



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 29 October 2021 and the information is correct at the time of publication (03:31 P.M., 29 October 2021). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

Questions marked thus **[R]** indicate that a relevant interest has been declared.
 Questions with identification numbers of **900000 or greater** indicate that the question was originally tabled as an oral question and has since been unstarred.

ANSWERS

ATTORNEY GENERAL

■ Money Laundering: Prosecutions

Kevin Hollinrake:

[\[62777\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many referrals the CPS received from the National Crime Agency for charging decisions under the Money Laundering Regulations in each of the last three years.

Alex Chalk:

The number of referrals the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), Specialist Fraud Division (SFD) has received from the National Crime Agency (NCA) for charging decisions under the Money Laundering Regulations for the last three years are as follows:

- 4 cases received in 2018-19
- 2 cases received in 2019-20
- 4 cases received in 2020-21

CPS data is available through its Case Management System (CMS) and associated Management Information System (MIS). The CPS collects data to assist in the effective management of its prosecution functions. The CPS does not break down figures that constitute official statistics as defined in the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007.

However, the CPS is not able through either CMS or MIS to breakdown referrals to differentiate whether they were made by the police or other investigative organisations in England and Wales. On this occasion we have been able to provide the data because of a recent manual review, so whilst we have endeavoured to produce figures that are as accurate as possible, this data is subject to human error.

The official statistics relating to crime and policing are maintained by the Home Office and the official statistics relating to sentencing, criminal court proceedings, offenders brought to justice, the courts and the judiciary are maintained by the Ministry of Justice.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Animal Experiments

Dr Rupa Huq:

[\[63808\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to contribute to the (a) development and (b) validation of non-animal (i) research methods and (ii) technologies.

George Freeman:

The Government 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), who have committed £100 million through its research, innovation, and early career awards to provide new 3Rs approaches for scientists in academia and industry to use. This includes almost £27 million in contracts through its CRACK IT Challenges innovation scheme to UK and EU-based institutions, mainly focusing on new approaches for the safety assessment of pharmaceuticals and chemicals that reduce the use of animals.

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Heating**Jake Berry:**[\[58824\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what type of heating system is the primary source of heating in each building occupied by his Department and its agencies; and what fuel is used by those heating systems.

Greg Hands:

[Holding answer 28 October 2021]: The BEIS headquarters building in 1 Victoria Street use a diverse mix of energy including gas and solar. Like other offices across the country, as decisions are made about future energy usage in light of the Government's Net Zero commitments, further steps to decarbonise including installing heat pumps and connecting to heat networks will be taken.

Equal Pay and Recruitment: Ethnic Groups**Kirsten Oswald:**[\[63754\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 16 July 2021 to Question HL1739, on Equal Pay and Recruitment: Ethnic Groups, for what reason the Government's response to the report of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities has not yet been published; and when the Government plans to lay its proposals for ethnicity pay gap reporting before Parliament; and if he will make a statement.

Paul Scully:

Following publication of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities report, my Rt hon Friend the Prime Minister issued a statement making clear that the government will consider the Commission's recommendations in detail. In recognition of the extensive scope of recommendations, the Prime Minister established an Inter Ministerial Group which is reviewing the Commission's recommendations, including on ethnicity pay reporting, and assessing the next steps for future government policy.

The Government will respond to the Commission's report in due course.

■ Waste: Energy**Mark Pawsey:**[\[60396\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of introducing a carbon capture and storage initiative for energy from waste.

Greg Hands:

As set out in the Net Zero Strategy, we are exploring options to reduce emissions from Energy from Waste facilities, including whether support for CCUS at Energy from Waste plants could be provided by the Industrial Carbon Capture Business Model. We are still considering this position, given the complexities around the commercial incentives associated with these projects. However, we aim to provide an update on the eligibility of CCUS projects in waste management facilities as soon as possible, in line with the launch of Phase-2 of the CCUS cluster sequencing process.

CABINET OFFICE**■ Government Departments: Freedom of Information****Dan Carden:**[\[63857\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many Freedom of Information requests were (a) sent to and (b) granted in full by Government departments and agencies in each of the last five years.

Michael Ellis:

The Cabinet Office publishes Freedom of Information statistics for central government bodies on a quarterly and annual basis, which are available at www.gov.uk/government/collections/government-foi-statistics.

Government Departments respond to Freedom of Information requests in line with the legislation, including applying relevant exemptions where applicable.

■ Government Departments: Telecommunications**Dr Julian Lewis:**[\[63642\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of arrangements in place permanently to preserve electronic communications, within and between Departments, for purposes of (a) political accountability and (b) the historical record; and what restrictions are currently in place on the use of private communication systems to conduct official business.

Michael Ellis:

Guidance is provided in the Code of Practice on Records Management, issued under Section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. This was updated and published in July 2021 (as outlined in the Written Statement of 15 July 2021, HCWS185). In 2018, the National Archives was commissioned to undertake a review of the Code. The Code was revised and updated on a principles-based, format-neutral basis,

bringing the existing 2009 code up to date with contemporary information management practice and the modern digital working environment.

The Cabinet Office has also previously published guidance on how information is held for the purposes of access to information. Ministers and officials are also given advice on the security of electronic communications. We are keeping this matter under review, to ensure working practices reflect the use of modern technology available in the 21st Century.

■ Ports

Helen Hayes: [\[63798\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment he has made of the impact of the UK's withdrawal from the European Common Market on delays at UK ports; and what discussions he is having with his European counterparts on tackling those delays.

Helen Hayes: [\[63799\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment he has made of the impact of the UK's withdrawal from the European Common Market on the availability of imported goods; and what discussions he is having with his European counterparts to ease the import of those goods.

Helen Hayes: [\[63800\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps he is taking to reduce the additional bureaucracy placed on British businesses (a) importing from and (b) exporting to the EU since the end of the transition period.

Michael Ellis:

There are currently no delays at UK ports as a consequence of the time taken to carry out UK customs and other checks. To the extent that there are delays at some UK ports for inbound goods, these are caused by other issues connected to the current situation with global supply chains. UK border import controls on goods from the EU are being introduced in a phased way and in accordance with the timetable announced by my noble Friend, Rt Hon Lord Frost, on 14 September.

The Government has taken a number of measures to assist UK businesses in exporting to the EU since the end of the Transition Period. This includes online guidance and targeted financial support. On 1 October, my Rt Hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Trade, launched the Export Support Service specifically to help businesses trade with the EU.

In addition, my Rt Hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, announced on 27 October that the Government will make £180 million available to fund the development of the UK Single Trade Window. The Single Trade Window will offer a single gateway into Government for traders to complete their import, export and transit requirements. This will benefit business by dramatically reducing the

administrative costs of trade. It forms part of the 2025 Border Strategy, announced in December 2020, to build the most effective border in the world.

DEFENCE

■ Agnes Wanjiru

Bell Ribeiro-Addy: [62854]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what plans the Royal Military Police has to launch an investigation into the killing of Agnes Wanjiru in Nanyuki, Kenya.

Bell Ribeiro-Addy: [62855]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department plans to launch an investigation into the allegations of the potential involvement of soldiers in the killing of Agnes Wanjiru in Nanyuki, Kenya.

Bell Ribeiro-Addy: [63884]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of his Department's support to Kenyan detectives investigating the death of Agnes Wanjiru.

Bell Ribeiro-Addy: [63885]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will publish the communications his Department has had with the Kenyan authorities in each of the last nine years in relation to investigations into the death of Agnes Wanjir.

Leo Docherty:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 28 October 2021 to the hon. Member for Barnsley Central (Dan Jarvis) to Question 62729 and to the hon. Member for Hackney North and Stoke Newington (Diane Abbott) to Question 63647.

Attachments:

1. Agnes Wanjiru [[Hansards.docx](#)]

■ Armed Forces: Rented Housing

Gavin Robinson: [61153]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will publish an update on the outcome of the Rented Living Accommodation Project tender.

Jeremy Quin:

As the Rented Living Accommodation Project Tender is still an ongoing procurement, we are unable to provide any detail on the possible outcomes or next steps as to do so would prejudice our commercial position.

■ Army**Kenny MacAskill:** [\[63892\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will provide details of the (a) remit of 77th Brigade and (b) any restrictions on activities imposed on that unit.

James Heappey:

The British Army website details the role and activities of 77th Brigade. 77th Brigade | The British Army (mod.uk) "Our aim is to challenge the difficulties of modern warfare using non-lethal engagement and legitimate non-military levers as a means to adapt behaviours of the opposing forces and adversaries."

All activity conducted by 77th Brigade is in accordance with the legal and policy requirements of the MOD and is subject to Ministerial oversight.

■ Army: Northern Ireland**Kenny MacAskill:** [\[63893\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, further to the Answer of 25 October 2021 to Question 59966, on Army: Scotland, whether 77th Brigade has had involvement in (a) Northern Ireland or (b) Northern Ireland related security issues.

James Heappey:

77th Brigade has had no involvement in Northern Ireland or related security issues.

■ Army: Scotland**Kenny MacAskill:** [\[63891\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what relationship the 77th Brigade has with the Police Scotland Crime Campus at Gartcosh.

James Heappey:

77th Brigade have no relationship with the Police Scotland Crime Campus at Gartcosh.

■ Army: Trident Missiles**Kenny MacAskill:** [\[63895\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the 77th Brigade are involved in the monitoring of activities related to opposition to the siting of Trident missiles on the Clyde.

James Heappey:

77th Brigade are not involved in the monitoring of activities related to opposition to the siting of Trident missiles on the Clyde.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ Audio Content Fund****Hilary Benn:**[\[62606\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what plans she has for the future of the Audio Content Fund.

Julia Lopez:

No decision has yet been made on the future of the Audio Content Fund.

The Fund's three year pilot phase is due to end in March 2022, and it will be important to carefully consider all available information on its impact on the provision and plurality of public service content on radio before any decision is made with regard to potential closure, continuation or extension.

■ Charity Commission: Public Appointments**Rachael Maskell:**[\[63762\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions she has had with the Chair of the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee on (a) the Committee's timetable for discussing the appointment of the Chair of the Charity Commission and (b) progressing that appointment.

Nigel Huddleston:

DCMS Officials have been liaising with the DCMS Select Committee Clerk to identify a suitable date for the pre appointment hearing for the Charity Commission Chair appointment. This date will be confirmed in due course.

Rachael Maskell:[\[63763\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what her proposed timeline is for the appointment of the new Chair of the Charity Commission.

Nigel Huddleston:

I refer to an answer given to a recent parliamentary question [56570](#)

"The campaign to appoint a Chair to the Charity Commission is a fair and open competition in line with the Cabinet Office Governance Code for Public Appointments, as regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

Interviews for this role were rescheduled but have now taken place, and the preferred candidate will be announced in due course. They will be expected to attend a pre-appointment hearing in front of the DCMS Select Committee.

Further updates on the progress of the campaign will be made public in due course."

■ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Black History Month**Ruth Jones:**[\[60512\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how her Department has marked Black History Month 2021.

Julia Lopez:

DCMS marked Black History Month 2021 by hosting a variety of events for staff with the cross Civil Service Race Forum and key representatives from DCMS' sectors and ALBs which were advertised via the DCMS intranet.

Black History Month was also marked with a range of internal communications articles from the DCMS BAME network.

Online, we shone a spotlight on people in our sectors, including those working in Formula 1, Tech and Civil Society.

■ Gambling

Carolyn Harris: [\[61178\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, when her Department plans to publish the gambling white paper.

Carolyn Harris: [\[61179\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment her Department has made of which areas of gambling reform do not require primary legislation.

Carolyn Harris: [\[61180\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment her Department has made of the potential merits of introducing a statutory smart levy on the research, education and treatment of gambling addiction.

Carolyn Harris: [\[61181\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, when a Single Customer View system will be introduced for remote gambling.

Carolyn Harris: [\[61182\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions she has had with sports bodies on front-of-shirt gambling advertising.

Chris Philp:

The government launched its Review of the Gambling Act 2005 on 8 December with the publication of Terms of Reference and a Call for Evidence. The Review is wide-ranging and aims to ensure that the regulation of gambling is fit for the digital age. The call for evidence included questions on the appropriate mechanism for recouping the societal and regulatory costs of gambling, as well as the benefits and harms surrounding gambling advertising, including football sponsorship. We are carefully considering over 16,000 submissions we received, evidence from ministerial and official meetings with stakeholders, and other more recent evidence including the Public Health England evidence review which was published last month. Details of ministerial meetings can be found [here](#).

We will publish a white paper setting out our conclusions and vision for the sector in due course, and this will include an indication of how any changes will be implemented, whether by legislation or other means.

Alongside the Review, regulators are continuing to raise standards and increase protections for players. Working closely with the Gambling Commission, the Information Commissioner's Office recently published [a report](#) confirming it is possible under data protection law to share data safely and securely between online operators to help prevent gambling related harm. We expect the industry to proceed to trial its planned single customer view solution and will continue to monitor developments closely.

■ Mobile Phones: Fees and Charges

Ruth Jones:

[\[60513\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, when she last discussed the impact on consumers of the reintroduction of roaming charges in the EU with Ministers in the Welsh Government.

Julia Lopez:

Having recently been appointed Minister of State for Media, Data and Digital Infrastructure I look forward to meeting with Ministers in the Welsh Government in due course to discuss the impact on consumers of the reintroduction of roaming charges in the EU.

■ Musicians: EU Countries

Ruth Jones:

[\[61210\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what progress has been made on securing the right for musicians to legally work and tour in Europe.

Julia Lopez:

This government has spoken to every EU Member State about the importance of touring. From these discussions, 20 out of 27 Member States have confirmed they offer visa and work permit free routes for musicians and creative professionals.

We are working with the remaining Member States that do not allow any visa or permit free touring, to encourage them to more closely align requirements with the UK's generous rules, which allow creative professionals to tour easily here. Discussions are ongoing at ministerial and official level across these target countries, and we are working with the sector to amplify each other's lobbying efforts.

We have also helped to provide clarity on many other issues, including that portable musical instruments do not require a carnet, and that splitter vans are not subject to the market access rules around cross-trade and cabotage.

■ Social Media: Children and Young People

Chris Elmore:

[\[60485\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions she has had with representatives of (a) Facebook and (b) Instagram on recent reports of the harmful impact of their products on children and young people; and if she will make a statement.

Chris Philp:

Protecting children is at the heart of our plans to transform the online experience for people in the UK, and the strongest protections in the Online Safety Bill will be for children. All companies in scope of the Online Safety Bill will need to seriously consider the risks they may pose to children and take action to mitigate these risks.

The recent reports about the impact of Facebook's products on children and young people are highly pertinent to the forthcoming online safety legislation. The impact of harmful content and behaviour on young people's mental health has been a key consideration during the development of legislation.

Ministers and officials have met with a wide range of stakeholders, including Facebook (representing various products including Instagram) several times as the legislation has been developed.

■ Telecommunications: Infrastructure

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[62706\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of reforming the Electronic Communications Code to increase access to properties to build and maintain broadband infrastructure.

Julia Lopez:

The Telecommunications Infrastructure (Leasehold Property) Act 2021, introduced changes to the Electronic Communications Code ('the Code') which will make it easier for telecoms operators to gain access to properties, such as blocks of flats, for the purpose of installing digital connections. A consultation on the implementing regulations closed in August. The consultation response will be published in due course, with regulations laid as soon as parliamentary time allows.

A public consultation on whether further changes to the Electronic Communications Code ('the Code') are needed to support digital deployment was carried out between January and March this year. Replies to that consultation are currently being considered and the government's response will be published in due course.

■ Voluntary Organisations: Finance

Rachael Maskell:

[\[59855\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps she plans to take to help ensure that voluntary sector organisations have sufficient resilience after a period of income loss.

Nigel Huddleston:

The government has worked with the charity sector throughout the pandemic to support organisations to respond to the challenges they have faced. Charities have benefited from a multi billion pound package of support, including cross economy measures and targeted funding to help charities maintain essential services. This support has helped to put the sector in a strong position to continue its vital work after an extraordinarily challenging period.

My department continues to work closely with the sector as we shape policies that will enable charities to thrive in the future and work with the government to respond to shared priorities.

■ Youth Investment Fund**Bell Ribeiro-Addy:**[\[63888\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, for what reason funding from the Youth Investment Fund has yet to be released; and what her plans are for the release of that funding.

Bell Ribeiro-Addy:[\[63889\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the number of youth centres at risk of closure in 2021; and what plans she has to increase the availability of youth work.

Nigel Huddleston:

Our priority in the pandemic has been to stabilise youth charities and help them through the impact of this, so that they are in a position to deliver the outcomes envisaged for young people through the Youth Investment Fund (YIF). We have achieved this through our unprecedented charity sector package, from which £100 million has gone to organisations supporting children and young people during the pandemic, including £15.6 million through the Youth Covid Support Fund which provided emergency funding specifically for youth services.

Following the 2021 Spending Review, we are investing £560 million in youth services in England, including the Youth Investment Fund and ongoing support for the National Citizen Service.

Access to youth facilities is not felt equally, with young people in many parts of the country struggling to gain access to them. The YIF will seek to remedy this, creating and expanding youth facilities to level up opportunity in left behind places, giving young people access to support from youth workers and enabling them to engage in beneficial activities. Full details of the YIF's eligibility criteria will be announced in due course.

Government funding for the National Youth Agency has led to an increase in qualified youth workers and sustained professional standards within the youth work sector. Over the past two years we have worked with the National Youth Agency to help more than 900 youth workers gain qualifications and institute a new youth work

apprenticeship. Through these joint endeavours we have supported the renewal of a range of national standards, qualifications and training programmes for youth work.

EDUCATION

■ Coronavirus: Universities

Rachael Maskell: [60463]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will consult with universities on guidance for plan B for covid-19 winter management before its introduction.

Michelle Donelan:

The government has taken the responsible step of undertaking contingency planning in case our plans for pharmaceutical interventions and limiting the transmission of COVID-19 are not sufficient in averting unsustainable pressure on the NHS. This is set out here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-autumn-and-winter-plan-2021/covid-19-response-autumn-and-winter-plan-2021>. As outlined in Plan A, the government will continue to remain vigilant and monitor the data closely, and will take action to support and protect the NHS when necessary.

The department recognises how well the higher education sector has risen to the challenges of COVID-19 over the last 18 months. We regularly engage with the sector on a range of COVID-19 issues, including contingency planning in the event that we move to Plan B.

■ Department for Education: Quarantine

Mr Ben Bradshaw: [61092]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many of his Department's ministers have been exempted from quarantine in a hotel after returning to the UK from a covid-19 red list country to which they have travelled for the purposes of conducting official business.

Michelle Donelan:

Ministers from the Department for Education have not claimed any exemptions from the requirement to quarantine in a managed quarantine facility that is required after returning from a red list country.

■ Financial Services: Education

Seema Malhotra: [63729]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps is he taking to improve the financial literacy of school children in Feltham and Heston constituency.

Mr Robin Walker:

Education on financial matters helps to ensure that young people are prepared to manage their money well, make sound financial decisions and know where to seek further information when needed.

Finance education forms part of the citizenship national curriculum which can be taught at all key stages and is compulsory at key stages 3 and 4:

<https://www.gov.uk/national-curriculum>. Financial education ensures that pupils are taught the functions and uses of money, the importance of personal budgeting, money management and managing financial risk. At secondary school, pupils are taught about income and expenditure, credit and debt, insurance, savings and pensions, financial products and services, and how public money is raised and spent.

The department has introduced a rigorous mathematics curriculum, which provides young people with the knowledge and financial skills to make important financial decisions. In the primary mathematics curriculum, there is a strong emphasis on the essential arithmetic knowledge that pupils should be taught. This knowledge is vital, as a strong grasp of numeracy and numbers will underpin pupils' ability to manage budgets and money, including, for example, using percentages. There is also some specific content about financial education, such as calculations with money.

The secondary mathematics curriculum develops pupils' understanding and skills in relation to more complex personal finance issues such as calculating loan repayments, interest rates and compound interest.

As with other aspects of the curriculum, schools have flexibility over how they deliver these subjects, so they can develop an integrated approach that is sensitive to the needs and background of their pupils.

The department works closely with the Money and Pensions Service and other stakeholders such as Her Majesty's Treasury, to consider what can be discovered from other sector initiatives and whether there is scope to provide further support for the teaching of financial education in schools.

■ Foster Care: Finance

Seema Malhotra:

[63728]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department has made additional funds available to foster carers affected by the rising cost of living.

Will Quince:

The Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards, issued by my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, under the Care Standards Act 2000, sets out the expectations that are placed on foster carers and their agencies. The standards can be found here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/192705/NMS_Fostering_Services.pdf.

The department is clear that carers should not be out of pocket because of their fostering role, and we expect all foster carers to receive at least the national minimum allowance (NMA), plus any agreed expenses to cover the full cost of caring for each child placed with them (standard 28). The NMA was developed by calculating the cost of caring for a birth child and accounting for the additional cost of caring for a foster child. The rate is reviewed annually to bring it in line with inflation.

Foster carers also receive qualifying care relief which is made up of two parts: tax exemption on the first £10,000 shared equally among any foster carers in the same household, and tax relief for every week a child is in their care.

■ Languages: Schools

Seema Malhotra:

[63730]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to increase the take up of foreign languages in schools.

Mr Robin Walker:

One of the key priorities of the department is the take-up of languages.

In September 2014, a statutory requirement for all key stage 2 pupils to study either an ancient or a modern foreign language was introduced to the national curriculum. The department has also taken steps to increase the uptake of languages at GCSE, which is why GCSEs in all modern and ancient languages have been part of the English Baccalaureate performance measure for secondary schools, first introduced in 2010.

The department also recently carried out a consultation earlier this year on proposed changes to the subject content for French, German and Spanish GCSEs, the most popular languages at this level. The intention is that more pupils will want to study languages at GCSE level and encourage them to continue with this study to post-16 and beyond. The department plans to respond to the consultation later this year.

The total number of pupils in state-funded schools in England entered for examinations in at least one language GCSE has increased from 231,224 in 2010 to 253,379 in 2019. This amounted to an increase among all key stage 4 pupils of 7 percentage points from 40% in 2010 to 47% in 2019. With GCSE examinations due to re-commence in 2022, we will return to publishing, as far as possible, our usual range of English Baccalaureate entry and attainment measures.

The department also provides funding for several programmes to improve teaching quality and take-up in specific languages. These are:

- The Modern Foreign Languages Pedagogy Pilot led by the National Centre for Excellence for Language Pedagogy at the University of York
- The Mandarin Excellence Programme (MEP) led by University College London Institute of Education in partnership with the British Council
- Modelled on the MEP, the Department also recently announced a £4 million Latin Excellence Programme to increase uptake and attainment in Latin in secondary schools from September 2022 onwards

■ Parents: Advisory Services

Andrew Gwynne: [\[63681\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of Action for Children's research entitled Parenting through the Pandemic, published on 21 October 2021.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[63682\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of Action for Children's online Parent Talk resource for parents.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[63683\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department plans to expand the Government's online support services for parents.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[63684\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department plans to expand its support services for parents.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[63685\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on securing funding for parental support services in the 2021 Spending Review.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[63687\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans his Department has to ensure that parents are part of the Government's levelling up agenda.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[63688\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the accessibility of support services available to parents.

Will Quince:

The government has prioritised support for children and families in the Spending Review. The government has announced a £300 million package to transform services for parents and babies, carers and children in half of local authorities in England, helping to deliver our levelling up ambitions.

It includes funding to create a family hub network, for each local authority to publish their Start for Life offer, support for breast feeding, parent-infant relationships and parenting programmes. It also includes a smaller number of pilots to trial and evaluate innovative workforce models needed to support babies and families.

Family hubs are a way of joining up locally to improve access to services, the connections between families, professionals, services, and providers, and putting relationships at the heart of family help.

£50 million will be available for parenting support. The department will ensure online parenting programmes are available to new parents in the 75 selected local

authorities, alongside additional targeted support to families most in need. The department will set out more detail in due course, including on which parenting programmes will be available in the selected local authorities.

■ Pre-school Education: Staff

Dr Rupa Huq:

[\[63811\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to increase the number of people working in the early years sector in England.

Will Quince:

The majority of the early years' workforce are employed in private, voluntary and independent organisations and those employers are responsible for recruiting sufficient staff in line with the requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The government recognises that high-quality childcare, with a well-qualified workforce, has a powerful impact on children's outcomes and we have announced a £153 million investment in early years education to build a stronger, more expert workforce, enabling settings to deliver high quality teaching and help address the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on the youngest children, particularly those in the most disadvantaged areas. Within this investment we have substantially expanded the number of places that we fund for initial teacher training in early years, to increase the supply of qualified graduates to the sector.

■ Pupils: Hyperactivity

Kim Leadbeater:

[\[61234\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department has any plans to increase training on ADHD for school staff.

Mr Robin Walker:

High-quality professional development is important for teachers at all stages of their careers. Decisions relating to teachers' continuing professional development rests with schools, headteachers, and teachers themselves, as they are in the best position to judge their own requirements. This may include further training and development relating to pupils and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

All new teachers receive at least three years of evidence-based professional development and support, starting with Initial Teacher Training (ITT) based on the new ITT Core Content Framework (CCF), and followed by a new two-year induction underpinned by the Early Career Framework (ECF). The CCF and ECF set out a minimum entitlement of knowledge, skills and experiences that trainees need to enter the profession in the best position possible to teach and support all pupils to succeed, including those pupils identified within the four areas of need set out in the SEND Code of Practice. ITT courses must be designed so that trainee teachers can demonstrate that they meet the Teachers' Standards at the appropriate level. This

includes the requirement in Standard 5 that all teachers must have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including, where appropriate, those with ADHD or other special educational needs. Information on the Teachers' Standards are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards>.

The department is also launching a new and updated suite of National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) for teachers and school leaders at all levels. Eligible teachers and leaders will be able to access fully funded scholarships to undertake NPQs from autumn 2021. These NPQs have been designed around how to support all pupils to succeed, including those pupils identified within the four areas of need set out in the SEND Code of Practice, and children in need of help and protection as identified in the Children in Need Review.

Through our contract with the National Association for Special Educational Needs, the department is continuing in the 2021-22 financial year to fund the Whole School SEND Consortium to provide the schools workforce with training and resources to support children and young people with SEND, including those with ADHD.

We are also supporting education settings to develop whole-school approaches to mental health and wellbeing, and have:

- Provided funding to enable up to 7,800 schools and colleges in England to train a senior mental health lead from their staff this academic year
- Funded an adapted 'Link' programme, which is designed to improve partnerships between health and education leaders in local areas, raise awareness of mental health concerns and improve referrals to specialist help when needed
- Established new Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs) to support groups of schools and colleges. MHSTs provide early intervention on mild to moderate issues, as well as helping staff within a school or college setting to provide a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing. The ambition is that new MHSTs will be established in 35% of the country by 2023, with 183 teams already operational and ready to support children and young people in around 3,000 schools and colleges

■ Schools: Coronavirus

Rachael Maskell:

[60455]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions has he had with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on trends in the level of absences of (a) teaching and non-teaching staff and (b) pupils in schools as a result of covid-19.

Mr Robin Walker:

The Department for Education and the Department for Health and Social Care are working together closely to monitor COVID-19 related absence trends for both pupils and staff in schools. My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education and my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, have regular discussions across a range of issues related to the COVID-19 outbreak. There has

been a shared government priority throughout the COVID-19 outbreak to keep nurseries, schools and colleges open and reduce disruption to education.

The number and proportion of pupils in state-funded schools absent for COVID-19 since the start of the academic year can be found on Explore Education Statistics. The published data has been tabulated here: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-tables/permalink/c95bbdf9-07e2-407e-8741-da6e00c837df>. Similarly, the number and proportion of teaching and non-teaching staff absent for COVID-19 since the start of the academic year can be found here: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-tables/permalink/76767b09-1e9d-4871-bd10-4273aef84140>.

■ Schools: Repairs and Maintenance

Lee Anderson: **[61219]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what progress has been made on the Government's School Rebuilding Programme.

Mr Robin Walker:

The School Rebuilding Programme was announced in 2020 with a commitment to deliver 500 rebuilding and refurbishment projects over the next decade. The department announced the first 100 projects this year at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-rebuilding-programme>. The most advanced projects started construction in September 2021.

A consultation on the approach to prioritising schools for future places in the programme closed on 8 October 2021. We plan to publish the response and details of the future prioritisation process in early 2022.

Rachael Maskell: **[63926]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, on what date he plans to announce capital funding for rebuilding schools in the next stage of the School Rebuilding Programme.

Mr Robin Walker:

The School Rebuilding Programme was announced in 2020 with a commitment to 500 rebuilding and refurbishment projects over the next decade. Details, including the approach to prioritisation, are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-rebuilding-programme>.

The department announced the first 50 schools in February 2021 and a second set of 50 in July, with each round supported by £1 billion in funding. This comes on top of £11.3 billion allocated since 2015 to improve the condition of schools. We will set out details of condition funding for the 2022/23 financial year in due course.

A consultation on the approach to prioritising schools for future places in the programme closed on 8 October 2021. We plan to publish the response and further details of the programme in early 2022.

■ Schools: Ventilation

Rachael Maskell: [\[60460\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what guidance his Department is providing to schools on ventilation of classrooms in the context of the prevention of covid-19 over the winter when it is not practical to open windows due to cold weather.

Mr Robin Walker:

Throughout the COVID-19 outbreak the department has emphasised the importance of ventilation and provided guidance to settings on ventilation requirements. The department has always said that where a school is in operation it is important to ensure that it is well ventilated and that a comfortable teaching environment is maintained.

The government has started to provide CO2 monitors to state-funded early years, schools and further education providers, backed by £25 million in government funding.

The new monitors will provide further reassurance that existing ventilation measures are working, helping balance the need for good ventilation with keeping classrooms warm. The government has also provided new information on how to use CO2 monitors to better manage ventilation.

Further advice for schools on balancing the need for increased ventilation while maintaining a comfortable temperature is available here:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/equipment-and-machinery/air-conditioning-and-ventilation/index.htm> and <https://www.cibse.org/coronavirus-covid-19>.

Peter Kyle: [\[63786\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when he plans to publish the results of his Department's trial of air purifiers in Bradford schools.

Mr Robin Walker:

The trial of air purifiers is funded by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), who are contracting the trial management to Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust via their Centre for Applied Educational Research programme.

The full results of the study are expected in October 2022, but it is anticipated that an interim report on the feasibility of using air cleaners (HEPA and UV-C devices) in a school setting will be available early in 2022.

■ Special Educational Needs

Rob Butler: [\[61220\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the value and effectiveness of independent (a) schools and (b) special schools' contribution to SEND education in England.

Will Quince:

In January 2021, local authorities reported placing 4,555 children and young people with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans in mainstream independent schools and 17,839 in independent special schools (5.2% of EHC plans). There are 610 independent special schools currently registered with my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, representing 36% of special schools. 65% were rated 'good' or 'outstanding' following inspection.

Local authorities are responsible for determining where children and young people with EHC plans should be educated. Decisions are informed by whether a school is suitable for the age, aptitude and needs of an individual, and compatible with the efficient use of resources. The local authority is responsible for monitoring the placement (for example through the annual review of the EHC plan), to ensure the provision continues to meet the child or young person's needs.

In order to comply with the Independent School Standards, an independent school must take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those with an EHC plan, ensuring all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress. Where independent schools are identified as not meeting the required education or boarding standards, the Department for Education, as the independent school regulator, may take regulatory or enforcement action to require independent schools to improve within specified time constraints.

■ Students: Finance**Kirsten Oswald:****[63753]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 18 October 2021 to Question 53884 on Students: Finance, what discussions he has had with the devolved Administrations on the introduction of alternative student finance.

Michelle Donelan:

Discussions with officials in the devolved administrations about the provision of a student finance product compatible with Islamic finance principles have taken place, most recently with officials from the Scottish Government. As education is a devolved matter, it is up to each devolved administration to decide whether they wish to introduce a Sharia-compliant student finance solution.

■ Teachers: Qualifications**Kate Green:****[57024]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 5 July 2021 to Question 25092 on Teachers: arts, how many schools lack a qualified teacher in each subject.

Mr Robin Walker:

Legislation does not specify that teachers must have a degree in a particular subject or discipline. The Teachers' Standards specify the subject knowledge required for the

award of qualified teacher status. All trainee teachers must meet these by the time they complete their training.

In November 2019, of 2,948 state-funded secondary schools in England, the most common subjects taught where no teachers in a school held a relevant post A level qualification in the subject were computing (400), Spanish (292) and media studies (209). The attached table provides further detail on all subjects.

These figures relate only to schools where the subjects were taught. For example, a school that does not teach engineering and does not have a teacher with a post A level qualification in engineering is excluded from figures. In addition, figures only include schools that supplied both curriculum and teacher qualification data. This differs to the methodology used in the answer to question [25092](#), which included all schools, regardless of curriculum data and subjects taught. The present methodology better reflects the status of schools who do not have teachers with a post A level qualification in specific subjects.

The information provided does not consider the subject taught by teachers. For example, a teacher with a qualification in mathematics may instead teach computer science. Information on subjects taught and teacher's post A level qualifications is published in the 'School Workforce in England' statistical publication at:

<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-workforce-in-england>

To reduce the burden during the COVID-19 outbreak, schools and local authorities were not required to provide information on teacher qualifications in 2020. Therefore, the information provided relates to the November 2019 School Workforce Census.

Attachments:

1. 57024_table [[57024_Schools_without_specialist_teacher_by_subject.xls](#)]

■ **Teachers: Sick Leave**

Rachael Maskell:

[60458]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the impact of teacher absences as a result of covid-19 on pupils' education.

Mr Robin Walker:

As of latest available data on 14 October, over 99.95% (nearly all) of state-funded schools were open to pupils. 1.8% of teachers and school leaders and 1.6% of teaching assistants and other staff were absent from open schools due to COVID-19 related reasons on 14 October.

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 causes significant harm to educational attainment, life chances, mental and physical health. Therefore, the government has made it a national priority that nurseries, schools and colleges should continue to operate as normally as possible during the COVID-19 outbreak.

We have made rapid lateral flow device (LFD) tests available to secondary pupils and students and staff in schools and colleges. Staff are encouraged to continue testing twice weekly from home, 3-4 days apart to reduce transmission.

School leaders are best placed to determine the workforce required to meet the needs of their pupils. In the case of staff absence, schools should follow their usual process for covering absences. This may include engaging supply teachers and other supply staff. We recommend that schools consider using the Department for Education's and Crown Commercial Service's agency supply deal when hiring agency workers, as this offers a list of preferred suppliers that must be transparent about the rates they charge, details of which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/deal-for-schools-hiring-supply-teachers-and-agency-workers>. The Teaching Vacancies service can also help schools to list vacancies for both permanent and fixed-term teaching staff quickly.

■ Teachers: Trade Unions

Peter Kyle: [\[60472\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many (a) academies and (b) free schools have negotiated recognition agreements with teaching unions.

Mr Robin Walker:

The information requested is not held centrally.

The department does not collect data on academies or free schools who have negotiated recognition agreements with teaching unions.

■ Vocational Education: Qualifications

Stephen Morgan: [\[60501\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to ensure that students can continue to study BTEC qualifications in the future.

Stephen Morgan: [\[60502\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment he has made of the impact of removing funding for BTEC qualifications.

Alex Burghart:

In July 2021 the department set out the qualifications that we intend to fund alongside A levels and T Levels at level 3. We want T Levels to be the core of the new technical offer so that in a fast-moving and high-tech economy we close the gap between what people study and the needs of employers. We are confident T Levels will lead to better progression into work or further study. T Levels offer a broad course content, giving students a thorough understanding of the sector and an occupational specialism to develop the knowledge and skills needed to work in specific occupations. This cannot be matched by qualifications currently available.

T Levels are challenging qualifications developed with 250 leading employers. They have significantly longer teaching hours and include a meaningful nine week industry

placement that sets them apart from many current vocational qualifications. We want as many students to benefit as possible.

However, we will continue to fund some BTECs and other Applied General qualifications in future, and these qualifications will continue to play an important role for 16-19 year olds and adults as they do now.

We have been clear that we expect the changes to be generally positive as students will have access to higher quality qualifications in the future, including new T Levels. This will put students in a stronger position to progress onto further study or skilled employment.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Disposable Wipes: Waste Disposal

Catherine West:

[\[60484\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he has held recent discussions with manufacturers of wet wipes on (a) tackling fatbergs and (b) protecting waterways.

Rebecca Pow:

The incorrect disposal of wet wipes can cause sewer blockages and environmental damage. Wipes often combine with fats, oil, and grease, which are also often disposed into drains, to form fatbergs. My officials are working to assess the effects of wet wipes containing plastic on sewers and the environment and identify possible solutions.

Defra also continues to encourage the water industry and wet wipes manufacturers to work together to raise consumer awareness about the appropriate disposal of wet wipes and other non-flushable products. This will be crucial for generating meaningful behavioural change with consumers and customers.

■ Water: Somerset

Ben Everitt:

[\[60523\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking with (a) the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (b) Natural England to help resolve the water quality issues caused by phosphates in the Somerset Levels and Moors so that residential applications in that area can proceed.

Rebecca Pow:

The departments principally responsible for government policy on water pollution and development are Defra and DLUHC respectively, which are both aware of the challenges facing housebuilding and environmental protection in the Somerset Levels and Moors. To address water quality issues arising from nutrient pollution, a cross-departmental Nutrient Taskforce has been created, which brings together Defra,

Natural England, Environment Agency and DLUHC colleagues. Its remit is to discuss the causes of phosphate and wider nutrient pollution and ways we can support businesses to develop and protect the environment nationally.

Locally, the taskforce has assisted Natural England in developing several tools which enable local authorities to understand possible mitigations that can be put in place. In the Somerset Levels and Moors, this has materialised in the development of a phosphorus budget calculator which has helped to move forward planning applications. Furthermore, Somerset West & Taunton Council have approved a further £2M programme for interim mitigation projects as advised by Natural England. The Council will now seek NE sign-off in the next few weeks, after which it can begin to employ mitigation schemes to unlock delayed development in the area. Alongside this Natural England continues to support the piloting of a first-of-its-kind nutrient trading scheme in Somerset and expects to formally accredit the scheme in November. They report back regularly to the taskforce on progress.

More broadly, the taskforce has helped to inform and guide Defra's wider approach to address nutrient pollution in our waterways. For example, how we utilise the newly expanded Catchment Sensitive Farming advice programme, which we have doubled funding for, alongside funding for 50 new Environment Agency inspectors to work with the farming sector to tackle nutrient pollution. Defra is committed to improving the water environment and will continue to work with Natural England and the Environment Agency on the wider issue of underlying sources of pollution, considering upgrades to wastewater treatment works and ways of reducing pollution from agriculture.

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

■ **Abdel Moneim About Fotouh**

Hilary Benn:

[\[61111\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent representations she has made to the Government of Egypt on the continued detention of Abdolmoneim Aboufotouh.

James Cleverly:

The Foreign Secretary raised human rights in her first meeting with Egyptian Foreign Minister Shoukry in New York on 20 September. I [Minister Cleverly] also raised human rights with Foreign Minister Shoukry and met human rights activists during my recent visit to Cairo. We welcome Egypt's new human rights strategy and our strong bilateral relationship with Egypt allows us to raise human rights concerns frankly when we have them. Our focus is to lobby on ending pre-trial detention and improving prison conditions in Egypt

■ Bangladesh: Religious Freedom

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[63852\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions her Department has had with the Bangladeshi Government on the steps they are taking to end religious-based violence against (a) Hindus and (b) other religious minorities.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[63853\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions she has had with her Bangladeshi counterpart on the protection of Hindu temples following recent attacks on temples in that country.

Amanda Milling:

The UK Government is concerned about the recent violence at Hindu Durga Puja celebrations across various districts in Bangladesh. We engage with the Government of Bangladesh on the importance of freedom of religion or belief, which remains a priority for the UK Government. Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, the Minister of State for South Asia, tweeted his concern on 21 October. The British High Commissioner to Bangladesh discussed the violence with Foreign Minister Momen on 26 October, and on 19 October expressed his condolences to the victims of the violence and the UK's support for those working for religious tolerance and harmony in Bangladesh and around the world.

■ China: Export Controls

Tim Loughton: [\[61051\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions she has had with (a) the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and (b) Ministers in his Department on the imposition of export controls for companies dealing with Chinese businesses suspected of (i) breaching the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and (ii) genocide considerations pertaining to the Trade Act 2021.

Amanda Milling:

On 12 January, the Government committed to review existing export controls as they apply to China to identify whether we can bring into scope any additional goods which could be used for internal repression or human rights violations in Xinjiang. This review is ongoing and the Department for International Trade will report back to Parliament on the outcome of the review in due course.

■ Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Heating

Jake Berry: [\[58832\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what type of heating system is the primary source of heating in each building occupied by her Department and its agencies; and what fuel is used by those heating systems.

Amanda Milling:

We currently use a range of methods to heat buildings across our estate. This includes the Whitehall District Heating System for our buildings in Whitehall, a biomass boiler powered by wood pellets for Abercrombie House, and a biomass boiler burning woodchip sourced from the Wilton Estate for Wilton Park. Work is currently underway to implement full decarbonisation plans for our portfolio, as part of our strategic asset management planning.

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Quarantine**Mr Ben Bradshaw:**[\[61098\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many of her Department's ministers have been exempted from quarantine in a hotel after returning to the UK from a covid-19 red list country to which they have travelled for the purposes of conducting official business.

Amanda Milling:

Since managed quarantine for red list arrivals was introduced in February 2021, nine Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) Ministers, including those who are no longer ministers at the FCDO, have received an exemption from managed quarantine on their return to the UK after making official visits to a red list country.

Jagtar Singh Johal**Preet Kaur Gill:**[\[61185\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions she has had with her Indian counterpart on the arbitrary detention of UK national, Mr Jagtar Singh Johal.

Amanda Milling:

The UK Government takes all allegations of human rights violations very seriously, and we regularly raise Mr Johal's case directly with the Government of India at official and Ministerial level. The Foreign Secretary last raised Mr Johal's case with the Indian Minister of External Affairs, Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, on 22 October 2021. Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister of State for South Asia, raised Mr Johal's case most recently with the Indian Foreign Secretary, Harsh Vardhan Shringla, on 23 July and with the Indian High Commissioner on 8 June. This Government will continue to look to raise our concerns about Mr Johal's case at all appropriate opportunities.

Sanctions**Fiona Bruce:**[\[63701\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how parliamentarians can make referrals to the UK sanctions scheme.

Amanda Milling:

Parliamentarians can engage with the Government via the usual means on information concerning possible designations, including by writing to the Foreign Secretary, or by contacting sanctions@fcdo.gov.uk. All designations will need to meet the legal tests as set out in the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018, which includes ensuring designations are underpinned by robust evidence.

Fiona Bruce:[\[63702\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how civil society groups can make referrals to the UK sanctions scheme.

Amanda Milling:

If any person or organisation, including civil society groups, wishes to submit information to the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office concerning possible designations under a sanctions regime they may do so to sanctions@fcdo.gov.uk. The Government has published two Information Notes aimed at helping support Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and civil society engage with Government on Global Human Rights and Global Anti-Corruption sanctions.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**■ Abortion: Coronavirus****Jess Phillips:**[\[56147\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made for the risk of women turning to illegal online abortion medication at home if he remove the temporary approval given during the covid-19 outbreak to women and girls to take an early medical abortion following a telephone or e-consultation with a clinician.

Maggie Throup:

[Holding answer 20 October 2021]: The Government's public consultation on whether to make permanent the temporary measure allowing for home use of both pills for early medical abortion up to 10 weeks gestation for all eligible women has now closed. We are considering all evidence submitted, including relating to illegal online abortion websites and plan to publish our response later this year.

■ Air Pollution: Health Hazards**Geraint Davies:**[\[60347\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of (a) the adequacy of the World Health Organisation's latest air pollution guidelines and (b) the potential effect of the Government adopting those guidelines on (i) mortality rates in the UK and (ii) the annual cost to the NHS of treating people affected by air pollution.

Maggie Throup:

[Holding answer 26 October 2021]: The World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Air Quality Guidelines provide clear evidence that air pollution damages health at

lower concentrations than previously understood. The UK Health Security Agency has made no recent assessment of the potential effect of adopting the WHO's guidelines.

However, in 2018, the Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants estimated in 2018 that the United Kingdom mortality burden of long-term exposure to the air pollution mixture was an annual effect equivalent to 28,000 to 36,000 deaths. The former Public Health England estimated the total cost to the National Health Service and social care from air pollution in England to be around £1.60 billion for fine particulate matter and nitrogen dioxide. A one microgram per cubic metre reduction in fine particulate matter could prevent around 50,900 cases of coronary heart disease, 16,500 strokes, 9,300 cases of asthma and 4,200 lung cancers over 18 years. By improving air quality below the current standards, we could see additional health benefits in reducing cases of disease and lowering costs to the NHS.

■ **Coronavirus and Smoking: Barking**

Dame Margaret Hodge:

[\[60343\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of people who died from (a) smoking-related illnesses and (b) covid-19 in Barking in last 12 months.

Maggie Throup:

Data on the number of people who died from smoking-related illness in the past year is not currently available. The latest update to smoking attributable mortality estimates at local authority level is expected in mid-2022.

In the past 12 months, 486 people in Barking and Dagenham died within 28 days of a positive COVID-19 test.

■ **Coronavirus: Disease Control**

Dawn Butler:

[\[45057\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the two-monthly report on the status of the provisions of the Coronavirus Act 2020 published on 21 July 2021, what alternative measures the Department considered other than those contained under the Coronavirus Act 2020 to ensure that everyone was protected throughout the duration of the pandemic.

Maggie Throup:

[Holding answer 13 September 2021]: To develop the package of measures included in the Coronavirus Act 2020, the Government built on a draft emergency bill, originally developed for dealing with an influenza pandemic, in partnership with the devolved administrations. We are unable to provide information on alternative measures considered in preparation for the bill as this relates to the formulation and development of Government policy.

Henry Smith:

[\[56970\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to protect blood cancer patients and other immunocompromised groups who may still not be fully protected after a third covid-19 vaccine dose given that the shielding programme has ended.

Maggie Throup:

Immunocompromised individuals are a priority cohort for research into therapeutic and prophylaxis treatments, such as monoclonal antibody therapies and repurposed compounds. The Antivirals Taskforce is also identifying potential effective treatments for patients who have been exposed to the virus to stop the infection spreading and speed up recovery time. The National Health Service is also developing plans to deploy monoclonal antibody therapies if these become available in coming months.

As of 17 September, Ronapreve was made available to treat the most vulnerable hospital patients through an interim clinical policy. We anticipate that further monoclonal antibodies will be submitted for evaluation for a marketing authorisation by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency in the next few months. If approved, these could become available for community treatment or prevention use. On 20 October the Department announced the procurement of two promising new antivirals, with the intention to make these available to patients as part of a national study.

■ **Coronavirus: Vaccination**

Tim Loughton:

[\[56545\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has plans to make an assessment of the potential merits of including those on the influenza Green Book within the covid-19 booster programme.

Maggie Throup:

[Holding answer 20 October 2021]: The potential merits of using the influenza clinical risk groups as a potential way to identify and prioritise individuals for COVID-19 vaccination was assessed during the development of phase one recommendations for the primary COVID-19 vaccination programme. However, when evaluating the data, the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation found that there were differences between those at high risk of severe flu and those at high risk of severe COVID-19 infection.

The COVID-19 booster vaccine programme follows the priority groups one to nine in phase one of the programme to be offered a third dose of vaccine six months after their primary course.

Rebecca Long Bailey:

[\[57065\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress his Department has been made in (a) validating UK-approved vaccines administered overseas and (b) creating the data flows so that people residing in England who have received their covid-

19 vaccinations outside of the UK can apply for an NHS COVID Pass; and what his timeframe is for completion of the NHS app upgrade.

Maggie Throup:

[Holding answer 20 October 2021]: Since 30 September a pilot process has been in place for overseas vaccinations to be recorded in the National Immunisation Management Service (NIMS) and through the NHS COVID Pass. The pilot involved three vaccination sites in England with more opening as the pilot phase moves to national deployment. By the end of October, one vaccination site in every region in England will offer this service and subject to the pilot's findings, it 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 via the NIMS and 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.

Emma Hardy:

[\[57292\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of including the Falklands among the approved countries for the covid-19 vaccination.

Maggie Throup:

[Holding answer 20 October 2021]: The Falkland Islands are on the list of countries and territories with approved proof of vaccination for travel to England. A letter of proof from the overseas territory government showing full vaccination under the United Kingdom overseas vaccine programme containing forename and surname(s), date of birth, vaccine brand and manufacturer, date of vaccination for every dose and country or territory of vaccination and/or certificate issuer is permitted for travel.

Chris Loder:

[\[57346\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that booster covid-19 vaccinations are accessible to eligible people in (a) West Dorset constituency and (b) Dorset.

Maggie Throup:

The National Health Service is already contacting those who are eligible to receive a COVID-19 booster vaccine, including those in Dorset. Appointments are available via the National Booking System or alternatively through local community pharmacies. General practitioner practices in Dorset are also inviting patients for vaccination when they become eligible for a booster vaccination six months after their second dose.

Rachael Maskell:

[\[60454\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of holding vaccination sessions in (a) city centre and (b) workplace locations to encourage take up of the covid-19 vaccine.

Maggie Throup:

Vaccination sites in city or workplace settings or outside of the standard vaccine sites, are already a key part of the vaccine programme. These are generally 'pop up' or 'roving' sites that are established and managed at a regional/local level in England. They may be administered in care homes, buses, places of worship or work. Additionally, pharmacies are also involved with the vaccination programme.

Daisy Cooper:[\[60517\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to enable people who are eligible for a booster covid-19 vaccination, and for whom 182 days have elapsed since their second dose, to access that appointment via the NHS Booking Service without need for an invitation letter.

Maggie Throup:

[Holding answer 26 October 2021]: The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation has advised that the COVID-19 vaccine booster dose should be offered no earlier than six months after completion of the primary vaccine course, and deployed in the same order as phase one of the programme.

NHS England are contacting those eligible for a booster vaccine and inviting them to book an appointment via the National Booking System by either calling 119 or booking online. If an eligible individual has not been contacted at six months and one week since their second dose, they are invited to book their booster vaccination via the National Booking Service or by phoning 119 without the need of an invitation letter.

Robert Jenrick:[\[62739\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to increase covid-19 booster jab uptake in (a) Newark and the surrounding areas and (b) Nottinghamshire.

Maggie Throup:

NHS England are contacting those eligible for a COVID-19 booster vaccine, including those in Newark and Nottinghamshire, inviting them to book an appointment by either calling 119 or booking online. If an eligible individual has not been contacted at six months and one week since their second dose, they are invited to book their booster dose via the National Booking Service without the need of an invitation letter.

A national 'BOOST your immunity this winter' communications campaign has launched setting out the importance of getting the COVID-19 booster and flu vaccinations this winter.

Thangam Debbonaire:[\[62752\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress his Department has made on enabling British citizens who received their covid-19 vaccinations overseas to be certified as vaccinated by the NHS Covid Pass.

Maggie Throup:

A pilot launched on 30 September in England for residents vaccinated abroad to request that their vaccines are uploaded to the national database. Vaccines approved by the European Medicines Agency, the Food and Drug Administration or Swissmedic are accepted for the NHS COVID Pass. We are working to understand which non-Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency approved vaccines we would be confident to recognise in the NHS COVID Pass.

■ **Dementia: Research****Emma Hardy:**[\[62821\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will increase the funding available to dementia research.

Maria Caulfield:

We are working to significantly boost further research on dementia at all stages, including medical and care interventions. The Department funds research on health and social care through the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). While the usual practice of the NIHR is not to ring-fence funds for expenditure on particular topics, it welcomes funding applications for research into any aspect of human health including dementia. These applications are subject to peer review and judged in open competition, with awards made on the basis of the importance of the topic to patients and health and care services, value for money and scientific quality.

■ **Department of Health and Social Care: Quarantine****Mr Ben Bradshaw:**[\[61097\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many of his Department's ministers have been exempted from quarantine in a hotel after returning to the UK from a covid-19 red list country to which they have travelled for the purposes of conducting official business.

Maggie Throup:

None of the Department's ministers have returned from a 'red list' country and therefore no exemptions have been required.

■ **Fluoride: Drinking Water****Dr Julian Lewis:**[\[63641\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what opportunities the Government will make available to (a) Parliament and (b) the public to (i) discuss and (ii) decide whether (A) fluoride and (B) any other blanket medication should be added to British water supplies.

Maria Caulfield:

The Health and Care Bill, which aims to expand water fluoridation schemes, in England, is currently at the Committee stage where it can be debated further by Parliament.

The changes proposed by the Bill will maintain the duty to consult with the public on any future water fluoridation proposals.

■ Health Services

Rachael Maskell: [\[63778\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will reintroduce health checks for people at 40 years of age and for each year thereafter.

Maggie Throup:

The NHS Health Check was paused due to the pandemic. A review on improving the impact of the programme will be published shortly.

■ Health Services: Prisoners

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[60386\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the report entitled *Injustice? Towards a better understanding of health care access challenges for prisoners*, published by Nuffield Trust on 21 October 2021, what recent discussions he has had with Ministerial colleagues in the Ministry of Justice on the adequacy of prisoner escort capacity in England for enabling (a) a good standard of healthcare access for prisoners and (b) efficient provision of healthcare services.

Gillian Keegan:

We have regular discussions with the Ministry of Justice on a range of issues related to the provision of healthcare services in prisons.

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[60388\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the report entitled *Injustice? Towards a better understanding of health care access challenges for prisoners*, published by Nuffield Trust on 21 October 2021, if he will work with colleagues in the Ministry of Justice to enable the publication of regular data on (a) prisoners' health care use and (b) how that compares to use by the general population.

Gillian Keegan:

We have no specific plans to do so. However, NHS England and NHS Improvement collect health information in the prison health data system which is regularly reviewed and analysed to improve healthcare services for prisoners. Where possible, comparisons with data for the general population will be made.

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[60389\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the report entitled *Injustice? Towards a better understanding of health care access challenges for prisoners*, published by Nuffield Trust on 21 October 2021, what steps he is taking to support (a) research into and (b) monitoring of avoidable health outcomes for prisoners.

Gillian Keegan:

The Department is funding, through the National Institute for Health Research, the 'Understanding the scale and nature of avoidable harm in prison healthcare' research project. This aims to identify the scale of avoidable harm in prison healthcare and understand which policies or processes could minimise the risk of this in the future. The project is currently due to complete in May 2023.

NHS England and NHS Improvement's health and justice and health and inequalities teams are considering how the national Core20PLUS5 health inequalities survey for National Health Service professionals could be applied to prison settings. This will contribute to the monitoring and reduction of differences in health outcomes across priority areas such as maternal health, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and early cancer detection. In addition, the National Confidential Enquiry into Patient Outcomes and Death will undertake a review of natural cause deaths of people who died whilst detained in prison.

Health: Poverty**Drew Hendry:**[\[57142\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the potential impact on health outcomes of (a) the ending of the £20 uplift to universal credit uplift, (b) increases to inflation and (c) increases in energy costs.

Maggie Throup:

[Holding answer 20 October 2021]: The Department has not undertaken an assessment. It is the responsibility of each Government Department to assess the impacts of its own policies.

Immensa Health Clinic**Thangam Debbonaire:**[\[62751\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what lessons the Government has learned from the faults with PCR testing discovered at the Immensa laboratory in Wolverhampton; and if he will make a statement.

Maggie Throup:

The investigation into the Immensa Laboratory in Wolverhampton is ongoing and the UK Health Security Agency will update their findings in due course.

Influenza: Vaccination**Rachael Maskell:**[\[60450\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the efficacy of the 2021 flu vaccine.

Maggie Throup:

All the flu vaccines in use in the United Kingdom in 2021/22 are licensed following previous demonstration of efficacy against influenza in clinical trials. This statistical analysis is not possible until there have been sufficient cases. The 2021-22 season flu vaccines have not been evaluated for effectiveness against circulating strains of influenza.

Rachael Maskell:[\[60451\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many and what percentage of people are eligible for the flu vaccine in England; and if he will publish a weekly update on the numbers of vaccinations given for flu in England.

Maggie Throup:

Over 35 million people in England are eligible for the free flu vaccine in the 2021/22 flu season. The UK Health Security Agency has not calculated what proportion of the total population of England are eligible for the flu vaccine.

Weekly influenza vaccine uptake reports are produced throughout the flu season and are available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-flu-and-covid-19-surveillance-reports-2021-to-2022-season>

■ Liver Diseases: Health Services**Bell Ribeiro-Addy:**[\[63886\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities plans to support patients with liver disease.

Bell Ribeiro-Addy:[\[63887\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities plans to tackle health inequalities in the outcomes for liver disease across England.

Maggie Throup:

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities is supporting patients with liver disease through interventions to reduce alcohol consumption. We are investing in improving access to preventative health services to tackle health inequalities in the outcomes for liver disease.

■ Long Covid**Rachael Maskell:**[\[63766\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, for what reason his Department is not recording cases of long covid.

Maria Caulfield:

Currently there is no one single test for 'long' COVID-19. Therefore, it is not possible to publish case numbers.

NHS England and NHS Improvement publish activity data and demographic information for patients who have been referred to a 'long' COVID-19 assessment clinic.

■ Long Covid: Children

Dan Carden: [\[63856\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to diagnose long covid in young children.

Maria Caulfield:

NHS England and NHS Improvement has established 15 paediatric hubs to coordinate care for children and young people with 'long' COVID-19. Any parent or guardian concerned that their child may be exhibiting symptoms should seek advice from their general practitioner, who will be able to refer the child for assessment if appropriate.

We have so far invested £50 million into research for 'long' COVID-19. This includes £1.4 million over three years for The CLoCk Study on 'long' COVID-19 among non-hospitalised children and young people.

■ NHS and Social Services: Staff

Helen Hayes: [\[63801\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the impact of the UK's withdrawal from the EU on staffing levels in the (a) NHS and (b) social care sector; and what steps he is he taking to mitigate that impact.

Edward Argar:

We have not seen a negative impact on National Health Service staffing levels as a result of leaving the European Union. Skills for Care data shows that approximately 7.5% of the overall workforce employed by independent providers or local authorities held a EU nationality in 2019/20 and this has remained the same in 2020/21.

The Migration Advisory Committee has been asked to review on the impact of exiting the EU on adult social care. Their report will be published in April 2022.

■ NHS Test and Trace

Mr Steve Baker: [\[R\] \[63720\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will set a date on which he will stop the operation of NHS Test and Trace.

Maggie Throup:

The NHS Test and Trace service remains critical to the Government's plan for managing the virus. Decisions on the continuation of the service will be made in due course.

■ NHS Test and Trace: Consultants

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[57049\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the ratio of consultants to civil servants was in NHS Test and Trace on 1 September 2021.

Maggie Throup:

[Holding answer 20 October 2021]: As of 1 September 2021, the ratio of management consultants to civil servants in NHS Test and Trace was 1:1.

■ Onasemnogene Abeparvovec

Jim Shannon: [\[60413\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will allocate additional funding to ensure that the muscle disease drug, Zolgensma, is available for babies.

Edward Argar:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) published guidance in July 2021 approving the use of Zolgensma for babies aged up to the age of 12 months old with type 1 spinal muscular atrophy (SMA) and for babies with SMA prior to developing symptoms as part of a managed access arrangement. The National Health Service is legally required to fund drugs recommended by NICE and Zolgensma is now being made available to eligible babies in line with its recommendations.

■ Oral Tobacco: USA

Martyn Day: [\[58456\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his policies of the US's Food and Drug Administration decision to give snus the status of a reduced risk product in the United States.

Maggie Throup:

The Department has made no assessment. The sale of oral tobacco is banned in the United Kingdom under the Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016. The Department continues to monitor developments in tobacco use across the world. Evidence shows that the consumption of any tobacco product is harmful and it is the Government's policy to help people quit tobacco.

■ Public Health

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[60361\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans the Government have to reduce the public health backlog.

Maggie Throup:

[Holding answer 26 October 2021]: The National Health Service is ensuring that national public health programmes continue to address additional demand during the pandemic, including in some screening and routine vaccination programmes. We are

also ensuring that local authorities are recovering activity on NHS health checks where they were paused.

■ Smoking

Mark Jenkinson: [\[61222\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 29 September 2021 to Question 52601 on Smoking, with reference to the delayed publication of the ONS smoking statistics bulletin entitled Adults smoking habits in the UK, whether the Tobacco Control Plan is expected to be published in 2021.

Maggie Throup:

We are undertaking further policy development to support the Tobacco Control Plan, which will be published in due course.

Rosie Cooper: [\[62672\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the findings of Special Eurobarometer 506, Attitudes of Europeans towards tobacco and electronic cigarettes, published 3 February 2021, what further steps he is taking to reduce smoking rates in the UK.

Rosie Cooper: [\[62673\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the findings of Action on Smoking and Health's June 2021 report, Use of e-cigarettes (vapes) among adults in Great Britain, what progress he has made towards meeting the Government's target for England to be smoke-free by 2030.

Maggie Throup:

The Department is considering a range of policy and regulatory changes to achieve our ambition to be smoke-free by 2030. These will be set out in our new Tobacco Control Plan, which we will publish in due course.

■ Smoking: Barking

Dame Margaret Hodge: [\[60344\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has made an assessment of the reasons for the high smoking rate in Barking of 18.1 per cent.

Maggie Throup:

While we have not made a specific assessment, we know that smoking rates are higher for those who already suffer from poorer health and other disadvantages. The forthcoming Tobacco Control Plan will set out proposals and supporting regulatory changes to meet our ambition to be smoke-free by 2030.

■ Terminal Illnesses: Research

Rachael Maskell: [\[61170\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of funding for research into terminal conditions, including neurological conditions.

Maria Caulfield:

The Department invests £1.3 billion per year in health research through the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and welcomes funding applications on any aspect of human health. This includes a range of terminal and neurological conditions.

As with other Government funders of health research, the NIHR does not allocate funding for specific disease areas. Applications are subject to peer review and judged in open competition with awards made on the basis of the importance of the topic to patients and health and care services, value for money and scientific quality.

■ Travel: Coronavirus

Ms Marie Rimmer: [\[56258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to help ensure that the 15,000 volunteers who participated in Novavax covid-19 vaccination trials can travel overseas in the same way as those who have received a UK-licensed covid-19 vaccination.

Bambos Charalambous: [\[57237\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what support his Department is providing to people who received the Novavax vaccine with international travel.

Bambos Charalambous: [\[57238\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that people in the UK who received the Novavax vaccine are able to travel internationally.

Maggie Throup:

All Novavax trial participants can now access a domestic NHS COVID Pass and a majority the Pass for international travel. Discussions are ongoing with other countries and bodies such as the G7, G20, the European Union Commission and the World Health Organization to shape a common approach for trial participants around the world.

In consultation with the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation and in partnership with chief investigators of the trials, we are trial participants doses of approved vaccines, in addition to trial vaccines to ensure access to overseas travel.

Alberto Costa:

[\[56581\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans his Department has to introduce a covid-19 travel pass for those aged under 16 years.

Maggie Throup:

The NHS COVID Pass is currently available to those aged 16 years old and over. Few countries require childrens' vaccination status testing is generally available or entry on the parent/guardians' status. However, we recognise that a small proportion of children aged over 12 years old have or will receive a full course of vaccination following the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation's advice and the growing requirement abroad for children to demonstrate their status. The international standards for travel require a full course to be recognised as 'fully vaccinated'. We are exploring ways for fully vaccinated children aged over 12 years old to demonstrate their vaccination status for travel. Those aged 12 to 15 years old offered one Pfizer dose should continue to follow destination countries' entry requirements for unvaccinated arrivals.

■ **Travel: Quarantine**

Charlotte Nichols:

[\[61227\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the evidential basis was for his Department's decision not to remove quarantine for people who can demonstrate that they have been infected and recovered from covid-19 recently.

Maggie Throup:

Decisions to inform quarantine rules are taken by the Government based on the latest scientific advice, alongside wider public health factors. We are unable to provide the specific advice and evidence which informs these decisions as it relates to the ongoing development of Government policy.

■ **UK Health Security Agency: Consultants**

James Wild:

[\[47064\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many consultants are employed by UK Health Security Agency; and what the maximum day rate pay is for those consultants.

Maggie Throup:

The exact number of management consultants within the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) is currently not available while NHS Test and Trace and the former Public Health England transition into UKHSA. We are unable to provide the maximum day rates for consultants as this information would be commercially sensitive.

■ WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control**Mark Pawsey:**[\[60397\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the UK delegation to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control Ninth Conference of the Parties plans to request the formation of an intersessional Working Group to hear evidence on the use of vaping devices as harm reduction tools.

Maggie Throup:

We have no plans to do so. However, we will set out our pragmatic and evidence-based approach to e-cigarettes.

■ WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control: UK Delegations**Ellie Reeves:**[\[62811\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the UK delegation to the Ninth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP9) to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control will include a gender balance in line with the WHO's request that representatives follow United Nations General Assembly resolution A/RES/58/142 on women and political participation.

Maggie Throup:

Our delegation to the Ninth session of the Conference of the Parties consists of four female and two male representatives.

HOME OFFICE**■ Alcoholic Drinks: Drugs****Rachael Maskell:**[\[60461\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to support universities and hospitals to tackle drug spiking by (a) injection or (b) drinks.

Rachael Maskell:[\[60462\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to work with the night time economy to tackle spiking (a) by injection and (b) in drinks.

Rachel Maclean:

The reports of the spiking of drinks with illegal substances, and of other attacks on individuals in night time venues, are of course concerning. This is an ongoing matter which the police are investigating. We would encourage anyone who is a victim or a witness of the offences to report the information to the police. Information about spiking has been made available on the Government's website for information about drugs, FRANK

Licensing authorities have a number of options available to them to manage the night-time economy through a range of powers to tackle existing individual premises

which are causing problems including the use of conditions, licence reviews and closure powers under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

Rachael Maskell: [\[61171\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with representatives of the night-time economy on the reported increase in the number of incidences of spiking (a) women's drinks and (b) injections.

Rachel Maclean:

The reports of the spiking of drinks with illegal substances, and of other attacks on individuals in night time venues, are of course concerning. This is an ongoing matter which the police are investigating. We would encourage anyone who is a victim or a witness of the offences to report the information to the police. Information about spiking has been made available on the Government's website for information about drugs, FRANK

Licensing authorities have a number of options available to them to manage the night-time economy through a range of powers to tackle existing individual premises which are causing problems including the use of conditions, licence reviews and closure powers under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

■ Asylum: Children

Neil Coyle: [\[63738\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to page 5 of her Department's New Plan for Immigration, published on 16 September 2021, when she plans to increase access to legal aid for children undergoing the asylum process.

Neil Coyle: [\[63739\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to page 12 of her Department's New Plan for Immigration, published on 16 September 2021, what estimate she has made of the number of additional children undergoing the asylum process that would gain access to legal aid as a result of extending the eligibility criteria to those children.

Neil Coyle: [\[63740\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much more funding her Department is providing to legal aid specialists under its plans to increase legal aid.

Kevin Foster:

The Nationality and Borders Bill is part of our New Plan for Immigration, delivering the most comprehensive reform of the asylum system in decades

Asylum-seeking children are already supported through every stage of the asylum process, from their application to representation at interview and any appeal.

The legal aid scheme does not generally distinguish between services provided to children and adults, and as such, the following services will be available to both children and adults who meet the eligibility criteria for them.

The New Plan for Immigration provides for an expansion of legal aid provision in two circumstances.

The first is for up to 7 hours of legally-aided advice for recipients of a Priority Removal Notice (PRN), to help recipients understand what the PRN is and what action they need to take as a result of being served with one. This access to legal aid will be available to anyone served with a PRN, including children, although it is not envisaged children will be considered a priority for removal or deportation and therefore it is unlikely they will be served with a PRN.

The second is the provision of legally-aided advice on the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). This is designed to support individuals who may be victims of modern slavery by helping them to understand what the NRM is and the support available under it, and to seek a referral where appropriate. These individuals must already be receiving legally-aided advice on an asylum or non-asylum immigration matter, and these individuals could be adults or children.

■ **Catalytic Converters: Theft**

Seema Malhotra:

[\[63732\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of thefts of catalytic converters in each region and nation of the UK in each of the last three years.

Kit Malthouse:

The Crime Survey for England and Wales provides estimates of the number of incidents of theft from vehicles, including details of the items stolen, such as car parts. The latest published data, along with a time series, can be found here: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/adhocs/12496catalyticconvertersstoleninincidentsoftheftfromvehiclesyearendingmarch2015toyearendingmarch2020crimesurveyforenglandandwales>

We continue to work closely with police and motor manufacturers through the National Vehicle Crime Working Group, established by the National Police Chiefs' Council lead for vehicle crime and overseen by the Government's Crime and Justice Taskforce, to determine what more can be done to tackle the theft of catalytic converters.

The Government funded the set-up of the National Infrastructure Crime Reduction Partnership, which ensures national co-ordination of policing and law enforcement partners to tackle metal theft, including the theft of catalytic converters. The partnership has provided training to law enforcement and other partner agencies, shares intelligence to target offenders, and implements crime prevention measures.

■ **Immigration Controls: Coronavirus**

Ben Lake:

[\[63840\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 8 September 2021 to Question 45228 on Immigration Controls: Coronavirus, how travellers

without access to the internet are able to complete the Passenger Locator Form for a return journey to the UK, in the context of there being a 48 hour window for people to complete that form before arriving in the UK.

Kevin Foster:

As stated in the Government's response to Questions 45228, all passengers must complete the Passenger Locator Form online, however, once completed they can print off their finished form to show carriers before departing to the UK.

Passengers may seek assistance, from family, friends or another third party, to complete on their behalf.

There are dedicated helplines for members of the public who are encountering issues with completing the PLF form. Whilst these helplines can provide advice, they cannot complete the form on behalf of the passenger.

The contact telephone number from within the UK is 0800 678 1767 and is open Monday to Friday between the hours of 9am to 5pm. These calls are free of charge.

The contact telephone number when outside the UK is 0044 207 113 0371 and is open Monday to Friday between the hours of 9am to 5pm. These calls are charged dependant on the network provider.

■ **Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Vacancies**

Kirsten Oswald:

[\[63750\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the need to add HGV drivers to the Home Office Shortage Occupation List for a period of at least twelve months.

Kevin Foster:

I refer the honourable member to the response given to the honourable member for Bristol East on 15 July. [UIN: [31344](#)].

■ **Parliament Square: Security**

Dr Julian Lewis:

[\[63638\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will institute a review of security in Parliament Square, with particular reference to the (a) unlicensed use of amplified noise for prolonged unscheduled periods, (b) effect of such persistent noise on the (i) concentration and (ii) mental welfare of (A) personnel guarding the entrance to Parliament, (B) citizens working in other buildings in Parliament Square and (C) other users of the Parliament Square World Heritage Site; and for what reason political demonstrators are permitted to approach closely vehicles leaving Parliament whilst they are unprotected and stationary waiting to enter the traffic flow.

Kit Malthouse:

We are introducing new measures in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill to protect the rights of the public from the effects of disruptive protests.

These include new police powers to manage unjustifiably noisy protests that may result in serious disruption to the activities of an organisation, and noise that may result in a significant detrimental impact on persons in the vicinity of a protest.

We are also granting the police the power to direct individuals to cease obstructing vehicular access to Parliament to ensure the continued flow of traffic into and out of the Parliamentary Estate.

■ **Police: Financial Services**

Gareth Thomas:

[\[60348\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to require Police forces to offer training on financial resilience, including (a) planning for retirement and (b) building savings; and if she will make a statement.

Kit Malthouse:

Chief Constables and Police and Crime Commissioners, like all employers, have a duty to manage and support their workforces. It is the responsibility of individual forces to provide training and support, including on financial resilience, where appropriate.

Police forces provide a package of reward and support for police officers and staff, including their salary and relevant additional allowances. They also provide access to occupational pension schemes, including generous employer contributions, that compare favourably to those available to others.

Chief Constables are responsible for the administration of pensions for their respective workforce, including providing information on pensions and retirement.

The government has provided further support for savings in retirement, including for the police workforce, by introducing automatic enrolment in occupational pension schemes.

■ **Social Services: Vacancies**

Helen Hayes:

[\[63797\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she is having with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on staff shortages in the social care sector; and what steps she is taking to ease visa requirements for people applying to work in the social care sector.

Kevin Foster:

Home Office Ministers and officials discuss a broad range of issues with a variety of stakeholders including other Government departments.

Senior care workers were added to the Shortage Occupation List (SOL) in April 2021, joining other key health and care occupations such as nurses, occupational therapists and social workers. The SOL enables skilled workers to come to the UK for a lower salary and provides for cheaper visa fees.

The introduction of the Health and Care visa in August 2020 made it quicker and cheaper for regulated health and care professionals – including Senior Care Workers - and their dependents to secure their visa.

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.

■ Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

Peter Gibson:

[51847]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent steps her Department has taken to prevent illegal channel crossings in small boats.

Tom Pursglove:

I refer the Honourable Gentleman to the answer given to the Member for Romford on 20 September. These crossings are dangerous and unnecessary, and we are determined to bring them to an end and to tackle the criminality behind them.

From January to September 2021, Immigration Enforcement has arrested 46 individuals engaged in small boats activity, with 8 individuals already convicted and a further 94 investigations ongoing. Recognising that much of the criminality involved lies outside of the UK, we are also supporting wider law enforcement activity to tackle the threat of organised immigration crime. In its first 12 months, the Joint Intelligence Cell was involved in almost 300 arrests relating to small boats activity in France.

We must ensure that those involved in people smuggling are punished with the severity it rightly deserves. The Nationality and Borders Bill (Nationality and Borders Bill - Parliamentary Bills - UK Parliament (<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3023>)) will enable this and will also act as a much stronger deterrent for those tempted to pursue that despicable path. These long overdue reforms will break the business model of the criminal trafficking networks and make their activities unviable.

There remains an immediate challenge and a need to stop the boats leaving France in the first place and we are working closely with the French to tackle these crossings, both on a policy and operational level. In July 2021 UK/French joint action led to strengthened law enforcement deployments along the coast of France, more than doubling again equipped police resource focused on addressing illegal migration; enhanced intelligence-sharing; greater use of surveillance technology; and more border security at key transport infrastructure along the Channel coast.

Progress so far this year between January and September 2021 has resulted in the French stopping more than 15,000 people from crossing. This is a significant increase on the same point last year.

Our New Plan for Immigration will address the challenge of illegal migration for the first time in over two decades through comprehensive reform of our asylum system, making big changes and building a new system that is fair but firm.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE■ **Food: Exports**

Gareth Thomas: [60350]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what support her Department has provided to help British food and drink companies export to overseas markets; and if she will make a statement.

Gareth Thomas: [60351]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many food and drink businesses her Department supported with funding to help export to overseas markets in each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement.

Gareth Thomas: [60352]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how much her Department spent supporting and promoting food and drink businesses to export to overseas markets (a) in total and (b) per (i) nation and (ii) region of the UK in each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement.

Mike Freer:

The Department for International Trade (DIT) supports food and drink businesses in all parts of the UK, through our overseas network, international events programme and online services. New DIT teams have been established in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the North-East of England to boost trade and investment and level-up the country. On 1 October DIT launched a new Export Support Service (ESS), where UK businesses can get answers to practical questions about exporting to Europe by accessing cross government information and support all in one place via a new online service and helpline.

DIT's Annual Reports and Accounts for each of the last five years are available on www.gov.uk. These publications contain detailed commentary on the performance, governance arrangements and expenditure of DIT. Information on expenditure by sector, nation and region is not readily available.

JUSTICE■ **Bankruptcy: Courts**

Dr Julian Lewis: [63639]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether it is his policy that all bankruptcy hearings are held in London courts; whether options are available for such hearings to be held on a regional basis; and if he will make a statement.

James Cartlidge:

The case management and listing of cases is a Judicial function.

The Business & Property Courts hear cases in London as well as in seven regional centres across England and Wales (Birmingham, Manchester, Cardiff, Bristol, Liverpool, Leeds and Newcastle). Bankruptcy cases can be heard in those centres, as well as in District Registries (for Bankruptcy petitions issued in the High Court where the debtor lives outside London). In the case of lower value petitions, certain county courts also have bankruptcy jurisdiction.

The statutory committee which makes the rules in relation to Insolvency proceedings is chaired by the Judiciary and independent of Government. Parties are able to make an application to court to elect where their case is heard and there is encouragement for matters to be heard locally in the regions.

■ **Detainees: Legal Opinion**

Dan Carden: [\[59939\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of the Detained Duty Advice scheme.

James Cartlidge:

The MoJ committed to a review of immigration advice provision for detainees held in prison, and those in Immigration Removal Centres, in August 2020. The review's objective is to ensure equal access to high-quality immigration and asylum advice, irrespective of location. The intention is to consider the differences in the provision of immigration and asylum legal aid to immigration detainees in Immigration Removal Centres and prisons, including the Detained Duty Advice Scheme.

Work on this review is ongoing and includes working with stakeholders to understand better the experience of individual detainees.

■ **Fathers: Discrimination**

Andrew Rosindell: [\[59727\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department has taken to ensure sexual discrimination does not disadvantage fathers in family courts.

James Cartlidge:

The legislative framework which governs family law proceedings about children is gender neutral and is focused on the welfare of children involved and not on the sex or gender of a parent. Each case is determined on the facts and the individual welfare needs of the child as determined by the independent judiciary.

Section 1 of the Children Act states that family courts are required to presume that the involvement of a parent in the life of the child concerned will further that child's welfare, unless it can be shown that this would not be so. The Government is currently undertaking a review of the courts' application of this presumption and its exception, and its impact on children.

■ Littlehey Prison

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[60375\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Littlehey, published on 20 October 2021, whether the replacement for G wing will be composed of double cells; and what proportion of replacement cells will be designed to be suitable for (a) older prisoners and (b) prisoners with disabilities.

Victoria Atkins:

We have committed over £4billion towards the delivery of 18,000 additional prison places by the mid-2020s to have fit for purpose accommodation for prisoners, including older prisoners and those with disabilities. We are considering potential options to replace the capacity lost at HMP Littlehey, which we expect to be single occupancy cells.

■ Prisoners: Health Services

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[60381\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the report entitled Injustice? Towards a better understanding of health care access challenges for prisoners, published by Nuffield Trust on 21 October 2021, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his policies on reducing reoffending in England of the findings of that report.

Kit Malthouse:

We know that tackling the underlying causes of offending can be key in helping a person to turn their back on crime. This can mean accessing timely treatment or support for a substance misuse or mental health need.

To tackle reoffending on release, we fully recognise the need to support offenders to access the right treatment whilst they are in prison and to continue to do so once released.

As just one example, during COVID-19, telemedicine was successfully rolled out across the estate, illustrating how digital and technology can be used to facilitate healthcare assessments within prisons and enable timely access to the right services.

■ Prisons: Mental Health Services

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[60374\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Erlestoke, published on 15 October 2021, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of the creation of specialised units for neurodiverse prisoners who do not meet the criteria for a hospital order but cannot function in non-specialised prison environments.

Victoria Atkins:

The Ministry of Justice is committed to providing a supportive environment for neurodivergent prisoners.

Some of our prisons already have specialist wings, including HMP Parc and HMP Wakefield, which are designed to cater for the needs of neurodivergent individuals. Our future prison build programme will be informed by available evidence on design principles, including the Call for Evidence on Neurodiversity.

Prisons can also work with the National Autistic Society to achieve Autism Accreditation, which includes providing sensory rooms or separate wings for autistic prisoners and we are committed to promoting autism accreditation across the estate.

We are currently testing a new Neurodiversity Support Manager role in some prisons, who will be responsible for liaising with education and skills teams and ensuring that departments across the prison are aware of prisoners' individual needs.

■ Remote Hearings: Hearing Impairment

Maria Eagle:

[61113]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 22 July to Question 35513 on Remote Hearings: Hearing Impairment, if the Minister will publish the Equality Impact Assessment referred to.

James Cartlidge:

The Equality Impact Assessment will be published alongside an evaluation of the use of remote hearings during the covid-19 outbreak. HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS) aims to publish the evaluation in due course.

HMCTS Reasonable Adjustment Guidance and training are intended for internal use and HMCTS does not intend to publish these materials. Remote participation in hearings provides an alternative method for conducting a hearing. However, attending a hearing remotely will not always be appropriate. The option to hold a remote hearing is at the discretion of a judge, who will decide if it is appropriate and in the interests of justice to do so, taking into account the needs of the parties involved. The allocation of court facilities will be provided accordingly. HMCTS is committed to ensuring that remote hearings are accessible to all users including those with hearing loss.

To preserve the independence of the judiciary, the Lord Chief Justice (LCJ), the Senior President of the Tribunals, and the Chief Coroner have statutory responsibility for judicial training. All judicial training materials are created and held by the Judicial College which is independent from the Ministry of Justice.

All judicial office holders have access to the Equal Treatment Bench Book (ETBB). This is a publicly available guidance document that provides explicit guidance on a wide range of considerations, including with individuals who are hard of hearing. The ETBB is published here: www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Equal-Treatment-Bench-Book-February-2021-1.pdf.

HMCTS has issued guidance to staff highlighting that court/tribunal users with hearing loss may wish to use personal or specialist equipment including Roger

assistive devices in our buildings. Where a court/tribunal user wishes to use equipment at a hearing not provided by HMCTS this is subject to judicial approval.

■ Sexual Offences: Trials

Helen Hayes:

[63804]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the (a) total number of sex crime cases waiting to go to trial and (b) waiting time for sex crime cases to go to trial in London as of 26 October 2021; and what comparative assessment he has made of those figures with the number of cases and waiting times in each of the last 5 years.

James Cartlidge:

The table below shows the number of outstanding sexual offence cases awaiting trial and the average outstanding time in days in the Crown Court for sexual offence 'for trial' cases in London, from June 2017 to June 2021 (the latest available data).^{1,2,3}

Data up to 26 October 2021 is not currently available.

YEAR	LONDON		
	Outstanding cases	Median ⁴	Mean
2017	802	98	134
2018	439	163	194
2019	322	104	156
2020	534	196	216
2021 ⁵	893	209	257

Notes:

- 1) Outstanding time refers to the time between the receipt of a case in a specific Crown Court and the end of the reporting period, for example counts in Q3 2020 relate to cases which are open as at the end of September 2020.
- 2) 'For trial' cases relates to the case type at the point of receipt into the Crown Court - we know that most of these cases will result in the entry of a guilty plea and that only a minority will require a trial.
- 3) Outstanding cases excludes cases that have a live bench warrant issued on the case, at the end of the reporting period. The number of cases outstanding at the end of each period will not be equal to the sum of cases outstanding at the start of the period and those received during the period, minus cases disposed due to the exclusion of cases that have a live bench warrant issued on the case.
- 4) Median relates to the 50th percentile.

5) Outstanding cases used to calculate the outstanding time excludes cases which have been recorded on the HMCTS Common Platform Case Management System since September 2020, this is estimated to represent 1.8% of outstanding cases in the latest reporting period. Estimates of average duration for Common Platform cases remains in development, currently these cases are not included in the timeliness analysis reported here.

This is management information and reflects the data held at the date of extraction, which is subject to change.

Helen Hayes:

[63805]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the (a) total number of sex crime cases waiting to go to trial and (b) waiting time for sex crime cases to go to trial in England as of 26 October 2021; and what comparative assessment he has made of those figures with the number of cases and waiting times in each of the last 5 years.

James Cartlidge:

The table below shows the average outstanding time in days in the Crown Court for sexual offence 'for trial' cases in England, from June 2017 to June 2021 (the latest available MoJ data).^{1,2,3}

Data up to 26 October 2021 is not currently available.

Year	ENGLAND		
	Outstanding cases	Median ⁴	Mean
2017	5,333	135	176
2018	3,469	164	202
2019	2,752	110	154
2020	3,758	179	204
2021 ⁵	5,898	203	252

Notes:

- 1) Outstanding time refers to the time, measured in days, between the receipt of a case in a specific Crown Court and the end of the reporting period, for example counts presented for 2021 relate to cases which are open as at the end of June 2021.
- 2) 'For trial' cases relates to the case type at the point of receipt into the Crown Court - we know that most of these cases will result in the entry of a guilty plea and that only a minority will require a trial.
- 3) Outstanding cases excludes cases that have a live bench warrant issued on the case, at the end of the period. The number of cases outstanding at the end of each period will not be equal to the sum of cases outstanding at the start of the period and

those received during the period, minus cases disposed due to the exclusion of cases that have a live bench warrant issued on the case.

4) Median here relates to the 50th percentile.

5) Outstanding caseloads presented here excludes cases which have been recorded on the new case management system ('Common Platform') which has been rolled across England and Wales since September 2020. This is estimated to represent around 2% of the total outstanding sexual offence 'for trial' cases in England for the latest reporting period to June 2021.

■ Wandsworth Prison

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[60376\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Wandsworth, published on 21 October 2021, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of disability accessible accommodation capacity at HMP Wandsworth.

Victoria Atkins:

In addition to the dedicated healthcare cells located on Jones wing, there are a further seven cells in HMP Wandsworth that are adapted to provide accessibility for prisoners who require wheelchair access. Two of these cells were recently adapted as part of the Governor's drive to improve accessibility for prisoners with a mobility disability within HMP Wandsworth.

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[60379\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Wandsworth, published on 21 October 2021, whether the re-role of HMP Wandsworth to a reception prison has been completed.

Victoria Atkins:

HMP Wandsworth was originally a local prison and was re-designated as a reception and resettlement prison in September 2020 following the national roll-out of offender flows. The final stage will be the transition of Guildford and Staines Magistrates' Courts and Guildford Crown Court from HMP High Down. The aim is for this to be completed by April 2022.

The prison has benefited from the installation of a modern state-of-the-art video conferencing centre to support it in serving the additional courts.

■ Wandsworth Prison: Education

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[60380\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Wandsworth, published on 21 October 2021, what steps he is taking to help ensure that concerns raised by prison leaders on contracted out education provision are rectified.

Victoria Atkins:

We are working closely with HMP Wandsworth to help improve the performance of the education provider at the prison. We always ensure that poor performance is dealt with in a robust but proportionate manner, and in this instance the provider has received financial penalties. We have supported the establishment in creating an improvement plan and further contractual pressure will be placed on the provider should we feel insufficient progress against that plan has been made. Private providers play an important role in our prisons and we closely monitor their performance to ensure the high standards we set are being fulfilled.

Wandsworth Prison: Overcrowding**Ms Lyn Brown:**[\[60377\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Wandsworth, published on 21 October 2021, what plans he has to reduce overcrowding at HMP Wandsworth.

Victoria Atkins:

Despite a fall in the national prison population of around 4,800 since March 2020, and fewer prisoners sharing cells as a result, prisoners at HMP Wandsworth will continue to share cells where necessary, as the latest population projections indicate demand will return to pre-Covid-19 levels.

We are investing £4 billion to make significant progress in delivering 18,000 additional prison places across England and Wales by the mid-2020s. This includes creating four new prisons over the next six years while expanding several other prisons over the next three years. Construction is well underway on HMP Five Wells, the new prison in Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, which will open in early 2022, and works are underway at Glen Parva, Leicestershire. The opening of these two new modern prisons will provide 3,300 uncrowded prison spaces.

We expect this additional capacity to lower the proportion of crowding within the prison estate, however, decisions to convert cells to single accommodation are dependent on demand within the region.

LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES**Buildings: Insulation****Preet Kaur Gill:**[\[60487\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, where a building has had two EWS1 reports commissioned that have awarded it different ratings, what his Department's policy is on how lenders should decide which one to work with.

Preet Kaur Gill:[\[60488\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether an EWS1 report can be retrospectively invalidated in the event that the presumptions about

the type of cladding in the external wall system on which it was originally based are proved to be incorrect or out of date.

Preet Kaur Gill:

[\[60489\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what remedy is available to (a) leaseholders and (b) residents who wish to commission an EWS1 report but whose building owner or management company refuses to sanction one.

Christopher Pincher:

An EWS1 form is not a safety certificate or a statutory requirement. Assessments can be reviewed to make sure they are proportionate and building owners or residents may already seek second opinions if they are concerned about the recommendations. The building owner is responsible for commissioning an EWS1 assessment and should therefore clarify which form is to be used in the case of duplicate assessments, including if one is no longer required, referring to the professionals who conducted the assessments as necessary.

Following the July Independent Expert Statement on Building Safety in medium and lower rise blocks of flats, the government agrees that EWS1 forms should not be required on buildings under 18 metres. Where EWS1 forms and assessments have already been completed for buildings below 18 metres and have identified costly remediation work independent experts strongly recommend that these assessments are reviewed to make sure that the proposed solution is cost effective and proportionate.

■ **Buildings: Insurance**

Marsha De Cordova:

[\[60509\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the Written Statement of 21 July 2021, HCWS228, on Housing Update, when his Department plans to launch the Government-backed professional indemnity insurance scheme for qualified professionals conducting external wall system assessments.

Christopher Pincher:

We are progressing work on the state-backed Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII) scheme for qualified professionals conducting External Wall System (EWS1) Assessments, and will announce further details.

■ **Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities: Finance**

Steve Reed:

[\[52505\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what budget his Department has set to cover the costs of spending associated with changing the name of his Department from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

Eddie Hughes:

[Holding answer 18 October 2021]: Any necessary changes will be done in a cost-efficient way with expenditure being kept to a minimum.

■ **Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities: Staff****Steve Reed:**[\[63735\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how many civil servants are employed by his Department.

Eddie Hughes:

The Department is committed to routinely publishing its workforce management information. The number of staff employed at 30th September 2021 can be found at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dluhc-workforce-management-information-september-2021>. All staff at AO-SCS levels are employed as Civil Servants.

■ **Housing Infrastructure Fund****Mark Jenkinson:**[\[61221\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what plans he has to set targets for Homes England to process applications for the Housing Infrastructure Fund; and what steps he plans to take to speed up the processing of current applications.

Christopher Pincher:

All applications for funding from the Housing Infrastructure Fund were processed by 11 March 2020. 126 of the 127 projects within the programme are in contract. The remaining project is in the final stages of contracting.

■ **Housing: Construction****Lucy Powell:**[\[63733\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether he plans to deliver 300,000 new homes a year by the mid-2020s.

Christopher Pincher:

The Government is committed to building the homes this country needs. This will help to get more people on the housing ladder, support local economic growth, and create stronger and more sustainable communities.

We are making strong progress towards delivering our ambition to build 300,000 homes a year, and to build 1 million homes over the course of this parliament. From April 2019 to March 2020 around 244,000 homes were delivered - the highest level for over 30 years and the seventh consecutive year that net supply has increased.

COVID 19 stoppages inevitably had an impact on housebuilding, but government took swift action to support the sector through this period, including a stamp duty land tax holiday and issuing developers with guidelines on operating in an effective and

safe manner. Housing completions have started to rebound; ONS figures show that the first two quarters of 2021 saw completions 67% higher than in the same period of 2020.

■ Social Services

Steve Reed:

[\[63736\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether his Department has conducted an assessment of the impact of the Government's social care plan entitled Build Back Better: Our Plan for Health and Social Care on local authorities in England.

Kemi Badenoch:

My Department has been fully involved in developing the plan, including to make sure that the implications for local government are properly considered. The Government is working with care users, providers, local government and other partners to develop its plans and will publish further detail in a white paper for reform later this year.

■ Temporary Accommodation: Pupils

Seema Malhotra:

[\[63731\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what estimate he has made of the number of school children who are living in temporary accommodation in each local authority in England.

Eddie Hughes:

A full breakdown of each local authority in England can be found here, on sheet labelled TA.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statutory-homelessness-in-england-april-to-june-2021>

PRIME MINISTER

■ Prime Minister: Black History Month

Ruth Jones:

[\[60514\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, how he marked Black History Month 2021.

Boris Johnson:

I am proud to lead a country celebrated for its dynamism and diversity, where every day black Britons are making history. To mark Black History Month I shared a video message celebrating this and hosted a reception on 25th October at Downing Street. This reception celebrated the contribution of black entrepreneurs, businesses, and professionals to the UK. I met young people, entrepreneurs, and business leaders, including members of the 10,000 Black Interns programme. I have been pleased to see events and activity taking across government to mark this important event.

TRANSPORT**■ Bus Services: Herefordshire**

Jesse Norman: [\[63704\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to improve local bus services in Herefordshire.

Trudy Harrison:

The Government has announced £1.2 billion of transformation funding for buses in the Spending Review. We will allocate funding after assessing the Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIPs) which all English Local Transport Authorities outside London, including Herefordshire County Council, are developing in collaboration with their local bus operators.

■ Driving Licences: Internet

Peter Grant: [\[63758\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Answer of 21 October 2021 to Question 57141 on Driving Licences: Internet, what his planned timetable is for his Department being able to offer the facility of renewing driving licences online for all applicants without a digital passport signature following the recent system interface enhancements between the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency and Her Majesty's Passport Office.

Trudy Harrison:

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) has successfully delivered a digital service for customers applying for a provisional licence whereby they can upload their own signature. The immediate focus is on delivering further improvements to this provisional driving licence service to allow even more customers to be able to use it. The enhanced functionality is then expected to be rolled out to other driver services, such as renewals, during 2022.

■ Large Goods Vehicle Drivers

Kirsten Oswald: [\[63752\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will convene an HGV driver taskforce to (a) increase infrastructure investment and improve conditions on the motorway networks, including investment in lorry parking and truck stops and (b) promote haulage as a career with a more diverse workforce.

Trudy Harrison:

The Government recognises the need to ensure hauliers have access to appropriate services and facilities. This week, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced £32.5 million of investment in roadside facilities for HGV drivers.

The Department will continue to engage with key stakeholders to encourage the development of more safe, secure, and high-quality lorry parking to improve driver welfare.

The Government is also aware of the demographic imbalances in the HGV driver workforce including the lack of women drivers, under 25s and drivers from ethnic minorities. Addressing these issues and creating a workforce that will better reflect society will be key to permanently solving the driver shortage.

This will be for the industry to lead on but the Government will continue to support where it can, such as improving the accessibility of facilities for women drivers and increasing the provision of overnight lorry parking.

■ Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Driving Licences

Tom Randall:

[\[61229\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress has been made by the DVLA in reducing the number of vocational driving licence applications being processed.

Trudy Harrison:

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) is prioritising applications for vocational driving licences, including those for HGV entitlement, and has moved additional staff into this area.

On 24 October 2021, there were 29,545 applications for vocational driving licences awaiting processing, this is a significant reduction from the more than 55,000 held in mid-September. The main reason for the backlog was delays due to Coronavirus and ongoing industrial action at the DVLA.

There is no backlog for provisional vocational licences and these are being processed within the normal turnaround time of five working days, reduced from 10 working days.

It is important to note that the large majority of those applying to renew a vocational licence will be able to continue driving while their application is being processed. The DVLA continues to prioritise applications to renew vocational licences and expects to be back to normal turnaround times by early November.

■ Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Training

Drew Hendry:

[\[61160\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of modifying the Driver Certificate of Professional Competence process for HGV Drivers.

Trudy Harrison:

The Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) was introduced to improve road safety and provide economic and environmental benefits. Our assessment is that there are merits in modifying the processes, although change to key process issues would require regulatory and legislative changes.

We also appreciate the cost of renewing the Driver CPC can be difficult for some drivers. That is why, at the discretion of local DWP Work Coaches, the Flexible Support Fund is available to those who are currently unemployed or are in receipt of Universal Credit who need to renew their DCPC, where appropriate. In addition, many employers are offering training packages so even if a driver's CPC has lapsed, they can be supported in updating this through classroom or online courses.

We are further supporting lorry driver training through apprenticeships. This includes the revised Large Goods Vehicle Driver apprenticeship standard which is now available and supported by a funding band of £7,000.

We are also developing a driver training pilot through Jobcentre Plus to help jobseekers retrain as HGV drivers.

Kirsten Oswald:

[\[63751\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 21 October 2021 to Question 56327, on Driving: Qualifications, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of changing the Driver Certificate of Professional Competence process to help tackle the shortage of HGV drivers.

Trudy Harrison:

The Government continues to explore a range of options to help tackle the shortage of HGV drivers and has put in place 28 interventions to date. The role and impact of the Driver Certificate of Professional Competence will be kept under review. The current requirements are heavily influenced by legislation inherited from the EU.

■ Large Goods Vehicles: Concrete

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[\[63854\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he plans to take to protect jobs supported by volumetric mobile plant (VCM) manufacturers and operators in (a) Slough and (b) across the UK in the context of sales reductions as a result of the ban on VCMs over 32T.

Trudy Harrison:

The Department for Transport put in place a temporary regime to permit a limited number of volumetric concrete mixers (VCMs) to operate at higher than the standard 32-tonne weight limit applicable to vehicles of their design. This temporary arrangement was put in place over a maximum of 10 years to allow the industry to adjust. Progressively as vehicles reach the end of their operating lives, operators are liable to need to purchase newer vehicles, which in turn should stimulate demand for VCM manufacturers.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[\[63855\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of the safety of 38.4T volumetric concrete mobile plants on bridges.

Trudy Harrison:

We refer to the previous answer, UIN reference 62818. Following consultation in 2017, National Highways (then Highways England) commissioned a report into the loading effect on bridges of permitting volumetric concrete mixers (VCMs) to operate at higher than the standard applicable weights for vehicles of their design, including 38.4 tonnes.

Motorhomes: Insurance**Kerry McCarthy:**[\[63680\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with relevant stakeholders on barriers to obtaining insurance for campervan conversions as a result of DVLA vehicle classification.

Trudy Harrison:

The issue of obtaining insurance for vehicles that have been converted for use as a motor caravan has been raised with the stakeholders in the insurance industry. They have confirmed that there are insurance companies which will insure vans or other vehicles that have undergone this type of conversion. In some cases, customers may need to provide evidence to an insurer that the conversion work has been carried out to a professional standard.

Road Traffic: Dartford**Kerry McCarthy:**[\[63678\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of trends in the level of traffic in and around Dartford in the last five years.

Trudy Harrison:

The Department continues to work with National Highways to monitor levels of traffic on strategic roads in and around Dartford, with a focus particularly on the Dartford Thurrock Crossing. The design capacity of the Crossing is 135,000 vehicles per day, but it is not uncommon for over 180,000 vehicles to use the Crossing each day with over 50 million vehicles making the crossing each year.

In four of the last five years (2015/16 to 2018/19) traffic volumes have increased at the crossing (by 8%, 2.7%, 3.1% and 0.5% in those four years compared to the previous year), and volumes reduced in 2.5% in 2019/20. Traffic levels were affected by the pandemic but appear to be returning to pre-pandemic levels.

Road Traffic: Kent**Kerry McCarthy:**[\[63679\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the proposed Lower Thames Crossing on traffic levels in North Kent; and what discussions he has had with local authorities on reducing congestion.

Trudy Harrison:

As scheme promoter for the proposed Lower Thames Crossing, National Highways has forecast the impact on the entire road network, including in North Kent, using the Lower Thames Area Model, which is a strategic highway model built specifically to assess the impact of the Project.

National Highways' forecasts are regularly updated and shared with the local community and stakeholders. The most recent traffic forecasts formed part of National Highways' recent Community Impacts Consultation, which can be accessed at: <https://ltconsultation.highwaysengland.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Operations-update.pdf>.

National Highways works closely, and meets regularly, with local authorities to identify further improvement schemes which could be adopted and measures which could be taken to further reduce congestion in the area.

TREASURY**■ Air Passenger Duty****Andrew Rosindell:****[60362]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he plans to make a decision on changes to Air Passenger Duty in respect of flights (a) between UK airports and (b) from UK airports to airports in the Crown Dependencies.

Helen Whately:

Air Passenger Duty (APD) is levied on flights departing from UK airports. Therefore, return flights within the UK pay UK APD on both legs of a return journey, unlike return flights between the UK and the Crown Dependencies.

At Budget, the Government announced that, from April 2023, it would introduce a new reduced domestic band of APD, covering flights between England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, in order to support connectivity across the UK.

The economy rate for flights to the Crown Dependencies will remain frozen at £13, benefitting passengers travelling to these destinations.

■ Budgets: Disclosure of Information**Bridget Phillipson:****[63715]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he has taken to ensure staff employed as special advisors in his Department, and in his Press Office, are familiar with the findings of Sir Nicholas Macpherson's 2013 review into pre-budget announcements; whether the review's recommendation that the Treasury introduces a ban on the pre-release of the core of the Budget (and Autumn Statement), that is: the economic and fiscal projections, the fiscal judgement and individual tax rates, reliefs and allowances, remains his Department's policy; and if he will make a statement.

Bridget Phillipson: [\[63716\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the recommendation made by Sir Nicholas Macpherson in his 2013 review of pre-Budget announcements, that the Treasury introduces a ban on the pre-release of the core of the Budget (and Autumn Statement), that is: the economic and fiscal projections, the fiscal judgement and individual tax rates, reliefs and allowances, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on share values or market sentiment of his decision to release to the Telegraph before announcing to the House that Shipping firms flying the Red Ensign will stand a better chance from April 2022 of being accepted when applying for the UK's tonnage tax regime; and if he will make a statement.

Bridget Phillipson: [\[63717\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the recommendation of Sir Nicholas Macpherson's 2013 review of pre-Budget announcements that the Treasury introduces a ban on the pre-release of the core of the Budget (and Autumn Statement), that is: the economic and fiscal projections, the fiscal judgement and individual tax rates, reliefs and allowances, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on share values or market sentiment of his decision to release to the Telegraph before announcing to the House that companies investing in greener environmentally-friendly ships will also be prioritised for the tax regime; and if he will make a statement.

Bridget Phillipson: [\[63718\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the recommendation of Sir Nicholas Macpherson's 2013 review of pre-Budget announcements that the Treasury introduces a ban on the pre-release of the core of the Budget (and Autumn Statement), that is: the economic and fiscal projections, the fiscal judgement and individual tax rates, reliefs and allowances, for what reason his Department disclosed to the Telegraph ahead of the 2021 Budget that shipping firms flying the Red Ensign will stand a better chance from April next year of being accepted when applying for the UK's tonnage tax regime; and if he will make a statement.

Bridget Phillipson: [\[63719\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the recommendation of Sir Nicholas Macpherson's 2013 review of pre-Budget announcements that the Treasury introduces a ban on the pre-release of the core of the Budget (and Autumn Statement), that is: the economic and fiscal projections, the fiscal judgement and individual tax rates, reliefs and allowances, for what reason his Department disclosed to the Telegraph, ahead of the 2021 Budget, plans to announce in the Budget that companies investing in greener environmentally-friendly ships will also be prioritised for the tax regime; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Simon Clarke:

HM Treasury takes the recommendations of the Macpherson review seriously, and has followed these in full.

The reforms to the UK's Tonnage Tax regime which the Honourable lady has asked about have been announced months before they come into force in April 2022.

■ **Business Banking Resolution Service**

Bill Wiggin: [\[63660\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what information his Department holds on the number of applications that have been made to the Business Banking Resolution Service as of 26 October 2021.

Bill Wiggin: [\[63661\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what information his Department holds on the number of cases that have been accepted as eligible by the Business Banking Resolution Service as of 26 October 2021.

Bill Wiggin: [\[63662\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what information his Department holds on the number of cases that have been settled by the Business Banking Resolution Service as of 26 October 2021.

Bill Wiggin: [\[63663\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much his Department has spent on the Business Banking Resolution Service as of 26 October 2021.

Bill Wiggin: [\[63664\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the main reasons for cases not being settled through the Business Banking Resolution Service.

Bill Wiggin: [\[63665\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether it is his policy to continue to support the Business Banking Resolution Service.

Bill Wiggin: [\[63666\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an assessment of whether there is a case backlog in the Business Banking Resolution Service.

Bill Wiggin: [\[63667\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he plans to reform the Business Banking Resolution Service.

Bill Wiggin: [\[63668\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he plans to abolish the Business Banking Resolution Service.

Bill Wiggin: [\[63669\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he plans to introduce a new body in place of the Business Banking Resolution Service to determine compensation for small businesses.

Bill Wiggin: [\[63670\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he plans to take to compensate victims of banking fraud in the event that the Business Banking Resolution Service does not offer compensation.

Bill Wiggin: [\[63671\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he plans to change the eligibility criteria for applying to the Business Banking Resolution Service so that more cases are accepted.

Bill Wiggin: [\[63672\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he plans to increase his Department's oversight of the Business Banking Resolution Service.

Bill Wiggin: [\[63673\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much the Business Banking Resolution Service chief adjudicator has been paid to date.

Bill Wiggin: [\[63674\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he plans to introduce measures to ensure the transparency of the Business Banking Resolution Service.

Bill Wiggin: [\[63675\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he plans to maintain the independence from Government of the Business Banking Resolution Service.

John Glen:

The Business Banking Resolution Service (BBRS), which launched on 15 February 2021, offers a free, independent service which is designed to settle unresolved complaints from larger SMEs. The Government has always been clear that it welcomes the BBRS. However, it is an independent non-governmental body, and this independence is vital to its role. Its credibility, authority and value to SMEs would be undermined if it were possible for the Government to intervene in its decision-making or detailed operational matters. As a result of its independence, I hope you understand that it would be inappropriate for the Government to comment on cases taken before the BBRS, the remuneration of BBRS employees or potential changes that could be made to the BBRS in future.

On the question about eligibility criteria, the Government has already set out high level guidance regarding what the BBRS should look to achieve. In 2018, the former Chancellor wrote to the BBRS emphasising that for the scheme to bring closure it is vital that the scheme focuses on providing a resolution to SMEs who have not had

anywhere independent to take their case, rather than seeking to reopen cases that have already been settled under a previous redress scheme. Beyond this high-level guidance, I hope you can appreciate that it is not for the Government to comment on specific details about the eligibility criteria of a voluntary, non-governmental service. Similarly, it is not for Government to comment on how the BBRS handles its cases. I would note, to your question of where cases can be taken if the BBRS determines that compensation is not appropriate, that the BBRS is intended as a definitive and final assessment of cases.

On the question about Government expenditure on the BBRS, the Government has not directed any funding to the BBRS. Rather, as you may be aware the service launched with seven founding banks who make up the majority of the UK banking sector. The BBRS is funded in full by these participating banks, and is independently operated, managed and governed.

Government officials continue to monitor the performance of the BBRS through engagement with the service itself, as well as with SME representatives and the participating banks. The BBRS publishes Quarterly Insight Reports on its website, the most recent of which was released today (28th October) and can be found here: <https://thebbrs.org/news/bbrs-quarterly-insight-report-october-2021/>.

■ Capital Gains Tax

Kevin Hollinrake:

[60465]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what proportion of capital gains tax receipts came from the sale of residential rental accommodation in the most recent period for which figures are available.

Lucy Frazer:

It is not possible to provide the proportion of Capital Gains Tax (CGT) receipts from residential rental accommodation as information collected as part of CGT returns does not specify the use of a property.

In 2020-21, however, it is estimated that total CGT liabilities on UK residential property totalled £1.0 billion. This figure includes liabilities from all types of CGT liable residential property disposals, including rental properties and second homes.

Data on CGT residential property disposals can be found in Table 8 of the CGT national statistics: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/capital-gains-tax-statistics>

■ Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

Andy McDonald:

[58888]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his Department has plans to reimburse businesses that brought back employees from the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) on the basis of receiving the £1,000 per employee Job Retention Bonus (JRB) but that subsequently did not benefit from the JRB nor the extension of the CJRS.

Lucy Frazer:

The purpose of the Job Retention Bonus (JRB) was to encourage employers to keep people in work until the end of January 2021. This purpose was instead fulfilled by the extension of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) to March, April, and subsequently the end of September 2021.

That is why the Chancellor announced in November 2020 that the JRB was not going to be paid in February 2021. Instead, employers have had access to an extra eight months of support through the CJRS, which has been available to more employers and more employees than the JRB. Furthermore, the Government extended the cut-off date for which employers had to have submitted a Pay-As-You-Earn Real Time Information submission for employees from 20 March 2020 to 30 October 2020, and subsequently to 2 March 2021, to ensure that additional employees could be eligible for the CJRS.

As set out in the Plan for Jobs Progress Update, published on 13 September 2021, the economy now is in a stronger position than it was last autumn, and the labour market is in a stronger position too.

The latest data show that the Government's Plan for Jobs is working across all parts of the UK, with just 1.3 million people on furlough on 31 August 2021, and online job vacancy levels 35 per cent above February 2020 levels. Furthermore, at the start of the crisis, it was feared that unemployment would reach twelve per cent or even higher. The figure is now less than half of that – meaning almost two million fewer people out of work than had been feared – while the headline unemployment rate of 4.6 per cent has now fallen for seven consecutive months. The ONS has also found that of all workers who had ever been furloughed, more than nine in ten were still in work in the three months to June 2021. This is a similar proportion as for workers who had never been furloughed, meaning that there was no statistically significant difference in employment rates between those furloughed and who had never been furloughed.

We continue to maintain our focus on those still impacted by the pandemic, with targeted support for businesses, as well as getting people back into work.

■ Digital Technology: Taxation**James Murray:**[\[62887\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the total amount of tax that will be owed in the UK by (a) companies liable to the Digital Services Tax, (b) companies liable to the Digital Services Tax who are expected to fall within the scope of Pillar 1 of the OECD/G20 Inclusive Framework and (c) companies liable to the Digital Services Tax who are expected to fall outside the scope of Pillar 1 of the OECD/G20 Inclusive Framework for the calendar years (i) 2022 and (ii) 2023.

James Murray:[\[62888\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the tax that will be owed in the UK under Pillar 1 of the OECD/G20 Inclusive Framework in the first full

year of Pillar 1 implementation by (a) all companies within the scope of Pillar 1, (b) those companies within the scope of Pillar 1 that are currently liable to pay the Digital Services Tax and (c) those companies within the scope of Pillar 1 that are currently not liable to pay the Digital Services Tax.

James Murray:

[\[62889\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the tax that will be owed in the UK under Pillar 2 of the OECD/G20 Inclusive Framework in the first full year of Pillar 2 implementation by (a) all companies within the scope of Pillar 2, (b) those companies within the scope of Pillar 2 that are currently liable to pay the Digital Services Tax and (c) those companies within the scope of Pillar 2 that are currently not liable to pay the Digital Services Tax.

James Murray:

[\[62890\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the tax that will be owed in the UK under Pillar 2 of the OECD/G20 Inclusive Framework in the first full year of Pillar 2 implementation by (a) all companies within the scope of Pillar 2, (b) those companies within the scope of Pillar 2 that are currently headquartered in the UK and (c) those companies within the scope of Pillar 2 that are currently not headquartered in the UK.

Lucy Frazer:

The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) published its revenue forecast for the Digital Services Tax (DST) today. The DST will be repealed once the new globally agreed solution is in place.

Reaching a Two-Pillar Solution on global tax reform which reallocates taxing rights and introduces a global minimum tax has been a long-standing priority for the UK.

With overwhelming support from across the international spectrum, the Government is delighted that final political agreement on a Two-Pillar Solution has now been reached amongst 136 countries of the OECD Inclusive Framework.

These proposals represent a major reform of the international tax framework and will help to ensure multinational businesses pay their fair share, with the right companies paying the right amount of tax in the right place. The Government looks forward to continuing discussions with its global partners in the coming months as we look towards implementation.

Both pillars will be subject to the standard tax policymaking process, with their impacts formally assessed through the OBR forecast process.

■ Events Industry: Non-domestic Rates

Kevin Brennan:

[\[63658\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of removing business rates for live music venues.

Lucy Frazer:

At Autumn Budget 2021, the Government announced a new temporary relief worth almost £1.7 billion for eligible retail, hospitality, and leisure businesses in England to support local high streets as they adapt and recover. Eligible properties, which will be confirmed in guidance shortly, will receive up to 50 per cent off their rates bill, subject to a £110,000 cash cap per business. This builds on over £16 billion of support already provided to these high street sectors during the pandemic.

■ Heating: Housing**Jim Shannon:**[\[60419\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will provide funding to help support customers to switch to green domestic heating providers in the upcoming spending review.

Helen Whately:

The Heat and Buildings Strategy sets out the steps the Government is taking to make the transition to low carbon buildings affordable and achievable for all, including by committing £3.9 billion to ensure buildings are warmer and cheaper to heat, while supporting jobs across the country.

Households will benefit from £5,000 government grants through the £450 million Boiler Upgrade Scheme to help install low-carbon heating systems. The scheme will support the deployment of low carbon heat by helping to scale the heat pump market and support consumers with the upfront costs alongside a wider framework of policies as we aim to reach 600,000 installations per year by 2028.

The £950m Home Upgrade Grant will also provide support to low income off gas grid households by installing energy efficiency upgrades and low carbon heating while the £800 million Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund will help to improve the energy performance of social rented homes.

■ Housing: Prices**Anthony Browne:**[\[63907\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of increasing the £450,000 maximum home purchase price allowed via a Lifetime ISA in line with the UK average year-on-year increase in house prices.

John Glen:

The Lifetime ISA is intended to support younger people saving for their first home or for later life by offering a generous government bonus of 25% on up to £4,000 of savings each year.

The Government maintains that the 25% bonus should be focused on those that need it most and who may find it more difficult to get onto the property ladder, while ensuring sustainable public finances. First-time buyers who can purchase a home valued over £450,000 are likely to have an income significantly above that of the

average household in the UK and are therefore more likely to be able to purchase a first home without the support of this scheme.

The Government considers a property price cap of £450,000 appropriate to support the majority of first-time buyers across the UK. However, the Government keeps all aspects of savings policy under review.

■ **Private Rented Housing: Heating**

Kevin Hollinrake:

[\[60464\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the Government plans to treat the replacement by residential landlords of high carbon heating systems in rental accommodation with low carbon systems such as heat pumps as tax deductible repairs.

Lucy Frazer:

The Government has recently announced support to incentivise the installation of low carbon heating as part of the Net Zero Strategy. The new £450 million Boiler Upgrade Scheme will support the uptake of heat pumps, which we are confident will soon be a cost-effective alternative to oil heating. The Home Upgrade Grant also provides support to landlords with low-income tenants in off gas-grid properties to install energy efficiency upgrades and low carbon heating, subject to a minimum contribution. The Government also maintains a reduced rate of VAT of 5 per cent for the installation of many energy saving materials, including ground source and air source heat pumps, subject to certain conditions. HM Treasury keeps the tax treatment of deductions for landlords under review.

■ **Tickets: VAT**

Kevin Brennan:

[\[63659\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of extending the 5 per cent rate of VAT on ticket sales for a further three years.

Lucy Frazer:

The temporary reduced rate of VAT was introduced on 15 July 2020 to support the cash flow and viability of around 150,000 businesses and protect over 2.4 million jobs in the hospitality and tourism sectors. As announced at Spring Budget 2021, the Government has extended the temporary reduced 5 per cent rate of VAT for the tourism and hospitality sectors. This relief ended on 30 September 2021. On 1 October 2021, a new reduced rate of 12.5 per cent was introduced to help ease affected businesses back to the standard rate. This new rate will end on 31 March 2022.

This relief has previously been costed at over £7 billion, but the latest forecast means it may now cost over £8 billion. Whilst all taxes are kept under review, there are no plans to extend this relief. The Government has been clear that this relief is a temporary measure designed to support the sectors that have been severely affected by COVID-19. It is appropriate that as restrictions are lifted and demand for goods

and services in these sectors increases, the temporary tax reliefs are first reduced and then removed to rebuild and strengthen the public finances.

■ Whisky: Excise Duties

David Duguid: [\[60493\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans he has to freeze or lower excise duties on whisky.

Helen Whately:

As announced at Autumn Budget 2021, the duty rates on beer, cider, wine and spirits will be frozen for another year, saving consumers £3 billion over the next five years and supporting the hospitality industry and its suppliers as they recover from the pandemic. Due to the continued freeze on alcohol duty, Scotch whisky is also facing the lowest real-terms tax rate since 1918.

WALES

■ Wales Office: Stonewall

Tim Loughton: [\[61065\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what funding his Department has allocated to Stonewall in each of the last five years; and for what projects.

David T C Davies:

None. The Office of the Secretary of State for Wales has not allocated any funding to Stonewall during the last five years.

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

■ Females: STEM Subjects

Jim Shannon: [\[62726\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what recent estimate the Government has made of the proportion of women in work who are employed in the STEM sector.

Kemi Badenoch:

It is difficult to give an accurate assessment of the proportion of women who are employed in the STEM sector as not all roles in the sector are STEM occupations. However, we want to ensure that women and girls can make informed choices about their career, including enabling more to work in STEM.

To enable more people into STEM sectors, the Government has introduced free courses through the National Skills Fund to enable adults to upskill and retrain.

In order to improve representation, we are encouraging more girls to take STEM subjects at school, college and university by rolling out several programmes and committing substantial funding to support STEM uptake.

In addition, we are improving careers advice in schools on routes into STEM careers, as well as sector specific action such as supporting the Tomorrow's Engineers Code, managed by EngineeringUK.

Education and especially STEM is one of the key areas that the independent Gender Equality Advisory Council is looking at as part of our G7 Presidency and continues to be a key area for Government.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Cold Weather Payments

Peter Grant:

[\[63760\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to her letter to the hon. Member for Glenrothes dated 13 August 2021, what progress she has made on the annual review meeting for the Cold Weather Payment Scheme.

Guy Opperman:

I can confirm that the annual review meeting has taken place. We will update Parliament on the outcome of this year's review shortly.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Energy Default Tariff Cap: Effective Competition Decision

Minister of State for Energy, Clean Growth and Climate Change (Greg Hands):
[\[HCWS356\]](#)

The Domestic Gas and Electricity (Tariff Cap) Act 2018 enables the default tariff (price cap) on standard variable and default energy tariffs to be extended on an annual basis up to end of 2023 at the latest. These annual extensions are dependent on an assessment and statement that I make every year, by 31st October, on whether the conditions for effective competition are in place for domestic supply contracts.

I am confirming today that the price cap mechanism will remain in place for 2022 as the conditions for effective competition are not yet in place for domestic supply contracts.

As required by legislation, the independent energy regulator, Ofgem, has carried out an assessment into whether the conditions are in place for effective competition in domestic supply contracts this year. Ofgem have been transparent in how they made their assessment, and their report is clear and thorough. Ofgem assess that these conditions have not been met and recommend that the price cap mechanism should be extended.

The level of the price cap is a separate matter for Ofgem to determine.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Project Gigabit Autumn Update

Minister for Media, Data, and Digital Infrastructure (Julia Lopez): [\[HCWS358\]](#)

Today we have published the third Project Gigabit quarterly update and, thanks to the work of industry and our record £5 billion investment, we are making phenomenal progress delivering the biggest broadband rollout in UK history.

We are on track for 85% gigabit coverage by 2025 and we have now passed the connectivity milestone of more than 57 per cent of UK homes and businesses that can now access the fastest broadband speeds available.

In this Project Gigabit Autumn Update, we report on a significant further expansion in commercial plans, including more telecom providers focused on building in under-served rural areas. Greater commercial investment is positive for the UK and shows strong market confidence in customer demand for gigabit infrastructure.

This delivery plan update also reports on:

- progress with and changes to Phase 1 roll-outs and Phase 2 procurements;

- sequencing and dates of English Phase 3 rural projects, covering around 500,000 premises in Essex, Lincolnshire, Devon & Somerset, Herefordshire & Gloucestershire, Dorset, Cheshire, and North Yorkshire;
- an update on how we are utilising Gigabit Voucher subsidy as part of our rollout plans;
- information on the evaluation of the benefits of our Superfast Broadband programme; and
- details of an additional £8 million to deliver full-fibre to 3,600 premises in Scotland, as part of the Scottish Government's R100 project, and c.£22.6m to connect rural and remote parts of Northern Ireland, and information on the Welsh Government's Open Market Review and scheduled next steps.

Gigabit broadband will bring much faster and more reliable connectivity to rural and hard-to-reach communities. This will make them more attractive places for people to settle, raise families and start and grow businesses, improve education and healthcare services and increase accessibility.

This is how we level up and strengthen our Union - ensuring rural communities in every part of the UK have the same chances and opportunities as our urban towns and cities. That's why this is at the top of the Government's agenda, and as Secretary of State, I am fully committed to doing everything I can to make Project Gigabit a UK success story.

I will place a copy of the Project Gigabit Delivery Plan Autumn Update in the Libraries of both Houses.

SCOTLAND

■ Contingencies Fund Advance

Secretary of State for Scotland (Mr Alister Jack):

[\[HCWS359\]](#)

I hereby give notice of the Scotland Office's intention to seek a repayable cash advance from the Contingencies Fund of £12,000,000,000. The Department requires an advance to meet the Scottish Government's cash requirements pending parliamentary approval of the 2021-22 supplementary estimate.

The Scottish Government is operating within its budgets so this does not represent additional spending. However, an increase in net cash requirement will be sought in the supplementary estimate so accessing the Contingencies Fund will allow the Scottish Government to fund this existing spending in the meantime.

The advance will be repaid immediately following approval of the supplementary estimate.

Parliamentary approval for additional non-budget expenditure of £12,000,000,000 will be sought in a supplementary estimate for the Scotland Office. Pending that approval, urgent expenditure estimated at £12,000,000,000 will be met by repayable cash advances from the Contingencies Fund.

TRANSPORT**■ International Travel Update****Secretary of State for Transport (Grant Shapps):**[\[HCWS360\]](#)**Red List Review**

The Government has conducted a further review of the red list under our new and simplified system of international travel. From 4am on Monday 1 November, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Haiti, Panama, Peru and Venezuela will be removed from the red list.

Delta is now the dominant variant in most countries around the world. This means the risk of known variants entering the UK has reduced and the Government can confidently remove these seven destinations from the red list, with decisions informed by UK Health Security Agency's assessment.

We will keep the red list in place as a precautionary measure to protect public health, and we are prepared to add countries and territories if needed as the UK's first line of defence if the situation changes.

Expansion of the Inbound Vaccination Policy

From 4am on Monday 1 November, we will expand our inbound vaccination policy to include eligible fully vaccinated passengers who have not been in a red list country in the ten days before their arrival into the UK, to over 30 countries and territories:

Angola	Mauritius
Argentina	Mongolia
Armenia	Nepal
Azerbaijan	Occupied Palestinian Territories
Belize	Panama
Botswana	Peru
Cambodia	Rwanda
Costa Rica	Seychelles
Djibouti	Sierra Leone
Eswatini	Sri Lanka
Guyana	Suriname
Honduras	Tanzania
Lebanon	Trinidad and Tobago
Lesotho	Tunisia
Madagascar	Uganda
	Uruguay

This will also include all British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies, who previously qualified for fully vaccinated travel as part of the UK overseas vaccination policy.

Our inbound vaccination policy now covers over 135 countries and territories, and eligible fully vaccinated passengers and under 18s resident in those countries will be treated the

same as those vaccinated in the UK. Eligible fully vaccinated passengers who have not been in a red list country in the ten days before their arrival into the UK will no longer need to take a pre-departure test before their departure, a post-arrival test on day 8 or self-isolate upon their arrival.

Whilst public health is a devolved matter, UK Government works closely with the devolved administrations on any changes to international travel and aims to ensure a whole UK approach. The devolved administrations will be aligning to the policies set out in this statement.

Finally, since 4am on 24 October, eligible fully vaccinated passengers and most under 18s arriving in England have been able to use a cheaper lateral flow device test post-arrival, with a free confirmatory PCR test if they receive a positive result. The devolved administrations have also confirmed that such passengers arriving in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will from 31 October be able to choose to take a lateral flow test instead of a PCR test.

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

■ **Announcement of a Consultation on How to Ban Conversion Therapy**

Minister for Women and Equalities (Elizabeth Truss): [\[HCWS357\]](#)

This Government is committed to building a society in which the abhorrent practice of so called ‘conversion therapy’ no longer takes place. It is clear that, at present, gaps remain in the law that allow damaging practices to continue.

Today we take another step towards ending that, as we launch a public consultation on how we plan to ban these practices. The consultation will be open for 6 weeks, closing on Friday 10 December and we encourage as many people as possible to contribute their views.

The link to the consultation can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/banning-conversion-therapy>

Conversion therapy does not work and can cause long lasting damage. The Government is determined to protect LGBT people from this harm.

I also want to reassure those who may have concerns about the impact of this ban on clinicians’ independence as well as on freedom of speech. Core freedoms, such as freedom of choice, speech and belief, are central to these proposals. It is vitally important that no person is forced or coerced into conversion therapy, and that young people are supported in exploring their identity without being encouraged towards one particular path. We will continue to protect under-18s from being channelled into irreversible decisions. These proposals do not alter the existing clinical regulatory framework or the independence of regulated clinicians working within their professional obligations.

Equality Ministers and our officials have already heard views from a wide range of stakeholders, including victims of conversion therapy, LGBT organisations, faith groups, psychiatric and counselling bodies. Their experiences and advice have helped shape our

proposals, and we now welcome the views of stakeholders and the wider public on our next steps.

The consultation seeks views on a comprehensive package of proposed measures. These include a new criminal offence as well as sentence uplifts for existing criminal offences. We will also introduce Conversion Therapy Protection Orders, remove revenue streams from organisations which offer these practices and restrict the promotion of conversion therapies online.

It is also vital that those who have been subject to or are at risk of these abhorrent practices receive the support they need. This administration is the first UK Government to commit to providing such support. We will therefore be launching a competitive tendering process in November for a new Government-funded support service for victims and those at risk of conversion therapy.

After the consultation has closed, results will be analysed, for publication in due course, and will inform the Government's next steps in preparing legislation for Spring 2022.

I am laying the consultation document as a Command Paper today and it will be available on GOV.UK for people to respond to.