time standards as part of its clinically-led review of access standards. One such standard is that children, young people, and their families/carers presenting to community-based mental health services, should start to receive care within four weeks from referral. This consultation closed on 1 September 2021 and NHS England and NHS Improvement are analysing the consultation responses to inform a recommendation to the Government in due course.

On 5 March 2021, we announced an additional £79 million in 2021/22 for children and young people's mental health services, allowing around 22,500 more children and young people to access community health services and 2,000 more children and young people to access eating disorder services and accelerate the coverage of mental health support teams over 2021/22. NHS England and NHS Improvement have also announced a further £40 million in 2021/22 to address the impact of COVID-19 on children and young people's mental health.

Sir George Howarth:

[\[56565\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the impact that the covid-19 outbreak has had on waiting lists for mental health services.

Gillian Keegan:

We are monitoring the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic may have had on the mental health of adults, children and young people as new evidence becomes available. While increased demand has resulted in longer waiting times for some, it cannot currently be quantified as national access and waiting times standards for National Health Service adult and children and young people's mental health services have not yet been defined.

NHS England and NHS Improvement have consulted on five new waiting time standards as part of its clinically-led review of access standards. The consultation closed on 1 September 2021 and NHS England and NHS Improvement expect to publish the response to the consultation by the end of this year.

■ Motor Neurone Disease: Research

Catherine West:

[\[58469\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will increase research funding for motor neurone disease.

Edward Argar:

The Department funds research on health and social care through the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). While it is not usual practice to ring-fence funding for particular topics or conditions, the NIHR welcomes funding applications for research into any aspect of human health, including motor neurone disease. Applications are subject to peer review and judged in open competition, with awards being made on the basis of the importance of the topic to patients and health and care services, value for money, and scientific quality.

■ NHS

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[56787\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps is he taking to ensure that (a) the Health and Care Bill and (b) other legislative proposals supports the NHS's aim to be for public good, rather than private profit.

Edward Argar:

The Bill establishes integrated care boards (ICBs) as National Health Service bodies directly accountable for NHS spending and performance. The overwhelming majority of services paid for by the NHS will continue to be provided by NHS organisations.

The work of ICBs will be driven by health outcomes, not profit with safeguards in place to protect the interests of the public and the NHS. The ICB chair has the power to veto membership of the board and NHS England has the power to issue guidance to ICBs in relation to appointments, alongside the robust requirements on ICBs to manage conflicts of interests. We propose to bring forward an amendment to protect the independence of ICBs by preventing individuals with significant interests in private healthcare from membership on the boards.

■ NHS and Social Services: Staff**Alex Cunningham:**[\[60410\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the impact of discount schemes on helping to (a) recognise, (b) recruit and (c) retain workers in the health and social care sectors.

Edward Argar:

The Department does not currently work directly with providers of discount schemes. Individual employers develop their local reward offer through discount schemes with providers of their choice.

■ NHS: Negligence**Sam Tarry:**[\[58566\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that victims of medical negligence are able to seek redress for (a) damage, (b) suffering and (c) diminished earnings that have been found to result from receiving inadequate care from less experienced doctors.

Maria Caulfield:

A cross-system National Patient Safety Programme Board was established in February 2021 to provide new coordination and monitoring of improvements in patient safety and response to harm across the National Health Service. All registered healthcare professionals must keep within their scope of practice at all times to ensure they are practising safely, lawfully and effectively.

A person who believes they have been injured as a result of negligent medical treatment can take legal action to claim appropriate compensation. Where a claim is upheld, compensation is determined with the aim of restoring the person, as far as possible, into the same position they were in had the negligent injury not occurred. This could include compensation for loss of earnings and for pain, suffering and loss of amenity.

■ NHS: Pensions**Drew Hendry:** [\[60443\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Answer of 9 December 2020 to Question 120078, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of making funds available to equalise Survivor Pension Benefits for people who are unable to enter into new marriages or co-habit with a partner as a result of the pre-2008 NHS Survivor Pension rules.

Edward Argar:

The NHS Pension Scheme does not provide for the automatic retention of a survivor pension on re-marriage or co-habitation where the Scheme member ceased pensionable employment before 1 April 2008. Arrangements are in place for continuing or restoring a pension if, for example, withdrawal would create severe financial hardship for the recipient.

Following a review by NHS Pension Scheme stakeholders, changes were made to survivor benefits for Scheme members with service extended to or beyond 1 April 2008, where a survivor pension became payable for life regardless of whether the recipient remarries, forms a civil partnership or lives with someone else as a spouse or partner. The Government's position remains that benefit entitlements should normally be determined based on the rules applicable at the time the member served, to maintain fairness for active scheme members and the taxpayer.

■ Parkinson's Disease: Mental Health Services**Mary Glendon:** [\[58853\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much and what proportion of the £1 billion covid-19 backlog funding announced on 6 September 2021 will be allocated to Parkinson's (a) treatment and (b) care.

Mary Glendon: [\[58854\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he plans to take to ensure that the Government's £1 billion covid-19 backlog funding will support the physical and mental health of people affected by Parkinson's.

Edward Argar:

Information on specific allocations through the Elective Recovery Fund to each elective service in England is not held centrally.

As set out in the National Health Service '2021/22 priorities and operational planning guidance', systems are asked to deliver activity levels above set thresholds in order to access this additional funding. This will increase activity including in neurology services for patients affected by Parkinson's.

■ Polycystic Ovary Syndrome

Gavin Robinson:

[\[56682\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 23 September 2021 to Question 44360, on Polycystic Ovary Syndrome, if he will provide the data requested in the context of the Answer of 7 November 2016 to Question 51291, on Polycystic Ovary Syndrome.

Maria Caulfield:

[Holding answer 20 October 2021]: The information requested on the number of number of women diagnosed with polycystic ovary syndrome is not collected in the format requested. In our earlier answer of 7 November 2016, we provided the number of finished admission episodes (FAE) where the patient is female and a primary diagnosis for polycystic ovary syndrome was made in England. It should be noted that a FAE does not reflect the number of women who have had the syndrome as the same patient can be recorded on more than one occasion. In addition, diagnoses for this condition can occur in non-hospital settings, which is not recorded in this data.

The following table shows FAE activity in English National Health Service hospitals and English NHS commissioned activity in the independent sector in each year from 2015-16 to 2019-20.

YEAR	ADMISSIONS
2015-16	1,392
2016-17	1,297
2017-18	1,223
2018-19	1,254
2019-20	1,226

Source: Hospital Episode Statistics, NHS Digital

■ Public Health: Leeds

Hilary Benn:

[\[56463\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish the public health grant allocated to Leeds City Council in (a) cash and (b) real terms in each of the last 10 years.

Maggie Throup:

The information requested is shown in the attached table. The Public Health Grant was created in 2015. The value of the Grant in 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16 is therefore not directly comparable to subsequent years, as responsibility and funding for 0 to five year olds public health services was transferred from the National Health Service to local government from 1 October 2015.

Attachments:

1. Leeds City Council public health grant in cash and [[PQ56463 chart.docx](#)]

Rare Cancers

Rachael Maskell: [58945]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to improve the education of medical students on rare and less common cancers.

Edward Argar:

The training curricula for postgraduate trainee doctors, including clinical oncology and radiology, is set by the relevant Royal College. The General Medical Council approves curricula and assessment systems for each training programme.

For clinical oncology the training curricula is set by the Royal College of Radiologists and for medical oncology it is set by the Royal College of Physicians. These curricula emphasise the skills and approaches that a doctor must develop in order to ensure accurate and timely diagnoses and treatment plans for their patients, which includes diagnosis of conditions relevant to their specialism and the ability to identify and treat rare and less common conditions. All training programmes are continually kept under review by the relevant Royal College to ensure they remain up to date and meet patient needs.

Self-harm and Suicide

Alex Sobel: [58493]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of the Online Safety Bill being amended to compel all user-to-user services, regardless of reach and functionality, to tackle suicide and self-harm content that is legal but harmful to both children and adults.

Gillian Keegan:

We have not made a formal assessment. The Department of Health and Social Care continues to work with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on the contents of the Online Safety Bill and encourage online platforms to take voluntary action to address harmful content online, including suicide and self-harm content.

Shoulder Replacements

Jim Shannon: [58869]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people have had shoulder repair surgery by NHS appointments in the last three years.

Edward Argar:

This information is not held in format requested.

■ Social Services: Conditions of Employment and Pay

Rachael Maskell: [\[52528\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of setting minimum national pay and conditions for staff working in social care.

Gillian Keegan:

The vast majority of care workers are employed by private sector providers who ultimately set their pay and conditions, independent of central Government. Local authorities work with care providers to determine a fair rate of pay based on local market conditions. However, we are committing additional funding to support local authorities to move towards paying providers a fair rate for care and provide the means to improve working practices.

In addition, the Government recently announced at least £500 million over three years to fund hundreds of thousands of training places and certifications, progression pathways and wellbeing and mental health support.

■ Social Services: Fees and Charges

Zarah Sultana: [\[41320\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department plans to take steps to bring forward legislative proposals to introduce free comprehensive adult social care.

Gillian Keegan:

On 7 September, the Government announced major reforms to funding for social care. From October 2023, we will introduce a more generous means testing regime, as well as cap on costs. This means that no one in England will have to pay more than £86,000 in care costs over the course of their lifetime.

■ Social Services: Reform

Rachael Maskell: [\[58946\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that forthcoming white papers on social care reform and integration are informed and co-produced by people with lived experience of dementia.

Rachael Maskell: [\[58947\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish a timetable for stakeholder involvement in the co-production of forthcoming white papers on social care reform and integration.

Rachael Maskell: [\[58948\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he will take to ensure that users and providers of care services are involved in every stage of the Government's plans for social care reform.

Gillian Keegan:

The white papers on adult social care system reform and integration will be published this year. Our ongoing engagement with the sector is supporting publication to this timescale, following the involvement of stakeholders in the development of the Health and Care Bill.

We are engaging in detail with local government colleagues, think tanks, providers of care and their representatives, professional bodies, unions and people with lived experience of care and their representatives. This includes dementia specific organisations.

Helen Hayes:**[58959]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to reform the social care system through (a) staffing and (b) quality of care.

Gillian Keegan:

[Holding answer 22 October 2021]: We have committed to investing an additional £5.4 billion over three years to begin a comprehensive programme of reform for adult social care and support the delivery of high quality, compassionate care.

This includes at least £500 million to fund social care workforce professionalisation, initiatives to improve workforce wellbeing and further reforms to improve social care recruitment and support. We are continuing to work with care users, providers and other partners to develop our plans to be published in a white paper for reform later this year.

■ Terminal Illnesses: Social Services**Helen Hayes:****[58961]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that social care is affordable for people with a terminal illness; and what recent estimate his Department has made of care costs for people with a terminal illness.

Gillian Keegan:

[Holding answer 22 October 2021]: An individual's care costs are determined by their care needs and not by their condition, therefore no such estimate has been made.

Those with terminal illnesses with the highest levels of complex, intense and unpredictable needs, who have been assessed as having a 'primary health need', will, if eligible, receive a package of fully National Health Service-funded ongoing care. A fast-track pathway exists for those with a rapidly deteriorating condition who may be nearing the end of their life.

For those not eligible for NHS-funded care, the recently announced social care reforms provides a far more generous means test from October 2023. People with less than £100,000 of chargeable assets who currently pay for all their own care are likely to receive some support from the state. This is more than four times the current limit of £23,250.

■ Tonsils: Surgery

Jim Shannon:

[\[57032\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to reduce tonsillectomy waiting lists in England.

Edward Argar:

We are providing a further £1 billion in 2021 to the existing £1 billion Elective Recovery Fund, to reduce waiting lists, including for tonsillectomy patients. In addition, we plan to spend more than £8 billion from 2022 to 2025 which could deliver the equivalent of approximately nine million more checks, scans and elective procedures and allow the National Health Service to deliver the equivalent of 30% more elective activity. This will benefit patients across all elective services, including tonsillectomy.

■ Trodelvy

Caroline Lucas:

[\[58361\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 13 September 2021 to Question 2141, on Trodelvy, what recent progress his Department has made on making Trodelvy available via an interim access arrangement following licensing through Project Orbis.

Edward Argar:

NHS England and NHS Improvement and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) have agreed a set of principles to allow potential interim access to medicines ahead of NICE's guidance and are continuing to work with the manufacturer to explore options for interim access to Trodelvy.

■ Urology: Nurses

Alex Norris:

[\[59936\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 19 July 2021 to Question 7914 on Kidney Cancer, what steps he is taking to involve the urology clinical nurse specialist workforce in the development of the common and consistent competencies for clinical nurse specialists.

Maria Caulfield:

[Holding answer 25 October 2021]: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 18 October 2021 to Question PQ53330.

■ WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control

Sir George Howarth:

[\[58307\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the compatibility of the current WHO guidelines on the interpretation of Article 5.3 of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control with Article 5.3 of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

Maggie Throup:

Whilst the Department is not aware of any guidelines for interpreting Article 5.3 of the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC), there are implementation guidelines. These guidelines were developed in 2008 through wide consultative and inter-governmental processes. Our assessment is that they provide useful guidance in supporting countries to meet their obligations under Article 5.3. The Government is fully committed to its obligations under the WHO FCTC, including commitments under Article 5.3.

■ **World Health Organization****Sir George Howarth:**[\[58306\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of the UK's influence within the WHO compared with other countries.

Gillian Keegan:

The United Kingdom is a prominent and active member of the World Health Organization (WHO).

The UK currently holds seats on key WHO governing bodies including the Executive Board and uses participation at these meetings to scrutinise the WHO for delivering on its commitments and to raise UK priorities. The UK is also the third largest sovereign donor to WHO after the United States and Germany, with £340 million of fully flexible core funding from 2020 to 2024 to enable the WHO to address UK global health priorities. Of this funding, 30% is conditional based on performance to ensure value for money for the taxpayer.

■ **Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust: Complaints****Sir Greg Knight:**[\[60353\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of complaints to Yorkshire Ambulance Service were resolved within eight weeks in the most recent year for which figures are available; and how that data compares to the same data in each of the last five years.

Edward Argar:

The information requested is not held centrally.

HOME OFFICE■ **Afghanistan****Sir Mark Hendrick:**[\[56223\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if her Department will ensure that all queries raised by hon. Members on behalf of constituents and families in Afghanistan will receive a personal response.

Victoria Atkins:

[Holding answer 25 October 2021]: Given the very difficult circumstances in Afghanistan, we cannot pursue cases concerning Afghan people in country in the usual ways.

Please therefore signpost individuals to gov.uk to check for the latest information about Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) [Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy: further information on eligibility criteria and offer details - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy) and the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) ([Afghan citizens' resettlement scheme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/afghan-citizens-resettlement-scheme)) rather than seek to pursue cases on their behalf.

■ Asylum: Standards**Stephen Farry:****[58570]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the reasons are for the delays in processing asylum applications; and what steps she is taking to tackle the backlog of applications in the asylum system.

Kevin Foster:

The asylum system has been under mounting pressure for several years, but this has been exacerbated by the pandemic. At the start of the COVID outbreak, whilst intake reduced, so did interview and decision making capacity. We put in place recovery plans and continue to develop these in light of recent intake surges.

The Home Office is pursuing a programme of transformation and business improvement initiatives which will speed up decision making, reduce the time people spend in the system and reduce the numbers who are awaiting an interview or decision. This includes increasing the number of decision makers and providing improved training and career progression opportunities to aid retention of staff. This investment in our people will speed up processing times and increase the throughput of asylum decisions.

We are continuing to develop existing and new technology to help build on recent improvements such as digital interviewing and move away from a paper-based system. We are streamlining and digitalising the case working process to enable more effective workflow, appointment booking and decision-making. Asylum Operations are also working to reintroduce a service standard and will be looking towards aligning potentially with changes being brought about by the New Plan for Immigration

■ Carers: Migrant Workers**Daisy Cooper:****[58508]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her policy to treat disabled people who employ live-in carers as approved employers for the purposes of visa sponsorship, so they are able to accept applicants from the EU.

Kevin Foster:

While senior care workers and senior support workers qualify for a Skilled Worker visa, they would need to be sponsored by an organisation which holds a Skilled Worker sponsor licence. The Skilled Worker Visa is not limited to EU Nationals, as it allows recruitment on a global basis.

Individual persons are not eligible to be recognised as sponsors. The sponsorship system is designed to ensure employers fulfil specific duties to confirm those who apply for permission to enter or stay in the UK to work are eligible and will comply with the conditions of their visa.

Businesses are able to comply with these duties and demonstrate a verifiable track record of operating lawfully in the UK, both within the immigration system and the wider employer regulatory regime, in a way individuals cannot. This approach ensures the integrity of the immigration system and safeguards those who migrate to the UK.

Outside the Skilled Worker route, employers and individuals can recruit people with general work rights, including the millions of people who have been granted status under the EU Settlement Scheme, Commonwealth citizens with UK Ancestry visas, dependants of those here on our economic routes and those in the UK under our Youth Mobility Schemes. They have full access to the UK labour market and are free to work in the UK in any sector.

In July, I commissioned the MAC to review the impact of ending free movement on the social care sector. The MAC have issued a call for evidence with stakeholders and we look forward to receiving their report in April 2022.

■ Crimes of Violence: Females**Ms Lyn Brown:****[58342]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the potential merits of an expert-led public awareness campaign on male violence against women and girls, following the murders of Sarah Everard and Sabina Nessa.

Rachel Maclean:

We have recently published the [Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy](#) to help ensure that women and girls are safe everywhere - at home, online and on the streets.

The new strategy commits this government to using communications to create behaviour change that targets and challenge perpetrators, educates young people about healthy relationships and consent, and ensures victims can recognise abuse and non-contact sexual offending. The Strategy was informed by an unprecedented 180,000 responses from the general public and stakeholders as part of our Call for Evidence.

The campaign follows the swift action at the beginning of the pandemic last year where the Government launched the #YouAreNotAlone campaign. The campaign raised awareness of domestic abuse and the support available to those suffering from it, signposting those seeking support to the gov.uk domestic abuse support page [Domestic abuse: how to get help - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help) where they can access support services, including Refuge's National Domestic Abuse Helpline. The campaign reached millions of people through digital advertising, and specialist community engagement activity with campaign materials translated into 16 languages.

We also launched and promoted the 'Ask for ANI' codeword scheme which provides a simple and discreet way for domestic abuse victims to signal that they need immediate help using a codeword in participating pharmacies. Almost half of all pharmacies across the UK, including Boots, are now participating in the scheme, following the launch in January 2021.

■ Extradition

Ms Lyn Brown:

[58353]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to prevent abuse of the Interpol red notices system for political reasons by states abusing the human rights of (a) Uyghur people, (b) political opponents of the Russian Government, (c) human rights activists in China and (d) journalists.

Damian Hinds:

[Holding answer 25 October 2021]: The Government strongly supports INTERPOL in its efforts to improve the safeguards it has in place to protect human rights and preclude interventions or activities of a political, military, religious or racial character. The Government views any allegation of misuse of INTERPOL's systems very seriously and works closely with INTERPOL to ensure the legitimacy of the Red Notice system.

All Red Notices are subject to review by a multidisciplinary Notices and Diffusions Task Force in INTERPOL prior to publication to ensure legal compliance and prevent abuse of INTERPOL systems. In November 2019 the Home Office seconded a senior lawyer to INTERPOL to support the work of the Taskforce.

The UK is committed to the principle of non-refoulement and has repeatedly called on other countries to respect their obligations not to force persons to return to a country where there are substantial grounds for believing they would be in danger of being subjected to torture.

■ Fire and Rescue Services: Aircraft

Mr Kevan Jones:

[58310]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether any Integrated Risk Management Plans put forward by individual fire and rescue authorities have included the planned use of aircraft in order to tackle wildfires.

Kit Malthouse:

Operational decisions on the resources required to fight fires and respond to other emergencies are a matter for each individual fire and rescue service.

No fire and rescue service in England owns a plane or helicopter, but many have drones which are now commonly used to monitor the spread of fires.

Firearms: Licensing**Jim Shannon:**[\[58866\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of reviewing firearm licence procedures following the shooting in Plymouth on 12 August 2021.

Kit Malthouse:

This country has some of the toughest firearms controls in the world and our firearms law is kept under constant review to safeguard against abuse by criminals and to preserve public safety.

New statutory guidance on firearms licensing was published on 20 October and it sets a clear framework for the police to follow when considering applications for a firearm or shotgun certificate. For the first time, police will be legally required to have regard to the guidance and this will help improve standards and consistency across forces in the UK. The new guidance will come into force on 1 November.

We will keep the statutory guidance under review, especially as we learn more from the investigations and reviews following the shootings in Plymouth.

Fraud**Jim Shannon:**[\[58858\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment he has made of the reasons for which 22,000 fraud cases were dropped by police last year; and what steps he plans to take to ensure that instances of fraud are investigated in an equitable manner.

Kit Malthouse:

The National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB), operated by the UK's national lead force for fraud City of London Police, assesses information reported to it on potential frauds to identify crimes and links between seemingly unconnected incidents.

Where there is enough evidence available and a viable lead, cases are sent to the appropriate local police force for them consider whether enforcement activity should take place. Neither Action Fraud nor NFIB conduct fraud investigations themselves. Local forces remain responsible for the decision to investigate reports of fraud.

The Government has recognised the need to boost local police capacity and is committed to strengthening our criminal justice system to put victims first. As part of the Police Uplift Programme to recruit an additional 20,000 officers by 2023, we have

prioritised placing more investigators in the City of London Police and Regional Organised Crime Units to carry out fraud investigations.

The service also uses reports to support disruption of the enablers of fraud and cybercrime, including the take down of websites and telephone numbers. In addition, a benefit of having a centralised reporting system is that trends can be identified and action taken to address these threats.

In light of advances to technology and growing demand on the service as well as reports such as Sir Craig Mackey's independent review of Action Fraud to (<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/assets/About-us/action-fraud-report.pdf>), we are working with the City of London Police on plans to refresh and upgrade the current Action Fraud service. The new service, expected to be operational by 2024, will improve the service to victims, provide greater intelligence and insight to policing on fraud and cybercrime affecting communities, and allow for greater prevention and disruption at scale.

In the meantime, we continue to work closely with the City of London Police, who manage the service, and a number of improvements to the existing system have been put in place over the last year to ensure a smooth transition to the new service.

■ Immigration: EU Nationals

Cat Smith:

[57113]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will update the EU Settlement Scheme to ensure that people with pre-settled status do not have that status automatically removed from their online permit when they apply for settled status.

Kevin Foster:

Anyone with pre-settled status who applied for settled status on or after 15 July 2021 will continue to see a pre-settled status profile on their eVisa.

For pre-settled status holders who applied for settled status before 15 July 2021 and whose eVisa was updated to show a Certificate of Application (CoA), work is underway to change their eVisas back to a pre-settled status profile automatically.

In the meantime, anyone in this position who would like their eVisa changed back to pre-settled status can contact the UKVI Resolution Centre, who can arrange to manually update their eVisa.

Hywel Williams:

[60355]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent estimate she made of the number of outstanding applications to the EU Settlement scheme.

Hywel Williams:

[60356]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many outstanding applications for the EU Settlement scheme are from (a) Wales (b) rest of the United Kingdom.

Kevin Foster:

The Home Office publishes data on the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) in the '[EU Settlement Scheme statistics](#)'. Data on the number of applications and concluded applications in total and for Wales to 30 June 2021 are published in '[EU Settlement Scheme quarterly statistics, June 2021](#)', tables EUSS_MON and EUSS_05 respectively.

Summary statistics of total EUSS applications and concluded applications to 30 September 2021 are published on the '[EU Settlement Scheme statistics](#)' web page.

■ **Prevent Review****Conor McGinn:**[\[59837\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the (a) status and (b) likelihood of on-time delivery of the independent review of Prevent.

Damian Hinds:

[Holding answer 25 October 2021]: The Independent Review of Prevent is currently ongoing. The Independent Reviewer of Prevent will complete and present his report to the Government imminently. The Government will respond on receipt of the report, as parliamentary time allows.

■ **Refugees: Afghanistan****Andrew Rosindell:**[\[56298\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to help religious minorities in Afghanistan access the Afghan citizens' resettlement scheme.

Victoria Atkins:

[Holding answer 25 October 2021]: The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) will prioritise vulnerable people including ethnic and religious minorities, as well as those who have stood up for values such as democracy and women's rights in Afghanistan.

We will work with UNHCR and partners in the region to prioritise those in need of protection, such as ethnic, religious and other minority groups at risk.

Further information on the eligibility, prioritisation and referral of people for the ACRS is set out in the policy statement published on gov.uk on 13 September, available at www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghanistan-resettlement-and-immigration-policy-statement.

Andrew Rosindell:[\[56318\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of whether the Christian community in Afghanistan requires refuge.

Victoria Atkins:

[Holding answer 25 October 2021]: Whilst we have not made a specific assessment on the Christian community, all asylum and human rights claims, including those based on religion or belief, are carefully considered on their individual merits in accordance with our international obligations.

Andrew Rosindell:**[56321]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of people from religious minorities in Afghanistan who are able to resettle in the UK.

Victoria Atkins:

[Holding answer 25 October 2021]: Through the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) the UK will relocate up to 20,000 people at risk. It will prioritise those who have stood up for values such as democracy and women's rights in Afghanistan, as well as vulnerable groups, including ethnic and religious minorities.

Further information on the eligibility, prioritisation and referral of people for the ACRS is set out in the policy statement published on gov.uk on 13 September, available at www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghanistan-resettlement-and-immigration-policy-statement.

Catherine West:**[56523]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if her Department will prioritise the safe passage to the UK for Afghanistan's junior female football team.

Victoria Atkins:

[Holding answer 25 October 2021]: The Home Office is working at pace to finalise visas for Afghanistan's Girls Development National Youth football team and looks forward to welcoming them to the UK shortly.

We have been working closely with the NGOs and relevant partners to ensure that there are adequate arrangements in place to support the safe relocation of the team members and their families in the UK. This remains a priority for the Home Office and FCDO who continue to support the team in Pakistan and work through the application process.

The Government is committed to doing all it can to support those most in need, including vulnerable women and girls, and those at risk who have had to flee Afghanistan.

Gill Furniss:**[56641]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she next plans to provide an update on the Afghan citizens' resettlement scheme.

Victoria Atkins:

The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) is not yet open. Officials are working urgently to stand up the remaining elements of the scheme, amid the complex and changing picture.

The Government will continue to work closely with other government departments, non-governmental organisations, charities, local authorities and other partners and relevant organisations in the development and implementation of the ACRS.

Further information on the eligibility, prioritisation and referral of people for the ACRS is set out in the policy statement published on gov.uk on 13 September, available at www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghanistan-resettlement-and-immigration-policy-statement

The Home Office is logging the cases we have received from Honourable Members, and we are considering how this data will be used in the future.

Jessica Morden:

[56655]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to expedite biometric residence permit applications for Afghans evacuated under Operation Pitting and who have been in bridging hotels for over a week.

Victoria Atkins:

[Holding answer 20 October 2021]: The government has announced that those arriving under ARAP and ACRS will receive Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR). Following the policy statement the Government published on 13 September in relation to ILR, we are working through the cases of those who have recently arrived from Afghanistan and are processing them in line with the published policy.

No one will be required to leave the United Kingdom, or be disadvantaged in any way, while we work through their cases.

More information can be found in the Afghanistan Resettlement and Immigration Policy Statement

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghanistan-resettlement-and-immigration-policy-statement/afghanistan-resettlement-and-immigration-policy-statement-accessible-version#afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy>

Charlotte Nichols:

[56665]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when the Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme will open to applicants.

Victoria Atkins:

[Holding answer 25 October 2021]: The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) is not yet open. Officials are working urgently to stand up the remaining elements of the scheme, amid the complex and changing picture.

The Government will continue to work closely with other government departments, non-governmental organisations, charities, local authorities and other partners and relevant organisations in the development and implementation of the ACRS.

Gill Furniss:

[57223]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether Afghan citizens whose cases have already been raised with her Department by hon. Members will automatically be considered for the Afghan citizens' resettlement scheme.

Victoria Atkins:

[Holding answer 20 October 2021]: The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) is not yet open. Officials are working urgently to stand up the remaining elements of the scheme, amid the complex and changing picture.

The Government will continue to work closely with other government departments, non-governmental organisations, charities, local authorities and other partners and relevant organisations in the development and implementation of the ACRS.

Further information on the eligibility, prioritisation and referral of people for the ACRS is set out in the policy statement published on gov.uk on 13 September, available at www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghanistan-resettlement-and-immigration-policy-statement

The Home Office is logging the cases we have received from Honourable Members, and we are considering how this data will be used in the future.

Gill Furniss:

[59911]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her timescale is for bringing to the UK unaccompanied Afghanistan refugee children currently in temporary camps in Qatar who have relatives in the UK.

Victoria Atkins:

[Holding answer 25 October 2021]: The Home Office is aware of a group of unaccompanied Afghan minors with family links to the UK in Qatar and officials are working closely with UNICEF, the UNHCR and the US State Department to ensure the most appropriate outcomes for these children. Our priority is to ensure that the children will be safe and well cared for and to ensure any outcome is in the best interests of the children.

We are working with the utmost urgency to ensure that, where appropriate, these children are brought to the UK. However, we need to conduct assessments of the relatives the children will be living with to ensure the children's safety, and that moving to the UK is in their best interests. As soon as these assessments are made, and we are content moving to the UK is in the best interests of the children, arrangements will be made to bring them to the UK.

■ Sexual Offences: Criminal Investigation

Dame Diana Johnson:

[60369]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to reports by Channel 4 News, published on 12 October 2021, that reported cases of indecent exposure recorded by police forces have increased by a third in the last three years, what steps her Department is taking to improve police investigations into that offence.

Kit Malthouse:

Protecting women and girls from violence and supporting victims and survivors of sexual violence is a key priority for this Government.

In July, the Government published its Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy which committed to a number of actions to ensure that organisations and individuals work together effectively to tackle violence against women and girls, as well as hold perpetrators to account.

The Government has already worked with the National Police Chiefs' Council to appoint a National Policing Lead, DCC Maggie Blyth, for Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls to drive forward the policing approach to VAWG.

The Strategy also committed the Ministry of Justice to research the escalation of sexual offending amongst repeat offenders to continue to build the Government's understanding of escalatory offending behaviours.

As well as the Strategy, the Government is also taking forward actions following the Rape Review, which was published in June. These actions include Operation Soteria, which is a programme of work that will build on pioneering work of Avon and Somerset Constabulary and improve the work of the police and CPS in investigating rape and sexual offences in four further pathfinder locations.

Finally, the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill includes a number of provisions that will further protect women and girls by strengthening the management of sexual offenders by enabling courts to place positive obligations on those who pose a risk of sexual harm through Sexual Harm Prevention Orders (SHPO) and Sexual Risk Orders (SRO). The Bill will also make express provision for a court to impose electronic monitoring conditions as part of an SHPO or SRO, and it will reform pre-charge bail to better protect vulnerable victims and witnesses.

■ UK Border Force: Staff**Daisy Cooper:****[58511]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has made an estimate of the number of additional Border Force officers required to process entrants from the EU, following the recent changes to the Immigration Rules that have ended travel to the UK for those using EEA national ID cards.

Kevin Foster:

No additional Border Force officers have been recruited or required specifically for processing passengers as a result of the change in acceptance of EEA ID Cards.

The previous use of national ID cards at the UK Border by visitors from the EEA, instead of travelling on a national passport, increased demand on Border Force resources at key locations as these passengers needed to use the Primary Control Point, rather than E-Gates, on arrival.

Resource and staffing requirements are continually reviewed, and resources are deployed flexibly as and when they are required.

■ Visas: Married People

Stephen Farry:

[58568]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether a person who has recently married a UK national is eligible to apply for the Spouse Visa while their Marriage Visitor Visa is still valid.

Kevin Foster:

Visitors must leave the UK before applying for another type of permission, including as a spouse. An application may be made outside the UK whilst the marriage visit visa is still valid.

The applicant should apply in the country in which they are living. Further details on the spouse visa are available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/uk-family-visa/partner-spouse>

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Department for International Trade: Public Expenditure

Emily Thornberry:

[60372]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to her Department's spend control data for January 2021 to June 2021, published on 21 October 2021, if she will publish a breakdown of the £10,700,000 spent on UK Investment Support Services, reference number CAMS425.

Penny Mordaunt:

The departmental spend control data published on 21 October confirms amounts approved through the Cabinet Office Controls approval process, rather than actual expenditure. The monthly breakdown of actual expenditure on the Department for International Trade's contract with Ernst & Young for the provision of investment support services can be found in transparency data on the Department's spending over £25,000 here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dit-spending-over-25000-january-2021>.

Emily Thornberry:

[60373]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to her Department's spend control data for January 2021 to June 2021, published on 21 October 2021, for what reasons her Department incurred expenditure of £112,000,000 on Contingent/Interim Labour and Associated Services, reference number CAMS137.

Penny Mordaunt:

The publication in question relates to a business case submitted for assurance under the Cabinet Office spend control process. The Department has not incurred any spend to date on the proposed services.

■ Mubadala

Emily Thornberry:

[\[60371\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, which representatives of the Mubadala Investment Company she met on 19 April 2021; and whether she discussed with those representatives proposals announced the previous night for the creation of a European Super League.

Penny Mordaunt:

The former Secretary of State for International Trade, Liz Truss met with Khaldoon al Mubarak (Chief Executive Officer of Mubadala), Waleed Al Mokarrib Al Muhairi (Deputy CEO of Mubadala), and Matthew Hurn (Chief Financial Officer, Alternative Investments and Infrastructure at Mubadala) on 19th April 2021.

There were no discussions of any proposals for a European Super League.

JUSTICE

■ Compulsorily Detained Psychiatric Patients

Nick Fletcher:

[\[56535\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, for what reasons individuals who are detained under certain circumstances of section 37 of the Mental Health Act are detained without a tariff or plan for their future.

Victoria Atkins:

A hospital order (section 37 of the Mental Health Act) authorises detention under the Mental Health Act for an offender who is suffering from a mental disorder, for as long as treatment in hospital is necessary and appropriate.

The order is made by a court as an alternative to a prison sentence, where the court thinks it appropriate that an individual should be diverted away from custody to hospital for treatment. There is no minimum term to be served for the purpose of punishment so the period of detention will be determined by the patient's responsible clinician or the Tribunal based on the need for ongoing treatment in hospital.

As part of the planned reforms set out in the Mental Health Act White Paper, we want to ensure that all patients, including those subject to section 37 of the Act, have a high-quality care and treatment plan in place within days of their admission. This plan should set out the patient's needs, how these will be met whilst they are detained under the Mental Health Act, the objectives of detention and any proposed timescales before improvement might be expected.

■ Crime

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[56785\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to ensure that high-status and wealthy public figures are accountable under the law.

James Cartlidge:

It is a fundamental principle of our justice system and the rule of law that there is equality under the law. Any matter brought before the courts will be treated in line with this principle.

■ Legal Aid Scheme: Family Law**Sir Alan Campbell:**[\[56297\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure consistency in the legal aid fees payable for family law disputes involving children across England and Wales.

James Cartlidge:

This Government is committed to ensuring that everyone gets the support they need to access the justice system. The legal aid scheme is designed to target funding at those that need it most; legal aid is available in certain family matters, including public family law cases which fall under the Children Act 1989.

The consistency of legal aid fees is considered within the context of the wider civil and family legal aid system. More widely we continue to consider the long-term sustainability of the civil legal aid market and we have been engaging with representative bodies and providers within the sector to increase our understanding of the challenges the system is facing.

The Legal Aid Agency keep legal aid provision under constant review and take action when necessary to ensure consistency of provision.

■ Low Newton Prison: Vocational Education**Mary Kelly Foy:**[\[58502\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the areas of development set out on page 6 of the Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board for HMP/YOI Low Newton for 2020-21, published in October 2021, what funding the Government plans to provide to enable the governor of HMP/YOI Low Newton to invest in new educational and vocational initiatives to allow for additional and less stereotypically women's employment opportunities.

Victoria Atkins:

The funding of Prison Education is based on the number of prisoners and the type of establishment. Governors are able to decide, within limit, how much of the education budget is allocated to the core (Prison Education Framework) contract and how much is spent on niche provision via an Education Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS). There is further scope to move allocated monies around between establishments to cater for individual learner need at the discretion of the Director. The total education budget is just under £150 Million.

The Curriculum at HMP Low Newton is reviewed annually and learners are surveyed to ensure courses are relevant and of interest to them. Whilst it is important to provide learning that meets the wishes of learners, we also deliver the core skills of

numeracy, literacy and IT. We also continue to deliver courses which will support the women into employment on release and provide personal development, specifically tailored to meet the needs of the women in Low Newton's care.

■ Prisoners' Transfers: Property

Ms Lyn Brown:

[58348]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP/YOI Stoke Heath, published on 13 October 2021, what recent progress he has made in improving HMPPS systems for tracking prisoners' property when they are transferred.

Victoria Atkins:

A new operational policy framework is currently in development to ensure prisoners' property is managed as effectively as possible. Policy leads have worked closely with Independent Monitoring Board members and the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman's office on this. The new framework will strengthen guidance on known problem areas, including at the point of transfer, and will place a focus on ensuring prisoners do not accumulate excessive items.

For property held within the agreed limits, a new digital platform has been introduced which enables better tracking on transit between prisons. This is expected to be fully rolled out early in 2022. In addition, a new fleet of vehicles has been brought into operation and is designed to ensure that property up to the agreed limits can be moved more effectively.

■ Prisoners: Crime

Grahame Morris:

[58816]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many (a) referrals, (b) prosecutions and (c) successful prosecutions relating to crimes allegedly committed by prisoners have taken place in each of the last six years; and if he will make a statement.

Victoria Atkins:

The Ministry of Justice is not able to provide data on (a) referrals, (b) prosecutions and (c) successful prosecutions relating to crimes allegedly committed by prisoners as this information is not held centrally on the court proceedings database.

We are not able to identify in our data whether individual offenders are prisoners or not, nor whether offences have taken place in prisons. I have commissioned work on how this data can be captured.

■ Prisoners: Obesity

Ms Lyn Brown:

[58344]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the trends in (a) obesity and (b) people being overweight among prisoners in England and Wales since the covid-19 outbreak began.

Victoria Atkins:

Information on trends in prisoners' weight across the estate is not collected by HMPPS.

Prison Rules require that prisoners are provided with wholesome, nutritious, well prepared and served food that should be reasonably varied and sufficient in quantity. Meals take medical requirements into account and are informed by Government guidance on eating a healthy diet.

In relation to exercise, since the beginning of the pandemic prisons have been authorised to use external exercise yards for access to the open air and to deliver external physical education.

As prison regimes have opened up again in line with our National Framework for Regimes and Services, all establishments are encouraged to continue to support outdoors sports and activities and the majority are reintroducing indoor fitness facilities and classroom based PE activity.

HMPPS encourages exercise within prisons, and has a range of schemes designed to encourage this. This includes the Twinning Project which links prisons in England and Wales with a local professional football club. This offers skills to prisoners and promotes healthy living.

Any medical concerns about an individual's weight can be referred to NHS prison healthcare services.

■ Prisoners: Pregnancy**Gareth Thomas:**[\[56756\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prisoners for all or part of their custodial sentence have been pregnant in each of the last five years; how many of those prisoners have given birth whilst in custody; how many have given birth at an external hospital; how many have given birth at a HMP facility; how many have given birth at a HMP facility without professional medical support; and if he will make a statement.

Gareth Thomas:[\[56757\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps HM Prison Service has taken in response to the death of baby born to an 18 year old inmate in September 2019 at HMP Bronzefield in order to prevent that situation arising again; and if he will make a statement.

Gareth Thomas:[\[56758\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of reassessing the requirement for women in their third trimester of pregnancy to be in custody; whether he has made an assessment of the appropriateness of other punitive measures outside of custody for all but violent inmates; and if he will make a statement.

Victoria Atkins:

On 20 September the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) published a new policy on pregnancy, Mother and Baby Units and maternal separation from children up to the age of two in women's prisons, which contains a range of reforms for improving the care of pregnant women. As part of the new policy, we have increased central data collection on self-declared pregnancies in women's prisons. We will be publishing annual snapshots in the HMPPS Annual Digest. The first publication, covering July 2020-April 2021, shows that on average 26 women self-declared as pregnant each week. During this period, 31 births took place. Out of these, 28 were in hospital, two in transit to hospital, and zero in a prison.

Women in prison should have access to the same range and quality of healthcare services as they would have access to in the community, including midwifery, obstetric and health visiting services. These services are commissioned through the health sector. Care is driven by individual care plans, including birth plans where women are due to give birth during their time in custody. These are developed by specialist midwives, prison staff and other relevant agencies dependent on individual needs.

The death of Baby A was a tragedy and a range of steps have been taken to prevent it from happening again. Immediate steps were taken locally at HMP Bronzefield to safeguard women in children, including a review of commissioning arrangements and provision of additional information resources on support services. In addition, measures were put in place in all women's prisons to ensure immediate estate wide improvements, including free access to local NHS Pregnancy advice services and additional welfare checks for all pregnant women in the third trimester.

Centrally, officials have responded directly to the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) recommendations with a comprehensive action plan detailing the work that is underway to address learning. This work is being assured by a Project Board jointly chaired by Executive Director level SROs in HMPPS and NHS England and NHS Improvement, to ensure whole system improvement.

The new HMPPS policy on pregnancy, Mother and Baby Units and maternal separation from children up to the age of two in women's prisons, published 20 September, forms an important part of our national response to the learning from Baby A. This contains requirements which directly address PPO recommendations.

Sentencing is a matter for the independent judiciary. However, we recognise the additional physical, emotional and practical challenges experienced by pregnant women in prison and we are taking steps to ensure sentencing decisions are more informed. Since the publication of the Female Offender Strategy in 2018, we have made improvements to the preparation of pre-sentence reports (PSRs) through a PSR checklist for women and a Pre-Sentence Pilot that includes the targeting of fuller reports for female offenders. These take into account individual circumstances relating to pregnancy and caring responsibilities and the impact that imprisonment has on these.

■ Prisoners: Self-harm

Ms Lyn Brown:

[56924]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP / YOI Downview, published on 29 September 2021, page 11, if he will make an assessment on the impact on the (a) accuracy and (b) comparability over time of self-harm in custody incident statistics of the decision to remove incidents of noose-making from the noose: ligature-making category.

Victoria Atkins:

Self-harm in prison custody is defined as “any act where a prisoner deliberately harms themselves, irrespective of method, intent or severity of any injury”.

Our assessment of the impact on the self-harm statistics was set out in the Safety in Custody statistical bulletin published in January 2021, available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-september-2020/safety-in-custody-statistics-england-and-wales-deaths-in-prison-custody-to-december-2020-assaults-and-self-harm-to-september-2020>. There has been a reduction of less than 2% in the number of incidents where ‘noose: ligature making’ has been reported.

■ Prisons: Drugs

Ms Lyn Brown:

[58355]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to Prison Security Investment Programme: X-ray Body Scanners Ad Hoc Management Information, published on 14 October 2021, what assessment he has made of the reasons for (a) the decrease in the positive scan rate from 13.3% to 10.1% and (b) the increase in the inconclusive scan rate from 2.3% to 4.8%; and what plans he has for the data contained in that release to be incorporated into the finds data published in the HMPPS Annual Digest in future.

Victoria Atkins:

Data received from the use of X-ray body scanners is in its infancy. It is currently not possible to identify trends in data as the equipment has not been implemented for long enough, and we therefore need to assess the data itself before trying to identify trends.

A project has commenced to identify if it is possible to link the finds of illicit items data with the indications of illicit items data produced from the X-ray body scanners. The first stage of this project has been completed which was to move the reporting of the data to the Performance Hub within SOCT, providing consistency of reporting. The second stage will scope the resource required to link the data.

■ Probate

Sir Charles Walker:

[56849]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to reduce the time taken to grant probate; and if he will make a statement.

Tom Pursglove:

The most recently published information regarding combined waiting times for a grant of probate, on paper and digital cases, covers April 2021 to June 2021 and is published on gov.uk via Family Court Statistics Quarterly (Table 25):

[Family Court Statistics Quarterly: April to June 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/family-court-statistics-quarterly)

The average length of time taken for a grant of probate following receipt of the documents required has been maintained at between four to six weeks, despite the unprecedented challenges faced by the Probate Service during the Covid 19 pandemic.

HMCTS continues to collaborate with service and its users to enhance the service and latest information on this can be found at:

<https://insidehmcts.blog.gov.uk/2021/08/06/collaborating-is-key-to-enhancing-probate-users-experience-of-using-myhmcts/>

The improvement of the online probate system remains a priority for HMTCS to ensure it is accessible to all applicants and they find it simpler and easier to understand.

Reoffenders**Ms Lyn Brown:****[56399]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 22 September 2021 to Question 49080, on Reoffenders, what proportion of single justice procedure convictions are recordable.

James Cartlidge:

For the year ending March 2021, approximately 670 defendants were dealt with at the magistrates' courts under SJP where the offence was deemed 'recordable on the PNC', which makes up 0.1% of the total defendants dealt with via SJP in that period (489,910). We are unable to say how many of these defendants were convicted of the recordable offence without incurring a disproportionate cost.

Reparation by Offenders**Ms Lyn Brown:****[58343]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to Offenders to pay back society more visibly under £90 million plan, published on 5 October 2021, what organisations working with former offenders he has recently consulted on the impact of different forms of unpaid work on (a) rehabilitation and (b) skills and employability.

Kit Malthouse:

This Government is investing £93m so that communities can benefit from a record-breaking 8 million hours of impactful and demanding unpaid work each year.

As part of our efforts to relaunch unpaid work, we are pursuing a range of measures that will build the skills needed for employment. New national partnerships with charities and organisations mean that offenders can make reparations for their

crimes, whilst gaining vital opportunities to improve their skills and employability. We have regular engagement with the voluntary sector, such as our new partnership with the Canal and River Trust, and more broadly with industry leaders through our New Futures Network, including employers such as Timpson and G4S. We are consulting a range of further potential voluntary sector partners to identify unpaid work placements that will develop work ready skills and offer vocational training.

We are engaging with education providers including large colleges, and those within the voluntary and community sectors, to create a national strategy that will see offenders gain access to apprenticeships, create positions of responsibility for hard working offenders to gain skills in group supervision, and provide training opportunities, interview preparation and CV building. We are also looking to recruit offenders locally to act as mentors and support staff. Some may be directly recruited from unpaid work groups, if they have demonstrated a willingness to develop themselves, gain new skills and provide support to their peers.

This work builds on our engagement with leading employment and education specialists as part of reforms to probation this year. Charities and private sector organisations were awarded £195m to provide vital services that help reduce reoffending, including £34m for skills training and employment support.

■ Sexual Offences: Convictions

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[56568]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to improve conviction rates for rape and sexual assault offences.

Victoria Atkins:

In June 2021, in response to falling rates of prosecutions in rape and serious sexual offence cases and concerns around victims feeling they are not able to pursue their case, this government published the end-to-end Rape Review report and action plan.

The Action Plan sets out transformative action across the Criminal Justice System to address the reasons for the decrease in prosecutions since 2016 across four areas:

- Holding each part of the Criminal Justice System accountable for driving improvement through publication of transparent performance metrics (e.g. on timeliness and quality of cases) and improved governance through a ministerial-chaired taskforce with specific responsibility for implementation of the Rape Review action plan;
- Providing quality support to every victim of rape and sexual assault, which is appropriate to their needs, when they need it;
- Transforming the way the police and CPS investigate and prosecute cases by focusing investigations on the behaviour of the suspect rather than the behaviour of the victim; and

- Improving the victim's experience of court, without compromising the principle of a fair trial, by reviewing the use of evidence presented in court and ensuring consistent practice in courts across the country.

■ Stoke Heath Prison: Education and Training

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[58347\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP/YOI Stoke Heath, published on 13 October 2021, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of budgets for education and training at HMP/YOI Stoke Heath (a) to meet the prison objective of rehabilitation and (b) to help local businesses to address skills shortages in the labour market.

Victoria Atkins:

The funding of Prison Education is based upon the number of prisoners and the type of establishment. The education budget at Stoke Heath has remained consistent since 2018/19 and, during this period, the budget at Stoke Heath has been underspent. No further action to supplement Stoke Heath's budget has been undertaken. The total education budget is just under £150 Million.

■ Wakefield Prison: Psychiatry

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[58350\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Wakefield, published on 13 October 2021, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of ensuring access to a forensic psychiatrist at HMP Wakefield.

Victoria Atkins:

Forensic Psychiatry is not directly linked to the provision of Mental Health or Clinical Services within the prisons commissioning model. Prisoners mental health is supported and treated by Clinical Psychiatry which is an NHS England commissioned service and is in place at HMP Wakefield. Clinical Psychiatry is the diagnosis and treatment of mental health conditions. In addition, Clinical Psychology (a commissioned service separate to, but aligned with the Psychiatry service) supports the treatment of a range of psychological conditions, including trauma conditions from a clinical perspective.

Forensic Psychiatry is concerned with the contribution of mental health diagnoses and conditions to criminal risk. It can advise more broadly on a prisoner's progression to reduce their future risk of re-offending and their reports are sometimes of value to, for example, Parole Boards. Forensic Psychology is also focused upon similar parameters where by this profession delivers interventions that will actively seek to reduce the risk of re-offending. At HMP Wakefield this intervention is delivered by the Assessment and Interventions Psychology team, which is not a commissioned clinical service as the team are employed by HMPPS and as such would not be delivered by

the Practice Plus Group, and removes the requirement for access to a Forensic Psychiatrist at HMP Wakefield.

■ **Wealstun Prison: Food Allowances**

Ms Lyn Brown:

[58345]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Wealstun, published on 14 October 2021, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of the daily food allowance for prisoners of £2.02 per day.

Victoria Atkins:

Food budgets for public sector prisons are determined locally and kept under review as part of normal budget allocation planning.

I am pleased that the IMB at HMP Wealstun commended the variety and standard of food provided at the prison, which includes produce grown on the prison grounds at little cost.

Prison Rules require that prisoners are provided with three meals a day that are varied and nutritious and that meet the religious, cultural and medical needs of all. HMPPS will continue to work closely with the Office of Health Improvement and Disparities, following government guidelines on eating healthy meals.

LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

■ **Affordable Housing: Construction**

Sam Tarry:

[58557]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what plans he has to work with local authorities to increase the rate of building affordable social homes.

Eddie Hughes:

The Government is committed to increasing the supply of affordable housing, and has taken a number of steps to support councils to deliver new homes. In March 2021 we announced a package of reforms to give councils more freedom in how they can spend the money they receive from Right to Buy sales on replacement homes, including homes for social rent. In May 2021, Homes England launched its Local Government Capacity Centre to provide councils with practical support to build their development skills and capacity.

This is on top of the removal of Housing Revenue Account borrowing cap in 2018, enabling local authorities greater flexibility to borrow for building. To further support the delivery of new homes we are investing over £12 billion in affordable housing over 5 years, the largest investment in affordable housing in a decade. This includes the new £11.5 billion Affordable Homes Programme. Councils are eligible for funding through the Affordable Home Programme and we want to see local authorities

playing a key role in the delivery of this Programme, using it and the range of tools available to deliver a new generation of council housing.

■ **Building Safety Fund**

Hilary Benn: [\[58300\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will make available in the Library a copy of schedule 9 of the Funding Agreement of the Building Safety Fund.

Hilary Benn: [\[58301\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how many leaseholders have raised concerns about schedule 9 of the Building Safety Fund funding agreement; and if he will make a statement.

Christopher Pincher:

The Department has committed to publish the full Grant Funding Agreement for the Building Safety Fund. Schedule 9 is the Certificate of Compliance which applicants must sign at certain points of their remediation project to verify that it meets the Building Safety Fund technical and safety requirements. This will make sure that works are performed correctly and to required standards, so that leaseholders' and residents' homes are made safe. We are not aware of leaseholders raising concern about the Certificate of Compliance.

■ **Building Safety Fund: West Midlands**

Shabana Mahmood: [\[56943\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how many buildings have (a) applied to and (b) secured funding from the Building Safety Fund in (i) Birmingham Ladywood constituency, (ii) Birmingham and (iii) the West Midlands.

Shabana Mahmood: [\[56944\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how many buildings that have successfully applied to the Building Safety Fund have (a) received funding and (b) started cladding remediation work in (i) Birmingham Ladywood constituency, (ii) Birmingham and (iii) the West Midlands.

Christopher Pincher:

As at 18 October 2021, a total of 31 buildings have applied for funding from the Building Safety Fund in the West Midlands, 27 of the buildings are in Birmingham and of these 26 are in the Birmingham Ladywood constituency. A total of 18 buildings in the West Midlands are receiving funding from the Building Safety Fund, 17 of which are in Birmingham and 16 of those are in Birmingham Ladywood. A total of 5 buildings have started cladding remediation, all of which are in the Birmingham Ladywood constituency.

■ Community Care: Autism and Learning Disability

Henry Smith:

[\[58374\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will publish details on what funding the Government is providing to local authorities to build community support to prevent people with a learning disability, and/or autism, from being admitted to inpatient units.

Eddie Hughes:

Government funding for local support services, including services for those with a learning disability and/or autism, is paid through the Local Government Finance Settlement (England), with an estimated £360 million (gross) spend on commissioned support by local authorities in 2019/20.

Since 2010 Government has invested over £4 billion into the local authority administered Disabled Facilities Grant (2010-11 to 2021-22), to help disabled people remain living safely and independently at home. Forthcoming guidance on Disabled Facilities Grant delivery for local authorities will be clear that the grant is for all disabled people including those with a learning disability and/or autism.

The Government is also investing more than £90 million in 2020/21 in the development of services to support people with a learning disability and/or autism to have their mental health needs met in the community instead of in a mental health inpatient setting, this comprises of £31 million of mental health recovery funding for the learning disability and autism programme, £40 million as part of the NHS Long Term Plan and £21 million for the Community Discharge Grant.

■ Community Development

Theresa Villiers:

[\[58321\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what discussions he has had with bodies representing communities with Latin American heritage.

Theresa Villiers:

[\[58322\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether his Department has any grant schemes which might be available to support efforts to increase general public awareness and understanding of Latin American communities in the UK.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Government's vision is for a country where people live, work, learn and socialise together and share rights and responsibilities, whatever their background. The Government is committed to levelling up our country and strengthening communities to ensure everyone can progress, no matter their background. The Government is committed to strengthening community integration across the country and is running several programmes on improving access to education, jobs and other opportunities for communities across the country. The Department has discussions

with communities across the United Kingdom and would welcome the opportunity to discuss how government and civil society can promote understanding of Latin American communities.

■ **Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities: Local Government**

Steve Reed:

[\[60434\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what consultation he has undertaken with local government representatives from across the political spectrum since his appointment as Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

Kemi Badenoch:

Since September, the Secretary of State has held meetings with the chair of the Local Government Association, has met with the M10 network of Metro Mayors, and has spoken at the Local Government Association's Councillors' Forum, comprised of councillors representing different political parties from councils across England and Wales. He has also met with the chair of the County Councils Network. Other Ministers from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities continue to meet regularly with councils and local government representative bodies.

Further to this, my Department continues to lead the Government's significant and regular engagement with councils and local government sector bodies throughout England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, to ensure information is getting to councils and that we are made aware of any areas of concern.

■ **Horticulture**

Peter Dowd:

[\[60439\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the Ornamental Horticulture Roundtable Group's action plan, *Unlocking Green Growth: A plan for the ornamental horticulture and landscaping industry*, published on 7 September 2021; and what assessment he has made of the potential merits of proposals to improve urban planning and green urban areas.

Christopher Pincher:

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) acknowledges the importance of green and open space and makes clear that where new development is proposed an appropriate amount of public space should be provided. It sets out that existing open space should not be built on unless there is evidence to demonstrate that it is no longer required, or it will be replaced by equivalent or better provision at a suitable location.

The NPPF also sets out how both local and neighbourhood plans allow communities to identify and protect green areas which they consider to be of particular importance, by formally designating these as Local Green Space.

We amended the NPPF, in July 2021, to ensure planning policies create places which are better-designed and more beautiful. In addition, the National Model Design Code sets out proposals for how nature and green spaces should be woven into the fabric of our villages, towns and cities, providing benefits in terms of health and wellbeing, biodiversity, climate and flood mitigation.

My officials are engaging with DEFRA officials regarding the outcomes of the Ornamental Horticulture Roundtable Group's '*Unlocking green growth: A plan from the ornamental horticulture & landscaping industry*'.

■ Housing First

Bob Blackman:

[\[58382\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what discussions his Department has had with the Treasury on funding the Housing First places needed in England to end rough sleeping and homelessness for cases of people with complex needs.

Eddie Hughes:

This Government is committed to ending rough sleeping as part of its latest Manifesto Commitment, utilising schemes like Housing First. Announcements regarding the Spending Review are imminent, which will set out how Government will continue to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping.

■ Housing: Ilford

Sam Tarry:

[\[58565\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what support the Government is giving to local authorities to urgently house the most vulnerable, in the context of the average waiting time for homeless applicants in Ilford wanting a two-bedroom house being eight years and eight months.

Eddie Hughes:

Between 2010 and 2020 the social housing waiting list fell from 1.74 million households to 1.15 million households. The waiting lists are falling because the Government has given councils the flexibility to manage them, and we have taken action to build more homes.

Temporary accommodation is an important way of ensuring no family is without a roof over their head. The Homelessness Reduction Act is also helping more people get help earlier, particularly single households who often would not have received help in the past and would have been at risk of sleeping on our streets. This year the Government is spending over £750 million to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping.

The Government is committed to increasing the supply of affordable housing and are investing over £12 billion in affordable housing over 5 years, the largest investment in affordable housing in a decade. This includes the new £11.5 billion Affordable Homes

Programme, which will provide up to 180,000 new homes across the country, should economic conditions allow.

■ Leasehold: Reform

Theresa Villiers: [\[58317\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether freeholders will receive compensation for the loss of marriage value under the Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Bill.

Theresa Villiers: [\[58318\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether he has made an estimate of the financial value of the marriage value which will be removed from freeholders under the Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Bill.

Theresa Villiers: [\[58319\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the effect of restricting ground rents, as proposed in the Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Bill, on (a) the involvement of professionals in managing blocks of flats and (b) fire safety.

Eddie Hughes:

The Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Bill currently in Parliament will put an end to ground rents for new residential leasehold properties as part of the most significant changes to property law in a generation. The Bill's provisions will lead to fairer, more transparent homeownership for thousands of future leaseholders. Leaseholders pay ground rent on top of their property purchase price and service charges, yet there's no clear service provided in return.

This will be the first part of seminal two-part reforming legislation in this Parliament. In January 2021, the Government announced a package of reforms on enfranchisement valuation. The Government will abolish marriage value, cap the treatment of ground rents at 0.1% of the freehold value, and prescribe rates for the calculations at market value. Our reforms to enfranchisement valuation ensure that sufficient compensation is paid to landlords to reflect their legitimate property interests.

The Ground Rent Bill is focused entirely on the issue of ground rents. Service and management charges are beyond the scope of this Bill. The role of ensuring that the fabric of the building is maintained and safe for residents is an essential part of the relationship between freeholder, leaseholder and in some cases a managing agent. The cost of complying with these obligations is usually recoverable from the leaseholders through the service charge fund. In most cases the lease will allow the freeholder to recover the actual costs of the works, and the freeholder may also pass on the cost of managing or overseeing the works.

The Government is committed to bringing about the biggest improvement in building and fire safety for a generation. The Building Safety Bill contains measures to protect leaseholders by providing a legal requirement for building owners to prove they have

tried all routes to cover the cost of essential safety works, along with evidence that this has been done. If this does not happen, leaseholders will be able to challenge these costs in the courts.

■ **Listed Buildings: Energy Performance Certificates**

Craig Mackinlay:

[\[59910\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how many listed buildings have been granted an exemption from obtaining an Energy Performance Certificate; and what assessment he has made of the potential merits of providing such a statutory exemption for listed buildings to protect their historic value.

Christopher Pincher:

The Department does not hold information on how many listed buildings have been granted an exemption from obtaining an Energy Performance Certificate. Therefore, we have not made an assessment of the potential merits of providing a statutory exemption for listed buildings to protect their historic value.

■ **Local Government Finance**

Steve Reed:

[\[60432\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what the revised timetable is for the Fair Funding Review.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Spending Review will conclude later in the week, at which point the Government will set out its proposals for the future of the local government finance system.

■ **Local Government: Carbon Emissions**

Andrew Bridgen:

[\[57035\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what support his Department is providing to councils to meet the cost of achieving carbon zero.

Eddie Hughes:

The Net Zero Strategy sets out our commitments to enable local areas to deliver net zero. This includes setting clearer expectations on how central and local government interact in the delivery of net zero.

We have published a landing page to help local authorities navigate the large amount of information from all departments and identify initial contact points for officers. In the longer term we have committed to continue working with the local sector towards effective delivery of common goals on the path to net zero

Steve Reed:

[\[60433\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on the role of local authorities in meeting the Government's net zero target.

Eddie Hughes:

The Secretary of State meets regularly with Cabinet Colleagues on the commitment to net Zero. The CAI last convened on 28 September to discuss high-priority climate change issues. The agenda item for this meeting was the Net Zero Strategy, which includes a commitment to set clear expectations and guidelines on how central and local government interact when delivering net zero, and a new Local Net Zero Programme which centres around the Local Net Zero Forum, announced in the Net Zero Strategy. The Forum will provide a framework for central and local government to collaborate on issues relating to capacity and capability to support local places' ambitions on net zero

Local Government: Coronavirus**Steve Reed:**[\[60430\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether his Department plans to provide additional resources to local authorities with high rates of covid-19 transmission.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Government has allocated over £12 billion directly to councils since the start of the pandemic. Of this, over £6 billion is unringfenced in recognition that local authorities are best placed to decide how to meet the major COVID-19 pressures in their local area. We continue to closely monitor the sector's finances as we emerge from the pandemic.

Steve Reed:[\[60431\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what statistics his Department holds of the financial impact of the covid-19 outbreak on local authorities after June 2021.

Kemi Badenoch:

Local Authority COVID-19 Financial Impact monitoring results are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-covid-19-financial-impact-monitoring-information> . Monitoring returns are an essential source of evidence in our work to understand the financial pressures that local authorities are experiencing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Local Government: Meetings**Dr Luke Evans:**[\[58529\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, when he plans to publish his Department's response to the call for evidence on whether local authorities and parish councils may meet remotely on a permanent basis.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Department is reviewing the responses to the consultation and will respond in due course. Any permanent change would require legislation, and would depend upon Parliamentary time being available.

■ Local Government: Planning Permission

Robert Halfon:

[\[58380\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the Government's review of the Planning for the Future White Paper, if he will make it his policy to allow local authorities to place statutory planning notices with digital-only news outlets to cover their statutory duty.

Christopher Pincher:

The Secretary of State is taking time to review departmental programmes and engage with key stakeholders, and will be considering the best way forward in relation to proposals to reform the system. Community engagement in planning should be transparent and more accessible for communities across England, and the Secretary of State's considerations include how engagement can be improved, including through statutory notices. An announcement on our proposed way forward for the planning system will be made in shortly.

■ National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service: Costs

Sir Peter Bottomley:

[\[56726\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, pursuant to the Answer of 13 September 2021 to Question 41608 on National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service, what allowance has been made in the estimated cost of the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre for optimism bias; what (a) category of project, (b) mitigation factor and (c) optimism bias factor were used; and whether the planned mitigation has been independently verified.

Kemi Badenoch:

The estimated cost has been produced in line with Green Book guidance.

■ Property: Auctions

Sir Greg Knight:

[\[58741\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of whether buyers should be warned of fees likely to be incurred when purchasing real property through the modern method of auction, including stamp duty; and what steps he is taking to ensure that the parties to any transaction agreed under that method are fully aware of their liabilities and responsibilities beforehand; and if he will make a statement.

Christopher Pincher:

[Holding answer 22 October 2021]: It is important that both buyers and sellers who use Modern Methods of Auction take the time to understand the process before they enter into a transaction. We would expect them to understand the fees that are payable and the timescale for payment before they make a commitment to buy or sell. Agents should help them by making this information clear at the outset.

■ Rented Housing: Pets**Henry Smith:**[\[58375\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of allowing pet deposits or pet damage insurance for residential rental accommodation.

Eddie Hughes:

The Tenant Fees Act 2019 introduced a cap of five weeks' rent for properties with an annual rent below £50,000, and banned most letting fees charged to tenants. The five week cap should be considered the maximum, rather than the default amount charged. This approach should therefore accommodate private renters who wish to keep pets, without the need for a separate pet deposit. The Government has no plans to amend the Tenant Fees Act 2019 at this time.

Both tenants and landlords are able to choose to take out insurance for pet damage, however the Tenant Fees Act prevents landlords requiring tenants to take out insurance.

■ Social Rented Housing: Construction**Preet Kaur Gill:**[\[60491\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what estimate he has made of the number of homes for social rent that will not be built over the next five years as a result of housing association and council liabilities arising from building safety matters in (a) Birmingham, (b) the West Midlands and (c) England.

Preet Kaur Gill:[\[60492\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what estimate he has made of the number of homes for social rent that will not be built as a result of council liabilities arising from building safety matters over the next five years in (a) Birmingham, (b) the West Midlands and (c) England.

Christopher Pincher:

No such estimate has been made. Individual housing associations and councils are responsible for making the necessary investments to ensure their buildings are safe. The Government has supported this by committing up to £400 million to fully fund the removal and replacement of unsafe ACM cladding systems on buildings over 18 metres that are owned by registered providers of social housing. The Government has also committed to meet the cost of removing other types of unsafe cladding on buildings over 18 metres where the costs would otherwise have been borne by leaseholders or where a registered provider of social housing's financial viability would otherwise be threatened.

The Government is committed to increasing the supply of affordable housing and is investing over £12 billion in affordable, the largest investment in affordable housing in a decade. This includes the new £11.5 billion Affordable Homes Programme, which

will provide up to 180,000 new homes across the country, should economic conditions allow.

■ **Temporary Accommodation: Bethnal Green and Bow**

Rushanara Ali:

[\[56704\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will make a statement on the steps taken by his Department following notification by Clarion Housing Group of its decision to urgently decant 122 tenants and leaseholders from Clare House from 29 September 2021.

Rushanara Ali:

[\[56706\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what the maximum permissible period tenants and leaseholders decanted from Clare House for fire safety reasons by Clarion Housing Group can be expected to reside in hotel accommodation before being moved into suitable self-contained temporary accommodation.

Christopher Pincher:

The Department has been in regular contact with Clarion Housing Group and the London Borough of Tower Hamlets regarding the situation at Clare House. Clarion Housing Group has responsibility for the safety of residents at Clare House and for providing residents with appropriate alternative accommodation in the event of an evacuation of the building. Clarion Housing Group has confirmed that they have made residents a comprehensive offer of support which will include permanent alternative accommodation. The Department and the Local Authority expects Clarion Housing Group to move quickly to provide alternative permanent accommodation and provide support to evacuated residents for as long as it is required.

■ **Voting Methods: Visual Impairment**

Daisy Cooper:

[\[58512\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what policy objective his Department seeks to achieve by removing a prescribed device to enable blind and partially sighted people to vote without assistance through proposals in the Elections Bill.

Kemi Badenoch:

It is integral to our democracy that everybody is able to make their voice heard and that elections are accessible for all those eligible to vote. This is why, for the first time in electoral law, through the Elections Bill, we are putting in place a requirement for Returning Officers to consider the needs of all disabled voters when providing equipment for polling stations.

This will allow Returning Officers to tailor the package of equipment they offer to their voters and to take into account developments in equipment and technology, in order to best meet the needs of people with disabilities including those who have sight loss.

Clear guidance will be issued to Returning Officers by the Electoral Commission, which will be produced in partnership with the Government's expert Accessibility of Elections Working Group, which includes a wide range of stakeholders including the Royal National Institute of Blind People.

We will also work with the group and wider stakeholder networks to publicise the support available and help ensure people get the right support for them.

NORTHERN IRELAND

■ Coronavirus: Vaccination

Louise Haigh:

[\[59863\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what discussions he has held with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on citizens of Northern Ireland temporarily residing in England being unable to access the NHS Covid Vaccine Passport as their GP postcode is registered in Northern Ireland.

Conor Burns:

[Holding answer 25 October 2021]: Ministers regularly speak with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and the Northern Ireland Minister of Health and have raised the issue concerning NHS Covid Vaccine passports recently.

Both Ministers agreed on the need to resolve this matter as a priority and have instructed their officials to work at pace to implement data flow solutions. This is being resolved as a matter of urgency, however we will continue to monitor the situation to ensure all UK citizens are able to access their NHS Covid Vaccine Passport.

■ UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[\[59717\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, when he plans to announce proposals on how the UK Shared Prosperity Fund will be used to strengthen the Union.

Conor Burns:

[Holding answer 25 October 2021]: The UK Shared Prosperity Fund will help to level up and create opportunity across the United Kingdom.

It will operate UK-wide, using the new financial assistance powers in the UK Internal Market Act 2020. We will ramp up funding so that total domestic UK-wide funding will at least match EU receipts, on average reaching around £1.5bn a year.

The Spending Review 2020 set out the main strategic elements of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in the Heads of Terms. The Government will publish further details later this year and confirm its funding profile at the upcoming Spending Review.

TRANSPORT

■ Cars

Kenny MacAskill:[\[58518\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the number of private cars per 10,000 of the population is in (a) Glasgow, (b) Newcastle, (c) Liverpool, (d) Manchester, (e) Bradford and (f) Bristol.

Trudy Harrison:

The number of privately-kept cars at the end of June 2021, and the mid-year population estimates for 2020 are outlined below:

LOCAL AUTHORITY AREA	PRIVATELY-KEPT CARS PER 10,000 CAPITA	NUMBER OF PRIVATELY- TOTAL MID-YEAR	
		KEPT CARS AT THE END OF JUNE 2021 ^A	POPULATION ESTIMATE FOR 2020 ^B
City of Bradford	3,701	200,623	542,128
City of Bristol	3,781	176,161	465,866
City of Glasgow	2,982	189,531	635,640
Liverpool	2,875	143,911	500,474
Manchester	2,734	151,934	555,741
Newcastle upon Tyne	3,028	92,895	306,824

a. Sourced from DVLA data, based on registration address. Excludes company-kept cars registered in each local authority

b. Sourced from ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates

■ Civil Aviation Authority: Environment Protection

Daisy Cooper:[\[59065\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will provide an update on the progress made on establishing the Civil Aviation Authority environmental panel.

Robert Courts:

Following the closure of the Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise (ICCAN), my Department is working with the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), for it to take on the majority of ICCAN's former functions. To help deliver these functions the CAA will be establishing a new environment panel that will provide it with independent expert guidance to support its environmental roles, including the consideration of carbon, air quality, as well as aviation noise.

The CAA is currently undertaking work to define both the purpose and remit of the environmental panel, before recruiting a diverse membership. The panel is expected to be operational from April 2022.

■ Cycling: Older People

Dan Jarvis:

[60428]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of introducing a cycle scheme whereby people of pension age can obtain commuter bikes and cycling accessories at a discounted rate; and whether he has had discussions with Ministerial colleagues in the Department for Work and Pensions on such a scheme.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The Department has not made any detailed assessment of the potential merits of introducing such a scheme. The Cycle to Work scheme enables employees of any age to hire a cycle and safety equipment from their employer through a salary sacrifice arrangement, effectively providing access to cycles at a discount. For those who are not in employment, no similar scheme is in place, but the Department is supporting pilot schemes in a number of local authority areas to test approaches to providing e-cycles to those with the highest need, including those that cannot benefit from the cycle to work scheme. The Department is also due to launch a national e-cycle support programme shortly, building on the lessons learned from these pilot schemes. It is also developing a social prescribing pilot scheme to be rolled out in some local authority areas which could involve providing subsidised access to cycles for older people.

■ Driving Licences

Tony Lloyd:

[58302]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions he has had with representatives of the DVLA on the backlog in reviewing driving licences.

Trudy Harrison:

The quickest and easiest way to make an application to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) is by using its extensive suite of online services. There are no delays in successful online applications and customers should receive their licence within a few days.

However, many people still choose or have to make a paper application. The DVLA receives around 60,000 items of mail every day and industrial action by members of the Public and Commercial Services union has led to delays for customers. The DVLA has been working with a significantly reduced number of staff on site to ensure social distancing in line with Welsh Government requirements. The current increased demand for the DVLA's services has also contributed to delays with paper applications.

The DVLA has introduced additional online services and recruited additional staff. The DVLA is urgently securing extra office space to house more staff to help reduce waiting times while providing future resilience and business continuity.

The DVLA understands the impact that delays can have on people's everyday lives and is working as quickly as possible to process paper applications and return people's documentation to them.

Stephen Morgan:

[58485]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to tackle the backlog of driving licence renewal applications.

Stephen Morgan:

[58486]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent estimate he has made of the backlog of driving licence extension applications at the DVLA.

Trudy Harrison:

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency's (DVLA) online services are the quickest and easiest way to renew a driving licence. There are no delays in successful online applications and customers should receive their driving licence within a few days.

However, many people still choose or have to make a paper application for a driving licence. The DVLA receives around 60,000 items of mail every day which must be dealt with in person.

Currently, paper driving licence applications are likely to take between six and ten weeks to process. There may be additional delays in processing more complex transactions, for example, if medical investigations are needed. The latest information on turnaround times for paper driving licence applications can be found [here](#).

The DVLA has introduced additional online services and recruited additional staff. The DVLA is urgently securing extra office space to house more staff to help reduce waiting times while providing future resilience and business continuity.

It is not possible to specify how many applications to renew a driving licence made following the expiry of the extension to all driving licences that was put in place last year in response to the pandemic are awaiting processing. It is important to note that the large majority of drivers awaiting the renewal of their licence will be able to continue driving while their renewal application is being processed.

■ **Electric Vehicles: Charging Points**

Navendu Mishra:

[58544]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many electric vehicle chargepoints have been delivered via the On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme in Stockport constituency as at 18 October 2021; and whether funding is in place to deliver further chargepoints in 2022.

Trudy Harrison:

Stockport has not yet applied for funding under the On Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme.

The Government wants to ensure that drivers can benefit from the transition to zero emission vehicles. The On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) is available to all UK local authorities to apply to and provide public chargepoints for their residents without access to private parking. £20 million is available in 2021-22. At Spending Review 2020 the Government committed £1.3bn for charging infrastructure to 2024/5, and a further £620m has recently been announced to support chargepoints and targeted vehicle grants. This funding includes the Local EV Infrastructure Fund, which will be available to English local authorities in 2022/3. This fund will facilitate the roll-out of larger scale charging infrastructure projects across the country.

■ High Speed 2 Railway Line**Esther McVey:**[\[57012\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much power HS2 trains will need to run across each of the phases.

Andrew Stephenson:

We estimate that the HS2 network will require approximately 1 TWh of energy per annum at the completion of Phase 1/2a, and approximately a total of 2.5 TWh at the completion of Phase 2b. This will be subject to power usage specification of the Rolling Stock, and the findings of the Integrated Rail Plan (IRP). We routinely consider forecast growth in electricity demand, which includes the energy requirements of HS2.

■ Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Recruitment**Daisy Cooper:**[\[58507\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many HGV driver recruitment letters the Government has sent to serving (a) firefighters, (b) paramedics and (c) other emergency service personnel.

Trudy Harrison:

The Government does not want emergency service personnel to change jobs, or to be diverted from their vital work saving lives.

The letter was automatically sent to almost one million people with HGV driving entitlement. Information on the occupation of licence holders is not held on the driving licence database.

Dan Jarvis:[\[60424\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to include trade unions in discussions on supporting the (a) recruitment and (b) retention of HGV drivers.

Trudy Harrison:

Trade union representatives are included in policy discussions with haulage sector trade bodies and departmental officials on a range of issues including retention of the current HGV driver workforce and attraction of new workers to the sector.

Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Vacancies**John Redwood:**[\[58708\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to promote more rail freight during a period of shortage of HGV drivers.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The Government remains fully committed to unlocking the benefits rail freight can deliver, including its role in supporting resilient supply chains. We are incentivising modal shift from road to rail through the Mode Shift Revenue Support Scheme. In 2021/22, the Department allocated up to £20m to freight grants, removing the equivalent of around 900,000 HGV journeys off the road.

We are working closely with the rail freight industry to ensure they are doing all they can to move more goods during this period, with Freight Operating Companies (FOCs) transporting additional containers from ports to inland terminals to reduce congestion, where possible. We are exploring with Network Rail (NR) and FOCs whether there is scope to run longer freight trains, to ensure that capacity is maximised, and help increase the flow of rail freight on key routes from major ports.

Large Goods Vehicles**Charlotte Nichols:**[\[58535\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether the Government plans to proceed with trials of on-road lorry platooning.

Trudy Harrison:

Government funded on-road trials of Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) platooning technology are currently underway and expected to conclude in spring 2022. The main aim of the trials is to determine whether HGV platooning can safely deliver real world fuel consumption benefits on UK roads.

The project will also provide invaluable insight into infrastructure constraints, traffic management, vehicle maintenance and driver workloads.

Local authorities: Renewable Fuels**Andrew Bridgen:**[\[57037\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department will offer support to local authorities replacing conventional diesel with HVO fuel to run their vehicle fleet.

Trudy Harrison:

The Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation (RTFO) certificate trading scheme is successfully supporting a market for low carbon fuels in the UK, including biodiesel.

Hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) is a type of biodiesel. Those supplying HVO for use in road vehicles in the UK, and which meets sustainability criteria, are eligible for reward under the RTFO scheme.

There is no funding programme specifically for local authorities switching to fuel their existing fleets with HVO, and there are no current plans to introduce such a programme. The primary support for the wider deployment of HVO is the RTFO scheme, which provides a competitive market for a broad range of low carbon fuels.

Local authorities are well placed to determine how best to decarbonise their vehicle fleets. The Department is supporting this through a grant provided by the Energy Savings Trust. This provides tailored outreach advice to local authorities in support of the development and implementation of their own transport decarbonisation strategies, including advice on the decarbonisation of their own vehicle fleets. Later this year the Department will also publish a transport decarbonisation toolkit for local authorities, which will provide guidance to support local areas to deliver more sustainable transport measures including decarbonising their own fleets.

■ M49

Jessica Morden:

[\[56653\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with National Highways and Delta on a completion date for the two-bridge Central Park-Avonmouth junction on the M49.

Trudy Harrison:

National Highways completed works at the M49 Avonmouth junction in December 2019 and is working with key stakeholders to finalise an approach for the completion of the link roads to the existing local roads in the Avonmouth Severnside Enterprise Area, which will be an important step towards unlocking significant benefits to local communities and the wider region.

■ Parking: Pedestrian Areas

Daisy Cooper:

[\[58510\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 28 September to Question 51857 on Parking: Pedestrian Areas, if he will make a statement on the planned timetable for publishing the outcome of the consultation on managing pavement parking, which closed on 22 November 2020.

Trudy Harrison:

The Department plans to publish the outcome of the consultation as soon as possible.

Steve McCabe:

[\[58729\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will publish a timetable for publication of the Government's consultation on pavement parking.

Trudy Harrison:

The Department plans to publish the outcome to the consultation as soon as possible.

■ Passenger Ships: Coronavirus**Justin Madders:**[\[57092\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of covid-19 guidance applying to cruise ships in response to the reported MSC Virtuosa covid-19 outbreak.

Robert Courts:

As part of the Department's ongoing monitoring of cruise restart, we were notified through both industry reporting and Test and Trace that a number of crew and passengers tested positive for COVID-19 during and after domestic sailings on the MSC Virtuosa last month.

Cases on board were managed in line with industry protocols, in coordination with Public Health England and port health authorities. My officials have spoken with MSC and are content with the implementation of the protocols.

The evidence from cruises continues to strongly demonstrate that cruises can operate safely and respond to any outbreaks effectively.

■ Ports: Charging Points**Ruth Jones:**[\[59046\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what support he is providing to increase the number of shore power installations and charge point facilities at UK ports.

Robert Courts:

The Government is allocating funding under its Clean Maritime Demonstration Competition to projects including on shore power, and will consult this year on the appropriate steps to support and, if needed, mandate the uptake of shore power in the UK.

■ Railways: Diesel Fuel**John Redwood:**[\[58709\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the amount of diesel that is used by the railway network and train companies each year.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The Office Rail and Road produces annual data on rail energy consumption and emissions per financial year since 2005. The latest published data can be found here: <https://dataportal.orr.gov.uk/statistics/infrastructure-and-emissions/rail-emissions/table-6105-estimates-of-passenger-and-freight-energy-consumption-and-carbon-dioxide-equivalent-co2e-emissions/>.

In our Transport Decarbonisation Plan the government commits to net zero by 2050, with the ambition of removing all diesel only trains by 2040.

■ Railways: Electrification

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[\[58484\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Transport Decarbonisation Plan, published on 14 July 2021, when he plans to announce further rail electrification schemes.

Trudy Harrison:

Electrification will play an important role, alongside battery and hydrogen trains, in our programme to achieve our net zero 2050 target.

We will continue to develop electrification schemes through the Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline process in the usual way, to ensure that they are affordable, deliverable, and represent value for money.

Announcements on future rail electrification schemes will be informed by the outcome of the ongoing Spending Review.

■ Railways: Freight

Luke Pollard:

[\[59035\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to ensure that increasing energy costs do not discourage freight operators from sending freight by rail instead of reverting to road transport.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The Government recognises fully business concerns around increasing electricity prices and we are regularly engaging with the rail freight industry on this issue. We are not aware that increasing energy costs are causing freight operators to send freight by road instead of rail.

The Government strongly supports the modal shift of freight from road to rail to reduce congestion and carbon emissions from across the freight sector. This is supported through significant investment in the rail network to improve its capability and capacity for freight, and through £20m per year grant schemes which support the carriage of freight by rail and water on routes where road haulage has a financial advantage, resulting in the equivalent of 900,000 fewer HGV journeys in 2021/22.

The Government has also committed to introducing a rail freight growth target to encourage the continued growth of the sector and its success in the future.

■ Railways: Greater Manchester

Chris Clarkson:

[\[58567\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of restoring the twice-hourly train service between Castleton and Manchester following the lifting of covid-19 public health restrictions.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

Passengers currently have an hourly service between Manchester and Castleton which increases to two trains per hour during the morning and evening peak.

Northern operates on a complex network and like other operators, it has to make difficult decisions to maximise the number of services it can offer to customers whilst maintaining a high-performing railway that people can rely on.

Railways: Pay**Helen Hayes:**[\[58966\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Government's decision to end SouthEastern Railway's franchise, what steps his Department is taking to review the wider use of executive bonuses and company dividends in the rail sector.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The Department will consider any lessons regarding the use of executive bonuses and company dividends as part of its review into Southeastern. Any lessons learned will be used to inform future contracts both on Southeastern and other TOCs.

Railways: Weather**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[\[58483\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to help improve passenger safety on the rail network as a result of unpredictable weather patterns due to the climate emergency.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

Maintaining a safe rail network, and ensuring that it is resilient to changing weather patterns and extreme weather events, remain key priorities for my Department.

The amount available to manage earthworks and drainage on the rail network has increased significantly, from £952m in Control Period 5 to £1.3bn in Control Period 6. This has enabled Network Rail, in its capacity as the infrastructure manager of Britain's railways, to undertake additional work during this period to address the challenge of a changing climate and its impact on the railway. Resilience will be a key theme of planning for the next periodic review for Control Period 7.

Network Rail has worked hard to ensure that lessons learnt from the Carmont derailment in August 2020 are implemented across the entire rail network, building on the findings of two expert-led taskforces that resulted in the Mair and Slingo reports published earlier this year. These measures include a renewed focus on management of earthworks, proactive inspection of slopes following high rainfall using drones and helicopters, upskilling of the workforce to use weather data and technology more effectively, and trialling new technology to improve early detection and risk assessment. My Department and the Office of Rail and Road will be closely monitoring progress in implementing these recommendations.

■ Roads: Snow and Ice

Emily Thornberry:

[\[60370\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the answer of 21 October 2021 to Question 58329 on Roads: Snow and Ice, what the level of salt in the emergency salt reserve was on 1 October in each of the years from 2015 to 2020.

Trudy Harrison:

Pursuant to the answer to question 58328, there were 259,021 tonnes of salt in the emergency salt reserve managed by National Highways as of 1st October 2021.

National Highways reports these totals annually, holding the reserve under the provisions of the National Salt Reserve Protocol. Precise totals for 1st October specifically in previous five years are not currently available. The totals for previous years, 2015-2020, are included in the table below:

YEAR	STRATEGIC RESERVE HELD BY NATIONAL HIGHWAYS FOR THE DEPARTMENT (TONNES)
2021	259,021
2020	264,591
2019	265,786
2018	266,149
2017	280,577
2016	282,235
2015	286,642

No salt has been added or removed from these piles since 2015, though the totals gradually reduce each year due to environmental factors.

■ Shipping: Carbon Emissions

Stephen Morgan:

[\[59010\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what support he is providing to decarbonise the UK's maritime sector.

Robert Courts:

To date the Department for Transport has funded a £1.5m competition for innovation in clean maritime and provided £93,897 in grant support through the 2019 Department's Transport Technology Research Innovation Grant (TRIG) Programme to early stage research projects related to clean maritime. In 2020 the TRIG programme provided almost £90,000 to clean maritime projects. Under this

programme the Department will allocate up to £400,000 this year to 13 projects in zero emission shipping.

In March this year Government launched a Clean Maritime Demonstration Competition (CMDc) to decarbonise the maritime sector. The CMDc will allocate up to £23m in R&D funding to 55 projects comprising of feasibility studies and trials in zero emission shipping technologies, accelerating the development of zero emission technology and infrastructure in the UK.

Stephen Morgan:

[59011]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of the level of economic development that investing in maritime decarbonisation may provide to the UK's coastal communities.

Robert Courts:

The Department has made no assessment of the level of economic development that Government funding for maritime decarbonisation may provide to the UK's coastal communities. However, in 2019, alongside the Clean Maritime Plan, the Department published an assessment which identified that low and zero emissions shipping could result in potential economic benefits to the UK of around £360-£510 million per year by the middle of the century.

Maritime UK has published its views that investment in maritime decarbonisation could in future create jobs in all four nations of the United Kingdom, particularly in coastal communities with a tradition of maritime economic activity, including shipbuilding.

Industry research estimates that in 2017 the UK maritime sector as a whole directly supported more than 220,000 jobs for UK employees.

Ruth Jones:

[59039]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what support he is providing to help decarbonise the UK's maritime sector.

Robert Courts:

To date the Department for Transport has funded a £1.5m competition for innovation in clean maritime and provided £93,897 in grant support through the 2019 Department's Transport Technology Research Innovation Grant (TRIG) Programme to early stage research projects related to clean maritime. In 2020 the TRIG programme provided almost £90,000 to clean maritime projects. Under this programme the Department will allocate up to £400,000 this year to 13 projects in zero emission shipping.

In March this year Government launched a Clean Maritime Demonstration Competition (CMDc) to decarbonise the maritime sector. The CMDc will allocate up to £23m in R&D funding to 55 projects comprising of feasibility studies and trials in zero emission shipping technologies, accelerating the development of zero emission technology and infrastructure in the UK.

Ruth Jones:

[\[59040\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential implications for the upcoming Spending Review of Maritime UK's proposal for investment in maritime decarbonisation.

Robert Courts:

The Government has carefully considered all industry submissions, including the proposals published by Maritime UK. The Spending review launched on 7 September by the Chancellor of the Exchequer will conclude alongside an Autumn Budget on 27 October. It would be premature for me to comment on any plans for further investment in maritime decarbonisation before a settlement has been agreed.

Ruth Jones:

[\[59041\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of the potential economic contribution to coastal communities of investment in maritime decarbonisation.

Robert Courts:

The Department has made no assessment of the potential effect on coastal communities of providing Government funding for maritime decarbonisation. However, in 2019, alongside the Clean Maritime Plan, the Department published an assessment which identified that low and zero emissions shipping could result in potential economic benefits to the UK of around £360-£510 million per year by the middle of the century.

Maritime UK has published its views that investment in maritime decarbonisation could in future create jobs in all four nations of the United Kingdom, particularly in coastal communities with a tradition of maritime economic activity, including shipbuilding.

Industry research estimates that in 2017 the UK maritime sector as a whole directly supported more than 220,000 jobs for UK employees.

Ruth Jones:

[\[59042\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the level of economic development that investing in maritime decarbonisation may provide to the UK's coastal communities.

Robert Courts:

The Department has made no assessment of the level of economic development that Government funding for maritime decarbonisation may provide to the UK's coastal communities. However, in 2019, alongside the Clean Maritime Plan, the Department published an assessment which identified that low and zero emissions shipping could result in potential economic benefits to the UK of around £360-£510 million per year by the middle of the century.

Maritime UK has published its views that investment in maritime decarbonisation could in future create jobs in all four nations of the United Kingdom, particularly in

coastal communities with a tradition of maritime economic activity, including shipbuilding.

Industry research estimates that in 2017 the UK maritime sector as a whole directly supported more than 220,000 jobs for UK employees.

■ **Shipping: Exhaust Emissions**

Ruth Jones:

[\[59050\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans he has to allocate further funding to maritime decarbonisation following the Clean Maritime Demonstration Competition.

Robert Courts:

The Spending review launched on 7 September by the Chancellor of the Exchequer will conclude alongside an Autumn Budget on 27 October. It would be premature for me to comment on any plans for further investment in maritime decarbonisation before a settlement has been agreed.

■ **South Eastern Rail Franchise**

Helen Hayes:

[\[58962\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the amount of funding allocated from the public purse that will be repaid in response to the Government's decision to end SouthEastern Railway's franchise.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The Department is still reviewing the matters in full but will ensure all money owed to taxpayers is recovered, and this will include the appropriate interest payment. To date, we have recovered over £25m from LSER and following on from the investigation I will also be considering whether further actions or investigation is required.

Helen Hayes:

[\[58963\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, in the context of the Government's decision to end SouthEastern Railway's franchise, what investigations are being progressed by his Department alongside the internal investigation by Go-Ahead group.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

My Department has been engaging with a non-executive committee, formed of the chairs of both of LSER's owning groups. The committee is reviewing the issues and will produce a report for the Department to review. We have had sight of the terms, members and scope of the non-executive committee to satisfy ourselves of the appropriateness of the investigation. On receipt of the final report, my officials will undertake rigorous examination and review of the evidence provided and will report to me whether further action or further investigation is required.

Helen Hayes:

[\[58964\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he is having with the Serious Fraud Office in the context of the Government's decision to end SouthEastern Railway's franchise.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

At this time, it would not be appropriate for me to comment on any possible investigation by the Serious Fraud Office.

■ **Taxis: Government Assistance**

Sam Tarry:

[\[58558\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to data published by his Department which shows a reduction of 15.9 per cent in the total number of licensed taxi and private hire vehicles between March 2020 and March 2021, what financial support the Government plans to provide to help those vehicle industries to recover from the covid-19 outbreak.

Sam Tarry:

[\[58559\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to data published by his Department which shows a reduction of 15.9 per cent in the total number of licensed taxi and private hire vehicles between March 2020 and March 2021, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the financial support provided by the Government to those vehicle industries.

Trudy Harrison:

The majority of taxi and PHV drivers are self-employed and were therefore able to apply for grants through the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) before the scheme closed on 30 September 2021.

Drivers of taxis and private hire vehicles may also have been eligible for other sources of support, including locally administered grant funding. An online support finder tool was made available to help businesses and self-employed workers determine what support was available to them.

Ongoing engagement with sector stakeholders indicate that demand for taxi and private hire vehicles (PHVs) is very high with PHV operators seeking to increase driver numbers to meet this.

■ **Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern Rail Franchise**

Helen Hayes:

[\[58965\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Government's decision to end SouthEastern Railway's franchise, what assessment his Department has made of the future viability of the (a) Thameslink, (b) Southern and (c) Great Northern franchises.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

At this stage I have no reason to believe this activity is part of a wider-industry practice. My officials will be examining the outcome of the on-going investigation and will consider what further steps may be appropriate. The outcome of the investigation will also be a relevant factor in respect of decisions regarding the future of the Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern franchise. The Operator of Last Resort is always available if required in accordance with our statutory obligations.

Travel Restrictions: Colombia**Catherine West:**[\[58463\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, for what reason Colombia is on the covid-19 red list for international travel.

Robert Courts:

Colombia has been on the red list since 15 January 2021 due to the ongoing presence of variants of concern. Government scientists will continue to engage with countries on the red list and keep the evidence on variants of concern, especially Lambda and Mu, under close review in order to ensure the UK's approach remains proportionate.

Decisions on red country assignment and associated border measures will continue to be taken by Ministers, who take into account the JBC risk assessments alongside wider public health factors.

The data for all countries and territories will be kept under review and the Government will not hesitate to take action where a country's epidemiological picture changes.

TREASURY**Beer: Excise Duties****Wera Hobhouse:**[\[58984\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what support he plans to provide to small breweries to deal with additional costs from the proposed changes to Small Brewers Relief.

Wera Hobhouse:[\[58985\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the impact of changes to Small Brewers Relief on small breweries.

Helen Whately:

The Treasury committed to reforming Small Brewers Relief (SBR) and our review of SBR is ongoing. A technical consultation was launched in January this year to help inform the Government's review. The consultation document provides further information on the Government's assessment of changes and we are currently analysing the responses.

The Treasury believe that reducing the starting taper from 5,000 to 2,100 hectolitres (880,000 pints a year to 370,000 pints a year) strikes a balance between guaranteeing the full value of the relief for truly small breweries, while providing those between the 2,100 to 5,000 hectolitres threshold a smoother transition to the main duty rate. Officials are continuing to work closely with HM Revenue and Customs to deliver a relief that is sustainable and supports brewers of all sizes in the long-term.

We will publish our response to the technical consultation in due course.

■ Defibrillators: VAT

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[60363\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Answer of 19 January 2018 to Question 123106 on Defibrillators: VAT, what plans his Department has to review legislation on VAT on automated external defibrillators.

Lucy Frazer:

The Government takes the safety of the public seriously and, as noted in the previous answer, already provides several VAT reliefs to aid the purchases of Automated External Defibrillators and other first aid equipment.

Going further would impose significant additional pressure on the public finances, to which VAT makes a significant contribution. VAT raised around £130 billion in 2019/20 and helps to fund key spending priorities. Any reduction in tax paid is a reduction in the money available to support important public services, including the NHS and policing.

■ Electronic Cigarettes: Excise Duties

Charlotte Nichols:

[\[59089\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much HMRC raised in duties on vaping products in each of the last three years.

Charlotte Nichols:

[\[59090\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the amount that HMRC lost in duties on vaping products as a result of smuggling in each of the last three years.

Helen Whately:

Vaping products, such as e-cigs, are currently taxed as a consumer product with the VAT rate being 20%. There is no excise duty on vaping products.

HMRC does not hold information on VAT revenue from vaping products because businesses are not required to provide figures at a product level on their VAT returns, as this would impose an excessive administrative burden.

HMRC estimates tax gaps, which encompass taxes and duties lost as a result of smuggling. The Department publishes estimates of the VAT gap using a 'top down' estimation approach which would capture any smuggling of vaping. However, our

method does not allow us to identify individual items separately within the total VAT gap.

■ Inheritance Tax

Neil Coyle:

[\[60435\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how long on average HMRC takes to make decisions in inheritance tax cases.

Lucy Frazer:

HMRC aims to process 80 per cent of Inheritance Tax (IHT) returns within 15 days and cleared 82.1 per cent within 15 days in the last month. Once HMRC has processed the return, it will issue an IHT calculation for tax due.

Once any IHT due has been paid, notification will be sent by HMRC to the Probate Registry for England, Wales, and Northern Ireland cases, and to the Sheriff Clerk or Commissary Clerk for cases in Scotland. The IHT notification will be linked with the probate application, or confirmation application in Scotland, to enable a grant of probate or confirmation to be issued by them.

Customers will be contacted by HMRC within 12 weeks of them issuing the IHT calculation if further information is required. A small percentage of these IHT returns will require more detailed compliance checks. The length of these compliance checks can vary, and will depend on the complexity of the case.

■ Members: Correspondence

Robert Largan:

[\[59119\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he plans to respond to the enquiry from the hon. Member for High Peak of 12 August 2021, reference RL25105.

Helen Whately:

I responded to the Honourable Member's correspondence on 25 Oct 2021.

Robert Largan:

[\[59120\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he plans to respond to the enquiry from the hon. Member for High Peak of 20 August 2021, reference RL26254.

Mr Simon Clarke:

I responded to the Honourable Member's correspondence on 20 October 2021.

■ Petroleum Revenue Tax

Kenny MacAskill:

[\[58516\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the tax revenues raised from the Petroleum Revenue Tax in (a) 2019 and (b) 2020.

Helen Whately:

HM Revenue and Customs publishes annual and monthly tax receipts statistics, including for Petroleum Revenue Tax, on a cash receipts basis, at GOV.UK at the

following link. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hmrc-tax-and-nics-receipts-for-the-uk>.

■ Public Houses: Fiscal Policy

Chris Elmore: [59914]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of including fiscal easing measures for pubs in the Autumn 2021 Budget.

Helen Whately:

The Government keeps all taxes under review, and changes are announced in the usual way at budgets and fiscal events.

■ UK Internal Trade

Claire Hanna: [58550]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will publish guidance on the requirement of logistics businesses delivering goods from Great Britain to Northern Ireland to provide statistical returns specifying which goods are being transported.

Lucy Frazer:

The UK Government and the EU have shared proposals with each other in relation to the Northern Ireland Protocol and are currently in intensive talks. As none of the reported changes or documents published by either party on the Protocol have yet been agreed, existing arrangements will continue for now. This includes some easements for specific businesses and trade sectors. We have published guidance on these existing arrangements and will update this guidance in due course and give operators time to prepare for any changes.

■ Universal Credit

Mr Richard Holden: [60521]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 20 October 2021 to Question 56619 on Universal Credit, whether his Department has made a comparative assessment of the potential effect on public finances of an (a) increase and (b) decrease of (i) 1p, (ii) 3p and (iii) 13p per £1 to the earnings taper rate for universal credit.

Mr Simon Clarke:

Through Universal Credit, the government has designed a modern benefit system that ensures it always pays to work and withdraws support at a gradual rate as claimants move into work, replacing the old legacy system which applied effective tax rates of over 90% to lower earners in some cases.

There has been significant investment in Universal Credit in recent years, including the reduction of the Universal Credit taper rate from 65% to 63% announced at Autumn Statement 2016 and the £1,000 p.a. increase to Work Allowances announced at Autumn Budget 2018, which means working parents and people with disabilities on UC are up to £630 better off each year.

WORK AND PENSIONS**■ Child Maintenance Service****Marion Fellows:**[\[58424\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the average time taken was between the Child Maintenance Service's decision to take an enforcement measure and it being implemented, in respect of the 12,200 enforcement measures that were in process by the Child Maintenance Service at the end of June 2021.

Guy Opperman:

This information is not collated as a matter of normal business and is only available at disproportionate cost to the Department.

Marion Fellows:[\[58425\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many Child Maintenance Service Collect & Pay cases have had their arrears cleared to £0 in the last 24 months; and what proportion that represents of total Collect & Pay cases in the same time period.

Guy Opperman:

This information is not collated as a matter of normal business and is only available at disproportionate cost to the Department.

Marion Fellows:[\[58426\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the average length of time taken was for Collect & Pay case arrears to be cleared from April 2019 to April 2021.

Guy Opperman:

This information is not collated as a matter of normal business and is only available at disproportionate cost to the Department.

Marion Fellows:[\[58427\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, in how many cases was money recovered under the Child Maintenance Service Collect & Pay service from April 2019 to April 2021; and what proportion of total Collect & Pay cases that represents in the same time period.

Guy Opperman:

From the quarter ending September 2019 to the quarter ending June 2021, 173,000 out of 194,000 cases had money recovered under the Child Maintenance Service Collect & Pay service.

Marion Fellows:[\[58428\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what proportion of the £60.9 million of child maintenance due and paid through Collect & Pay in 2020-21 is (a) arrears repayments and (b) monthly standard liability.

Guy Opperman:

The total amount of child maintenance paid each quarter through Child Maintenance Service Collect & Pay and of that, the total paid towards arrears, from April 2020 to March 2021, is shown in Table 1. It shows that of the £170.4 million paid, £35.6 million was paid towards arrears.

Table 1: The total amount of child maintenance paid each quarter through Child Maintenance Service Collect & Pay and of that, the total paid towards arrears, from April 2020 to March 2021.

YEAR	QUARTER	TOTAL ARREARS PAID (£ MILLIONS)	TOTAL AMOUNT PAID (£ MILLIONS)
2020	June	8.7	41.7
	September	8.0	41.1
	December	8.7	42.2
2021	March	10.2	45.4
	Total	35.6	170.4

Source : Child Maintenance Group administrative data

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest £100,000.
2. The figures provided are for child maintenance only and do not include fees for the use of the service.
3. This calculation does not include unpaid child maintenance transferred to the CMS from the Child Support Agency.

Marion Fellows:

[58429]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, in what proportion of current Child Maintenance Service Collect & Pay cases are has (a) all money due been paid, (b) no money due been paid, (c) 1 to 25 per cent of money due has paid, (d) 26- to 50 per cent of money due been paid, (e) 51 to 75 per cent of money due been paid and (f) 76 to 99 per cent of money due been paid.

Guy Opperman:

Child Maintenance Service (CMS) compliance statistics for Paying Parents are published quarterly and can be found in "Table 2: Compliance (Collect and Pay) by quarter" of the "CMS Paying Parents" section of Stat-Xplore here:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/>.

Guidance on how to extract the information required can be found at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Getting-Started.html>

Marion Fellows:

[58430]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, in how many of the current Child Maintenance Service Collect & Pay cases has payment been delayed; and in how many cases has the delay been (a) 0 to 6 months, (b) 6 to 12 months, (c) 12 to 18 months, (d) 18 to 24 months and (e) over 24 months.

Guy Opperman:

This information is not collated as a matter of normal business and is only available at disproportionate cost to the Department.

Marion Fellows:

[58431]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the 2020-21 Child Maintenance Service statistics release, for what reason there are 7,100 unassigned arrangements for the Child Maintenance Service; and what steps her Department is taking to reduce that number.

Guy Opperman:

Unassigned arrangements are cases where the applications process is not yet complete.

The latest Child Maintenance Service (CMS) statistics show that over 90% of applications are usually cleared within 12 weeks. The statistics can be found in "Table 1: Applications to the Child Maintenance Service, Great Britain, July 2020 to June 2021" of the National Tables of the latest Child Maintenance Service (CMS) publication here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/child-maintenance-service-statistics-data-to-june-2021-experimental>

Applications are considered 'cleared' when one of the following occurs:

- a) the amount of child maintenance to be paid has been calculated and an arrangement to pay maintenance between the two parents has been agreed;
- b) the amount of child maintenance to be paid has been calculated as zero; or
- c) the child maintenance application has been closed.

■ Employment and Support Allowance

Drew Hendry:

[57146]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment her Department has made of the potential merits of extending the eligibility criteria for people on Income Related Employment and Support Allowance to apply for a hardship payment to include any cause of temporary payment suspension.

Chloe Smith:

Whether the claimant is facing a sanction related to work-related matters or a suspension because there is a doubt about their entitlement to Employment and Support Allowance, claimants can already apply for hardship with their Jobcentre adviser, work coach or via the helpline, at any time during the period when payment is reduced or stopped.

Dan Jarvis:[\[58876\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what support is available for employment and support allowance claimants who have had to leave the country for more than 28 days.

Chloe Smith:

[Holding answer 22 October 2021]: Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) can continue to be paid when a claimant is temporarily absent from Great Britain for more than 28 days where an absence is in connection with treatment in relation to their limited capability for work, or the health of a dependent child, provided they continue to meet the other conditions of entitlement. In these cases, ESA can continue to be awarded for the first 26 weeks in a 52-week period.

In addition, where ESA claimants travel abroad for NHS treatment, or move to live with a partner or close family member who is a serving member of the armed forces there are no time limits.

■ Job Centres: Coronavirus**David Linden:**[\[57283\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many job centres have been closed due to occurrences of covid-19 infections since the outset of the covid-19 outbreak.

Mims Davies:

There have been 23 Jobcentres that were fully closed using a circuit break between the beginning of the pandemic and Sept 30 2021 as a result of possible direct workplace transmission. Circuit breaks are tight restrictions and/or closures designed to stop the spread and bring the number of cases down. The Department has prioritised the safety of our workforce and claimants throughout the pandemic.

■ Kickstart Scheme: Hospitality Industry**Robert Halfon:**[\[56983\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Kickstart scheme in the hospitality sector.

Mims Davies:

As of 11th October, over 23,200 jobs have been made available in the hospitality and food sector through the Kickstart Scheme, including over 6,900 started. We are exploring how we can continue to support these sectors, whilst recognising that

Kickstart jobs must be additional, not displacing existing opportunities within the wider labour market.

The Department for Work and Pensions has developed an extensive offer to support the hospitality sector, along with at least £25 billion in COVID-19-related economic support that has already been provided by the UK Government to the tourism, hospitality and leisure sectors since March 2020. In addition to having access to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, loan guarantees and protection from commercial rent eviction and debt forfeitures, hospitality businesses also had access to grants, business rates relief, a VAT cut on food and non-alcoholic beverages to 5% and the Eat Out to Help Out Scheme. DWP has also provided additional support to help businesses reopen, with an additional £5bn in the form of one-off Restart Grants of up to £18,000.

The government has also recently published its long-term plans to support the hospitality sector in the Hospitality Strategy, available here: [Hospitality strategy: reopening, recovery, resilience - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hospitality-strategy-reopening-recovery-resilience).

■ Private Sector: Recruitment

Rebecca Long Bailey:

[58420]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps her Department is taking to promote inclusive recruitment practices in the private sector.

Mims Davies:

Jobcentre Plus offers a range of recruitment services to employers which include recruitment advice and support, advice about offering work experience and apprenticeships as well as support to employers on employment schemes such as Sector-based Work Academies and Kickstart. These recruitment services are delivered through our National Employer and Partnership Team and network of Employer Advisers in Jobcentres. Our Employer Advisers understand the local labour market and work with employers to promote fair open and inclusive recruitment, for example, by offering advice on wording on vacancies and encouraging employers to offer flexible working patterns. They also arrange Jobsfairs which connect employers directly to jobseekers, including DWP customers.

Our National Employer and Partnership Team run regular sector focussed employer panels where they discuss and share good practice amongst employers including how to recruit and build an inclusive workforce.

■ Restart Scheme

Stephen Timms:

[59705]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people have been referred to Restart scheme providers in each of the Restart scheme contract package areas since July 2021.

Stephen Timms:[\[59706\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, in each of the Restart contract package areas, how many of the people referred to Restart providers since July 2021 have so far started the programme.

Mims Davies:

[Holding answer 25 October 2021]: As of Sunday 17 October 2021, 73,665 people have been referred to the Restart programme since it began in July 2021. Many of those who have been referred to the programme will not yet have started due to the time factors involved: so far 41,570 have been recorded as having started on the programme. In addition, not all starts that occurred in this period will have been recorded on the system yet as a small number are recorded retrospectively.

The table below shows the breakdown of the total number of Referrals and Starts by Contract Package Area.

CONTRACT PACKAGE AREA	PEOPLE REFERRED	PEOPLE WITH A START
CPA 1a West Central	7,020	3,795
CPA 1b East Central	6,865	3,910
CPA 2a North East & Humber	5,370	3,610
CPA 2b S&W Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire	9,560	5,050
CPA 3a North West	3,940	2,020
CPA 3b Greater Manchester	4,015	1,990
CPA 4a South West	5,795	3,155
CPA 4b South Central	5,620	2,960
CPA 5a Central & West London	7,060	4,220
CPA 5b East & South London	5,900	3,085
CPA 5c Home Counties	9,095	5,750
CPA 6 Wales	3,430	2,025
All	73,665	41,570

Notes:

Source: Management Information from Provider Referral and Payment System

Not all starts will have been recorded on the system – a small number are recorded retrospectively.

All figures have been rounded to nearest 5, and totals do not necessarily sum due to rounding.

The Management Information above has not been subjected to the usual standard of quality assurance associated with Official Statistics, but is provided in the interests of transparency.

■ Self-employed

Catherine West:

[60483]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether she plans to utilise the twelve month discretion to delay a determination of gainful self-employment until 31 July 2022, as contained in Regulation 2(1)(b) of the Social Security (Coronavirus) (Further Measures) Regulations 2020, and continued by Regulation 2 (1) of the Universal Credit (Coronavirus) (Restoration of the Minimum Income Floor) Regulations 2021.

Mims Davies:

Due to the significant increase of self-employed people claiming Universal Credit during the pandemic, it will take the Department up to 12 months to meet with each of these claimants, consider their circumstances and determine if they are gainfully self-employed.

■ State Retirement Pensions: Scotland

Kenny MacAskill:

[58517]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people and what proportion of the total population of Scotland are in receipt of a state pension; and what the total value was of state pension paid to those pensioners living in Scotland in the 2020-21 financial year.

Guy Opperman:

In the quarter from November 2020 to February 2021 there were 979,217 individuals in receipt of State Pension in Scotland. This information can be accessed here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1015080/state-pension-statistics-to-february-2021-revised.ods

We cannot provide the information on what proportion of the total population of Scotland are in receipt of state pension as we only hold information on customers.

The Scottish Government published a forecast of State Pension expenditure in Scotland for 2020/21 of £8,517m. This can be found here:

[Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland 2020-21 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/government-expenditure-and-revenue-scotland-2020-21/pages/2.aspx)

■ Unemployment

Stuart Anderson:

[57343]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps she is taking to help reduce the number of people not in (a) employment, or (b) training across (i) the constituency of Wolverhampton South West, (ii) the West Midlands and (iii) the UK.

Mims Davies:

Through our Plan for Jobs, we are targeting tailored support schemes of people of all ages to help them prepare for, get into and progress in work. These include: Kickstart, delivering tens of thousands of six-month work placements for Universal Credit claimants aged 16-24 at risk of unemployment; we have also recruited an additional 13,500 Work Coaches to provide more intensive support to find a job; and introduced Restart which provides 12 months' intensive employment support to Universal Credit claimants who are unemployed for a year. Our Plan for Jobs interventions will support more than two million people.

DWP offers significant support to unemployed people across Great Britain to access employment opportunities through our network of Jobcentres. Our Work Coaches provide support on finding a job, help with retraining or skills advice, CV, job applications and access to new vacancies we record every day, in addition to signposting to the Find a Job service.

In Wolverhampton, the Youth Hub, based at 'The Way', opened on 5th October 2021. DWP Work coaches, in collaboration with City of Wolverhampton Council and a range of partners such as Black Country Impact and Princes Trust, provide bespoke support to customers to move closer to work or opportunities. Across The Black Country district, we regularly host and support Jobs fairs that aim to provide the greatest opportunity for our claimants to find work.

The DWP Support for Schools programme has a relationship with a number of schools across the Wolverhampton borough. The team provides advice on routes into traineeships and apprenticeships, promoting the parity of vocational and academic pathways into work. They also provide advice on local labour market including employability and soft skills that employer's value, for example team working and commitment.

■ Universal Credit

Jonathan Reynolds:

[60404]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many households are facing deductions to their universal credit award as a result of debts owed to the public purse as of 21 October 2021.

David Rutley:

For Universal Credit claims with a payment due during May 2021, 2,070,000 had a deduction towards an Advance or Government debt.

- 1) Data for May 2021 has been provided in line with the latest available UC Household Statistics.
- 2) Government debt includes: DWP Benefit Overpayment (fraud and non-fraud), Tax Credit Overpayment (fraud and non-fraud), Housing Benefit Overpayment (fraud and non-fraud), Social Fund Loan, Recoverable Hardship Payment, Administrative Penalty, Civil Penalty, Eligible Loan Deductions, Integration Loan.
- 3) Figures are provisional and are subject to retrospective change as later data becomes available.
- 4) Number of claims rounded to the nearest 1,000.

Jonathan Reynolds:

[60405]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will publish data on the size of deductions being made from claimants' universal credit entitlements as a result of debts to the public purse by (a) gross sum and (b) percentage of the claimants' standard allowance as of 21 October 2021.

David Rutley:

For Universal Credit claims with a payment due during May 2021, £139,400,000 was deducted towards an Advance or Government debt. On average, claimants with these deductions paid 15% of their Standard Allowance.

New claimants with new claim and benefit transfer advances now have the option to spread twenty-five Universal Credit payments over twenty-four months.

Customers can contact the Department if they are experiencing financial hardship to discuss a reduction in their rate of repayment, depending on their financial circumstances, whilst work coaches can also signpost claimants to other financial support.

- 1) Data for May 2021 has been provided in line with the latest available UC Household Statistics.
- 2) Government debt includes: DWP Benefit Overpayment (fraud and non-fraud), Tax Credit Overpayment (fraud and non-fraud), Housing Benefit Overpayment (fraud and non-fraud), Social Fund Loan, Recoverable Hardship Payment, Administrative Penalty, Civil Penalty, Eligible Loan Deductions, Integration Loan.
- 3) Figures are provisional and are subject to retrospective change as later data becomes available.
- 4) Amount deducted rounded to the nearest £100,000 and percentage rounded to the nearest percentage.

■ Universal Credit: Mental Illness

Bill Esterson:

[60398]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what representations she has received on the impact of using the universal credit online journal on people with mental health conditions .

David Rutley:

Universal Credit is a 24 hour, seven days a week, digital service that allows claimants to manage their own data and account online at a time which is convenient for them. Via their account, claimants can check their Universal Credit benefit payments, notify us of changes and record notes on the online journal facility.

To enable Work Coaches to provide a tailored experience for all claimants, including those with mental health conditions, Work Coaches are able to record in a free text format, through the use of 'pinned notes' in the Universal Credit system, information which supports staff in identifying and recording circumstances of individual claimants.

However, if claimants are unable to make a digital claim, they can make and maintain their claim via our Freephone Universal Credit helpline. When a claim is made by telephone, claimants do not need to provide an email address and are not given an online account to maintain, nor an online journal to manage. A telephone claim is also clearly marked on the service to remind DWP staff to use alternative channels to communicate information with claimants and their monthly award statement will be sent via post.

Additionally, Help to Claim support delivered through Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland offers tailored, practical support to help people make a Universal Credit claim up to receiving their first full correct payment on time. This support has been bolstered by the announcement in March this year of a further 12 months of funding for Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland to deliver Help to Claim.

■ Vocational Guidance: Hospitality Industry

Robert Halfon:

[56982]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps she is taking to encourage young people to take up careers in the hospitality sector.

Mims Davies:

The Department is working across our Jobcentre Plus (JCP) network to encourage all suitable candidates into the hospitality sector. We are supporting our Work Coaches to help them identify new talent for employers through our Plan for Jobs programmes.

Through the DWP Youth Offer, Work Coaches are helping young people access local skills, training and jobs. This may include Kickstart placements, Sector-based Work Academy Programmes, traineeships, work experience or apprenticeships.

Our Sector-based Work Academy Programmes (SWAPs) provides opportunities in sectors with high volumes of current local vacancies, such as hospitality, allowing

people to learn the skills and behaviours that employers need. DWP is increasing the number of SWAPs opportunities to 80,000 in 2021/22.

Our National Employer and Partnership Team (NEPT) ran a series of Spotlight Calls for work coaches and employer engagement colleagues to ensure that they promote and maximise every opportunity available in these sectors to our customers. They have been joined on these calls by representatives from UK Hospitality and Springboard, as well as employers who spoke about the opportunities they have available.

We have made changes to our Job Help website which now includes an article on hospitality and encourages customers to consider a job in the sector, by highlighting the reasons to work in hospitality and the range of roles available. It also points jobseekers to training through the Careers Scope website and recommends jobseekers consider the key sector job boards (Caterer, Leisure Jobs, Jobsite, Hospitality UK) and the Find a Job website.

■ Workplace Pensions

Neale Hanvey:

[58530]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of amending legislation on workplace occupational pensions for the purposes of guaranteeing that retirees receive back at least the (a) actual sums invested into their pension pot or (b) amount invested into their pension pot uprated for inflation.

Guy Opperman:

No assessment has been made.