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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

■ Fraud: Prosecutions

Peter Gibson:

[R] [\[71471\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what steps she is taking to prosecute individuals charged with fraud by false representation particularly in relation to fraudulent property transactions.

Alex Chalk:

In March 2021, the CPS launched its first ever Economic Crime Strategy to ensure they keep at pace with the constant changing nature of crime. It is a high-level strategy which allows the flexibility to respond and adapt to new and emerging threats.

The CPS has a dedicated Specialist Fraud Division to ensure it has the right skills and resources to prosecute complex cases.

The CPS also has a Proceeds of Crime unit dedicated to asset recovery and in 2018, the CPS created three new Fraud Centres in CPS Areas to increase capability and resilience in dealing with fraud casework.

■ Prosecutions

Yasmin Qureshi:

[\[72385\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what steps she is taking to help improve prosecution levels under section 24 of the Offences Against The Person Act 1861.

Alex Chalk:

The recent rise in reports of spiking is incredibly concerning and is being investigated by the police. The CPS will always treat maliciously administering poison as a high harm offence and is working in close partnership with the police to bring perpetrators of this offence to justice.

Between 2020-2021 there were 222 prosecutions for cases charged under Section 24, which was an increase of 22% on the previous year.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Electric Vehicles: Renewable Energy

Hilary Benn:

[\[73731\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the additional renewable electricity generating capacity required to support the estimated number of electric vehicles in (a) 2025, (b) 2030 and (c) 2035.

Greg Hands:

[Holding answer 17 November 2021]: The Government works closely with National Grid Electricity System Operator (NGESO) to ensure there is adequate capacity available to meet peak demand in a range of scenarios, now and in the future. Each year NGESO evaluate how much capacity will be necessary to meet demand in the years ahead and utilise this assessment to determine targets for the annual Capacity Market auctions. Auctions held to date have secured the majority of Great Britain's capacity needs out to 2024/25.

The Government will take action so that, by 2035, all electricity will come from low carbon sources, subject to security of supply. This includes the Government's commitment to deliver 40GW of offshore wind by 2030, alongside the expansion of other low-cost renewable technologies.

■ Fossil Fuels: Climate Change**Jamie Stone:**[\[73939\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of tightening the definition of what counts as a new fossil fuel extraction project for the purposes of ensuring the effectiveness of the Government's climate compatibility checkpoint.

Greg Hands:

[Holding answer 17 November 2021]: The UK is the only major economy to have published a blueprint to transition its oil and gas sector to the green economy. The Government's landmark North Sea Transition Deal could support up to 40,000 high-quality direct and indirect supply chain jobs and sets a world-leading example for other countries who need to decarbonise their economies.

The Government's recent review into the future of offshore oil and gas licensing concluded that a formal climate compatibility checkpoint, building on current practice, should be established. This will help ensure that any future licences are only awarded following an assessment of their compatibility with the Government's broad climate change ambitions, including the UK's target of reaching net zero by 2050.

BEIS will consult on the design of the checkpoint in due course.

■ Heart Diseases: Research**Jim Shannon:**[\[72432\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will allocate additional funding to help identify drugs to help improve heart function in people with diabetes who have had heart attacks.

George Freeman:

One of the Healthcare Missions set out in my Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister's Life Sciences Vision is the prevention and treatment of cardiovascular disease and its major risk factors, including obesity. Government has announced that £95m will be provided to support the deployment and use of innovative treatments to deliver these

Healthcare Missions. Work will now commence with a wide range of partners to develop and deliver this mission.

Alongside this, the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) funds, enables and delivers world-leading health and social care research and focusses their work on early translational research, clinical research and applied health and social care research.

The NIHR welcomes funding applications for research into any aspect of human health, including diabetes and related heart conditions; it is not usual practice to ring-fence funds for particular topics or conditions. Applications are subject to peer review and judged in open competition, with awards being made on the basis of the importance of the topic to patients and health and care services, value for money and scientific quality.

■ **Iron and Steel: Energy Supply**

Stephen Doughty:

[\[72459\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to tackle the impact of energy prices on energy-intensive users in the steel sector.

Lee Rowley:

The Department continues to engage constructively with energy intensive industries to further understand and to assess the possibility of offering help to mitigate the impacts of high global gas prices. Our priority is to ensure that costs are managed and that supplies of energy are maintained.

■ **Research: North East**

Matt Vickers:

[\[71515\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to increase the level of (a) public and (b) private research and development funding in the North East.

George Freeman:

The 2021 Spending Review sees record levels of investment in the UK's world-leading research base with public spending on Research & Development (R&D) increasing by £5 billion per annum to £20 billion in 2024-25. The substantial uplift to research and science funding will not only allow the UK to build on our core strengths but will also provide opportunities to grow research and innovation investment across the entire country.

UKRI currently funds over 570 active science and research projects in the North East of England with a value of over £660 million. More specifically, the Government has already committed over £93.6 million Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund funding to organisations registered in the North East, which has leveraged an additional £41.8 million co-investment from non-public sources.

The Innovation Strategy, published in July, signalled how we would embed innovation across the country to level up the UK. We will create the right policy environment and send clear signals to unlock business investment in innovation and boost the private sector investment we need to achieve the 2.4% target by 2027 including in the North East. Making the most of R&D in places around the UK remains a key government priority and the forthcoming Levelling Up White Paper will set out the plan for doing this.

UKRI are also publishing detailed breakdowns of their funding data at a regional level annually to increase transparency of how places benefit from R&D funding. Latest available data is at: <https://www.ukri.org/our-work/what-we-have-funded/regional-distribution-of-funding/2018-to-2019-regional-distribution-of-funding/#contents-list>.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Procurement: Coronavirus

Angela Rayner:

[\[75894\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 20 October 2021 to Question 57295, on Procurement: Coronavirus, when he plans to publish details of companies that were awarded contracts via the high-priority lane for covid-19 procurement, and who referred those companies to the high-priority lane.

Michael Ellis:

I refer the Rt Hon. Member to the publication "PPE procurement in the early pandemic" on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) of 17 November.

DEFENCE

■ Ministry of Defence Guard Service: Conditions of Employment

Grahame Morris:

[\[75867\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 13 September 2021 to Question 44293 on Ministry of Defence Guard Service: Conditions of Employment, what assessment he has made of the merits of specifically assessing the potential effect of the introduction of Operational MGS Employment Contracts for civilian guards at UK military bases on levels of staff fatigue.

Grahame Morris:

[\[75868\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 13 September 2021 to Question 44293 on Ministry of Defence Guard Service: Conditions of Employment, whether a Health and Safety Executive Fatigue Risk Management system was established before the introduction of Operational MGS Employment Contracts.

Grahame Morris:

[\[75870\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 13 September 2021 to Question 44294 on Ministry of Defence Guard Service: Conditions of Employment, what account the assessment took of the effect of fatigue on (a) concentration and (b) vigilance levels of MGS staff.

Leo Docherty:

The effect of fatigue on the Operational MGS Employment Contract (OMEC) personnel has been considered. Current assessments of rostered working patterns for all MGS personnel against UK Working Time Regulations are considered effective to keep employees safe in the workplace.

Fatigue-related risks and issues associated with the introduction of OMEC are managed by the existing MOD Guard Service risk management process. No new Health and Safety Executive fatigue risk management system was established before the introduction of OMEC.

All aspects of employee wellbeing, including fatigue management, are routinely considered in accordance with MOD Civilian Policy, Rules and Guidance.

Grahame Morris:

[\[75869\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 13 September 2021 to Question 44294, Ministry of Defence Guard Service: Conditions of Employment, what evidence his Department holds that indicates the levels of security at UK military bases are unaffected by the introduction of Operational MGS Employment Contracts.

Leo Docherty:

Security at UK military bases is unaffected by the introduction of the Operational MGS Employment Contract. The Military Guard Service's (MGS) delivery of priority security tasks across the Defence estate has not been impacted. This is evidenced by weekly MGS delivery performance data.

■ Ministry of Defence: Aviation

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[75827\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much his Department has paid to other national governments for the receipt of charter air transport since January 2021.

Jeremy Quin:

UK Defence routinely charters aircraft from charter airlines globally to meet defence needs.

In the period in question no money was paid to national governments for the provision by them of air charter services.

However, the UK is part of the Movements Co-ordination Centre Europe (MCCE), a multinational organisation that facilitates the exchanges of excess Air Mobility capacity. Since 1 Jan 21 MCCE facilitated Air Transport services have been provided

to the UK by a number of different NATO partners and the UK has similarly provided reciprocal services where these have been available and required.

■ **Ministry of Defence: Fines**

John Healey: [\[75807\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 9 November 2021 to Question 68119, on Ministry of Defence: Fines, what specific contract was given by his Department retrospectively.

Jeremy Quin:

The fine detailed in Question 68119 related to approvals of some 36 contracts over a number of years up to 2016 covering a range of infrastructure activities and locations. The Department notified HM-Treasury (HMT) as soon as the matter was identified, and retrospective approval was sought. A detailed review was also undertaken in 2016 resulting in the implementation of improvements to approval processes in the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) and no further fines for such process failures have been incurred since.

■ **Ministry of Defence: Hikvision**

Alicia Kearns: [\[76032\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether Hikvision CCTV, or other surveillance software or equipment from Hikvision, is used on any property owned or administered by his Department.

Jeremy Quin:

As has been the case under successive Governments, it is not Defence policy to comment on the security arrangements of our establishments and sites. Specific details regarding the make and model of security systems are withheld on national security grounds.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ **Advertising: Fraud**

Owen Thompson: [\[73911\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what provisions the Government (a) has and (b) plans to make an assessment of the potential merits of taking forward in (i) the Online Safety Bill and (ii) other legislative proposals to tackle scam advertisements.

Owen Thompson: [\[73912\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if the Government will make platforms responsible for fraudulent and scam content hosted on their sites.

Chris Philp:

The government is working tirelessly with industry, regulators and consumer groups to tackle fraud. We are also considering additional legislative and non-legislative solutions to effectively address the harms posed by all elements of online fraud in a cohesive and robust way.

My Department is considering how online advertising is regulated through its Online Advertising Programme. This work will look at ensuring that standards about the placement and content of advertising are effectively applied and enforced online to reduce consumers' exposure to harmful or misleading advertising. This work will look at the role advertising can play in enabling online fraud and help inform our future efforts to tackle it. We will be consulting on this issue later this year.

Although paid-for advertising is exempt in the current draft of the Online Safety Bill, some types of advertising will be in scope. This includes posts by influencers and posts by companies on their social media feeds. Companies will therefore need to ensure that these posts do not host illegal content. The Bill is currently undergoing pre-legislative scrutiny and we will consider all recommendations from the Joint Committee when they report.

■ Football Index: Compensation**Dr Rupa Huq:**[\[75945\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment she has made of the potential merits of establishing a compensation scheme in order to grant financial redress to customers of Football Index.

Chris Philp:

The government appreciates the significant impact that the collapse of the novel gambling product Football Index had on former customers. BetIndex, the company which operated Football Index, went into liquidation on 5 November. The process is continuing and it is likely that this will result in some amounts being reimbursed to creditors. There is no compensation scheme for losses caused by a gambling firm ceasing to operate and the government does not think it would be appropriate to use public funds for these purposes.

■ Gambling**Rachael Maskell:**[\[75029\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the level and impact of gambling-related harm (a) nationally and (b) in York.

Rachael Maskell:[\[75030\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the potential impact of gambling on (a) mental health and (b) levels of suicide.

Chris Philp:

As set out in Public Health England's evidence review of gambling-related harms, the problem gambling rate for England was estimated as 0.5% in 2018, and has been relatively stable since 2012. The 2018 Health Survey also showed the problem gambling rate for Yorkshire and the Humber was 0.7%.

Public Health England's (PHE) evidence review of gambling-related harms found that there is a higher prevalence of problem gambling among people with poor health, low life satisfaction and wellbeing scores, and the problem gambling rate is higher among more deprived groups than less deprived groups.

It also found an association between harmful gambling, poor mental health and higher levels of alcohol consumption, although most of the published studies were not able to demonstrate the direction of causation.

The review examined the association between suicidal behaviours and problem gambling. It estimates 409 deaths a year from suicide associated with problem gambling, based on studies in Sweden. The government does not hold data on how many suicides in the United Kingdom are linked to gambling.

Rachael Maskell:[\[75031\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the potential impact of gambling on those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Rachael Maskell:[\[75032\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has of the potential (a) financial and (b) public health impacts of permitting gambling shops to be located in areas of economic disadvantage.

Chris Philp:

Public Health England (PHE)'s evidence review of gambling-related harms found that the socio-demographic profile of gamblers appears to change as gambling risk increases, with people who are unemployed and people living in more deprived areas showing higher rates of harmful gambling although they have relatively lower levels of participation.

The Gambling Commission requires gambling operators to have completed local risk assessments for each of their gambling premises. This is to ensure that they take into account factors near to their premises, including aspects of economic disadvantage such as addiction treatment centres or homelessness hostels. In accordance with the licensing objectives of the Gambling Act, operators must ensure that they mitigate against these risks.

■ Gambling Act 2005 Review

Rachael Maskell:

[\[75028\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps she has taken to embed a public health approach to gambling in the review of the Gambling Act 2005.

Chris Philp:

The Government considers that a public health approach is a key part of gambling regulation. Gambling legislation and the requirements placed on operators by the independent regulator, the Gambling Commission, are intended to offer a wide range of protections: from those which make gambling safer for the population as a whole, such as controls on gambling products, to tailored protections for groups such as children and specific targeted interventions and support for those at most risk of harm.

Our Review of the Gambling Act aims to ensure that the protections in place to prevent harm are appropriate and effective for the digital age. Public Health England's recent evidence review of gambling-related harms is a valuable contribution and we are considering it carefully.

■ Ofcom: Recruitment

Chi Onwurah:

[\[75884\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of on 8 November 2021 to Question 71330 on Ofcom: Recruitment, how many staff on a FTE basis Ofcom has employed to support its duties under the Telecoms Security Bill as at 6 April 2021.

Julia Lopez:

The Ofcom security budget for this financial year has been increased by £4.6 million. This funding will allow Ofcom to more than double the number of staff working on telecoms security by April 2022 by hiring around 30 FTE. This includes hiring a multi-skilled team including technical, enforcement and legal experts.

EDUCATION

■ Adoption

Jess Phillips:

[\[73855\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment his Department has made of the impact on women of the policy of forced adoption during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s.

Will Quince:

The government has great sympathy for those affected by historical adoption practices. Our hearts go out to the parents and children of those involved. Although

from a modern perspective these practices are clearly wrong, they took place at a time when society shared very different values.

Thankfully society today takes a very different attitude to single parents. Lessons of the time have been learned and led to significant changes to legislation and practice. Single parents are now supported to help ensure that children and their families stay together, and children are only removed permanently by a court, without the consent of the parents, if it is satisfied that the child is suffering significant harm or is likely to suffer significant harm.

Parents now have legal representatives appointed to support them, to ensure their views are heard and that evidence put forward can be challenged. In addition, NHS maternity services now have robust policy guidance and processes in place to safeguard care for vulnerable women and babies.

A range of help and support is available for those affected by historical adoption practices. For example, they can access intermediary services, provided by local authorities, voluntary adoption agencies and registered adoption agencies, to help them trace their birth children or birth parents and establish whether contact is possible. Birth relatives and adopted adults can also add their details to the Adoption Contact Register at the General Register Office to find a birth relative or an adopted person.

We recognise that none of the above can change the heartbreak and impact of things done in the past and repeat again our deepest sympathy for all those affected.

■ Carers: Young People

Matt Vickers:

[\[75170\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to help local authorities (a) identify, (b) assess and (c) support young carers.

Will Quince:

The Children and Families Act 2014, amended the Children Act 1989 to place a duty on local authorities to assess the needs of young carers. The duties have remained in place throughout the COVID-19 outbreak. Local authorities must ensure young carers are identified and referred to appropriate support if needed, and that the young carers are not taking on excessive or inappropriate care and support responsibilities. This provision works alongside those for assessing adults in the Care Act 2014, to enable whole family approaches to assessment and support.

On 7 September 2021, we announced investment of an additional £5.4 billion over three years in social care, which includes a commitment to take steps so that unpaid carers have support, advice and respite fulfilling the goals of the Care Act 2014. We will work with the sector, including unpaid carers to develop more detail on our plans and publish further detail in a White Paper for reform later this year. We have also provided councils with access to over £1 billion of additional funding for social care in the 2021/22 financial year. This will support councils to maintain care services while keeping up with rising demand and recovering from the impact of COVID-19.

■ Children and Young People: Mental Capacity

Rachael Maskell: [\[75920\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to ensure the wellbeing of children and young people who are being held under deprivation of liberty safeguards.

Rachael Maskell: [\[75921\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment has he made of the suitability of (a) holiday cottages, (b) park homes and (c) caravans as residences for children and young people subject to deprivation of liberty safeguards.

Will Quince:

All children should live somewhere that meets their needs and keep them safe. This is particularly important for looked after children who have been deprived of their liberty for their own or for the safety of others. These children and young people are often some of the most vulnerable in our society and we must do all that we can to keep them safe.

We are clear that where a looked after child is deprived of their liberty, the setting is very likely to be providing care and accommodation. Such accommodation must be registered as a children's home as required by the Care Standards Act 2000. Children's homes are subject to robust registration and inspection requirements by Ofsted to ensure that they meet the needs of children they accommodate, and they must follow the national standards. Ofsted can take action against children's homes when they are not delivering the quality of care and accommodation for children that the department expects.

Any provider operating a setting that meets the definition of a children's homes – providing care and accommodation wholly or mainly for children – without the required registration is likely to be committing a criminal offence. The government believes that all children who require care of the sort provided by a children's home should be in a children's home which is registered by Ofsted.

Where local authorities place children subject to a deprivation of liberty in a setting that is not registered with Ofsted, they should follow the 'Guidance on Placements in unregistered children's homes in England or unregistered care home services in Wales' issued by the President of the Family Division in November 2019 with an addendum added to that guidance on 1st December 2020. This guidance is clear that an application to register the provision with Ofsted must be made within 7 working days from the date of the deprivation of liberty order. The government supports this guidance and adherence to it.

■ Families: Respite Care

Helen Hayes: [\[75940\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent steps his Department has taken to help ensure that families with disabled children are able access (a) short breaks and (b) respite care that meets their health needs.

Damien Moore: [\[76003\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent steps his Department has taken to help ensure that families with disabled children are able to access (a) short breaks and (b) respite care that meet their health needs in (i) Southport and (ii) Sefton.

Alexander Stafford: [\[76049\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent steps his Department has taken to ensure that families with disabled children can access short breaks and respite care that meets those children's health needs.

Will Quince:

Respite care services, including short breaks, for disabled children and their families are provided based on an individual assessment of each child and family's needs.

The department believes it is right for local authorities, who know their areas' needs best, to determine what services are required locally, including early help.

This year, councils have access to £51.3 billion to deliver their core services, including a £1.7 billion grant for social care. The government has also given over £6 billion in funding directly to councils to support them with the immediate and longer-term impacts of COVID-19 spending pressures, including children's services.

The department will continue to work with other government departments, including the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, to ensure the needs of children's services are reflected.

Where a child has complex health needs or is in receipt of palliative or end-of-life care, respite provision may be appropriately delivered by health providers, including children's hospices. Local authorities have a statutory duty to assess the social care needs of disabled children and young people, and to provide respite care where necessary. Where it is appropriate, local authorities can fund respite care provided by hospices, either as a short-term stay or as a service provided to the child or young person in the family home by the hospice team. Local authorities and health commissioners regularly liaise to plan and commission the most appropriate package of respite care for the children and young people with life-limiting or life-threatening condition in their area.

In addition to statutory services, the department is providing £27.3 million to the Family Fund in financial year 2021-22 to support over 60,000 families on low incomes raising children and young people with disabilities or serious illnesses. Grants can be used for a range of purposes, including family breaks.

■ Free School Meals**Catherine McKinnell:** [\[74976\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Answer of 13 December 2016 to Question 56826 on Free School Meals, what progress his Department has made in making free school meal registration processes more efficient; and if he will make a statement.

Will Quince:

The department wants as many eligible pupils as possible to claim their free school meals, and to make it as simple as possible for schools and local authorities to determine eligibility.

Since December 2016, when the referenced question was asked, the department has continued to develop and provide an Eligibility Checking System to make the checking process as quick and straightforward as possible for schools and local authorities. We have continued to provide a model registration form to help schools encourage parents to sign up for free school meals.

The department has also provided guidance to Jobcentre Plus advisers so that they can make Universal Credit recipients aware that they may also be entitled to wider benefits, including free school meals.

Dame Diana Johnson: [\[75840\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will make it his policy to increase the threshold for Free School Meals in line with the National Food Strategy recommendations.

Dame Diana Johnson: [\[75841\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the number of children whose parents are in receipt of Universal Credit who do not receive a free school meal.

Dame Diana Johnson: [\[75842\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has had discussions with Ministerial colleagues in the Treasury on increasing the annual net earned income threshold for Free School Meals.

Will Quince:

The department supports over 1.7 million pupils from the lowest income families to concentrate, learn, and achieve in the classroom through the provision of free school meals. An additional 1.3 million infants receive a free meal under the Universal Infant Free School Meals policy.

In 2018, the government introduced new eligibility criteria for families on Universal Credit, following a consultation in 2017. It was estimated that this will be more generous in its reach by 2022, in comparison to the legacy benefit system. Further to this, we included generous protections which mean any family eligible for free school

meals transitioning to Universal Credit from a legacy benefit will continue to have access to free school meals even if they move above the earnings threshold.

The government will fully consider the recommendations of the National Food Strategy, which included recommendations around free school meal eligibility, and will respond in due course.

■ Pre-school Education: Finance

Stella Creasy: [\[75880\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much was (a) budgeted for and (b) spent on government-funded childcare provision for 3 and 4 year olds in each of the last 5 financial years.

Stella Creasy: [\[75881\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much was (a) budgeted for and (b) spent on government-funded childcare provision for 2 year olds in each of the last 5 financial years.

Will Quince:

The government allocates funding for the early years entitlements in line with the number of places that are taken up.

The expenditure figures are as follows:

EARLY YEARS DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT					
ALLOCATION	2017-18 FINAL	2018-19 FINAL	2019-20 FINAL	2020-21 INITIAL	2021-22 INDICATIVE
3-4 year old universal hours	£2,302.6 million	£2,286.7 million	£2,278.5 million	£2,310.9 million	£2,338.2 million
3-4 year old additional hours	£404.6 million	£743.7 million	£807.0 million	£840.3 million	£850.4 million
2 year old	£469.7 million	£449.1 million	£433.8 million	£434.5 million	£440.8 million

Please note that final allocations for 2020-21 and 2021-22 are not yet available.

■ Pupils: Absenteeism

Sir Desmond Swayne: [\[75802\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will amend the school system for the recording of pupil absences to distinguish between pupils who are absent due to illness and those pupils who are absent because of a requirement to self-isolate.

Mr Robin Walker:

Schools decide how they record sessions in the attendance register in line with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended.

In time for September 2020, we introduced a new category into the regulations to record sessions where a pupil does not attend school because their travel to or attendance at school would be contrary to public health guidance from the UK Health Security Agency and the Department for Health and Social Care. Schools record these missed sessions using Code X (not attending in circumstances relating to COVID-19).

Where a pupil cannot attend school because they are ill or have any infectious illness, including testing positive for COVID-19, in line with the Regulations, schools will record sessions as Code I (illness).

■ Pupils: Sanitary Protection

Ruth Cadbury: [\[73879\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of the free period product scheme for schools.

Ruth Cadbury: [\[73880\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many (a) secondary schools, (b) primary schools and (c) post 16 colleges and further education institutions have ordered free period products through his Department's scheme to date in 2021.

Ruth Cadbury: [\[73881\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many times his Department has communicated with schools regarding the free period product scheme for schools in England.

Ruth Cadbury: [\[73882\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department has taken to communicate with schools regarding the free period product scheme.

Ruth Cadbury: [\[73883\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department has taken to help increase the up-take of the free period product scheme for schools.

Will Quince:

The Department for Education's period product scheme launched in January 2020 and, by the end of 2020, 76% of secondary schools and 79% of post-16 organisations had ordered at least once. These organisations have older students and therefore are more likely to have a higher proportion of students in scope, compared to primary schools.

Further statistics regarding the first year of the scheme's operation can be found here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/979265/Period_Products_Scheme_January_2021_v2_.pdf. Take up of the scheme is monitored regularly by the department and our supplier, phs, and we will consider opportunities to publish further management information in the future.

All schools and colleges were provided with information on how to place orders for the scheme when it launched in 2020, and again in January 2021. We continue to work with our delivery partner phs to encourage engagement with the scheme. For example, in March 2021 the department ran a new social media communications campaign to raise the profile of the scheme amongst pupils, parents and schools. No one should be held back from accessing education due to their period, and we are considering what further work we can do, including with local authorities, to ensure that all organisations across England are aware of the scheme.

Organisations do not have to use this scheme to acquire period products if they prefer to use an alternative route to make them available.

■ Schools: Coventry

Colleen Fletcher:

[75905]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding his Department has allocated to schools in (a) Coventry North East constituency and (b) Coventry for building improvement programmes in each of the last five years.

Mr Robin Walker:

The department allocates condition funding each year to those responsible for school buildings to improve and maintain the condition of the school estate. Most condition funding allocations are calculated at a responsible body level and cannot be broken down to constituency level, as decisions on investment are often taken at a local level.

Schools and those responsible for school buildings receive condition funding through different routes depending on their size and type. The majority of condition funding is paid to responsible bodies through annual School Condition Allocations (SCA). Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) is also allocated for schools to spend on their own capital priorities.

The department has allocated over £20 million in condition funding to Coventry local authority since 2017 for maintained schools (see attached table). This includes SCA (and up to the 2019-20 financial year, funding paid via the local authority Voluntary Aided Programme for voluntary aided schools), and DFC. As part of this, in the 2018-19 financial year, additional funding was made available through the Healthy Pupils Capital Fund, as well as £400 million additional DFC. In the 2020-21 financial year, the government made an additional £560 million available for essential maintenance and upgrade projects. Coventry local authority's share of additional funding has been included in figures in the table.

Large multi-academy trusts and large voluntary aided school bodies, also receive SCA funding to invest in schools for which they are responsible. These are not

included in the figures as large academy trusts and voluntary aided school bodies will typically span local authority boundaries. A full breakdown of allocations can be found on GOV.UK.

Smaller trusts, voluntary aided schools and sixth form colleges that are not eligible for SCA can bid into the Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) each year. Over the last 5 years, there have been 3 successful CIF applications for eligible schools in the Coventry North East Constituency with a total funding award of £1.2 million. Over the same period, for Coventry overall there have been 38 successful CIF applications with a total funding award of £12.4 million.

For the Priority School Building Programme there have been two schools in the Coventry North-East constituency, and six schools in the Coventry Local Authority over the last five years. So far, there have not been any schools from the Coventry North East constituency within the new School Rebuilding Programme. However, four schools in the Coventry local authority area are included in the first 100 projects of the programme that have been announced to date.

Attachments:

1. 75905_table [75905_table_showing_Coventry_local_authority_condition_funding.xlsx]

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Ferric Sulphate

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[72402\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate his Department has made of the amount of ferric sulphate available in the UK as of 9 November 2021.

Rebecca Pow:

There is no shortage of chemicals required for wastewater treatment, and production levels remain normal.

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[72403\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the impact of the availability of ferric sulphate supplies on levels of untreated sewage being discharged into rivers.

Rebecca Pow:

There is no shortage of ferric sulphate or any other chemical required for wastewater treatment.

■ Flood Control: Northwich

Mike Amesbury:

[\[71447\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what checks are in place to prevent flooding in Northwich town centre during winter 2021-22.

Rebecca Pow:

Following October 2019 flooding and Storm Christoph in January 2021, flood risk authorities across Cheshire including the Environment Agency (EA), Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWCC) and United Utilities committed to reducing flood risk in Northwich. The three organisations have been working together to address recommendations from the October 2019 Section 19 report published by CWCC to make the community in Northwich more resilient to future storm events.

The partnership prepared a joint emergency plan covering pre-flood and emergency response checks so that efforts are even more coordinated than for previous events. Pumping contingencies put in place following the October 2019 flooding are being enhanced to cope with a Storm Christoph sized event, and funding has been committed from all organisations in this partnership to develop these and other winter readiness measures. The partnership aims to look at longer term solutions to address flood risk in Northwich using a coordinated and strategic approach to take account of the future impacts of climate change and develop more sustainable solutions going forward.

The EA re-checked all of the outfalls to the river in the town centre to ensure non-return valves are fitted and are working as they should. The EA conducted pre-winter testing of the demountable flood barrier defences in Northwich on 7 November 2021 and confirmed they are functioning correctly and that the road closures and operational procedures all go smoothly when called upon.

Hunting**Alex Norris:**[\[75987\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the frequency of public land being used for illegal fox hunting under the guise of trail hunting; and what steps the Government is taking to ensure the effective enforcement of the prohibition on fox-hunting on public land.

Rebecca Pow:

The Hunting Act 2004 makes it an offence to hunt a wild mammal with dogs except where it is carried out in accordance with the exemptions in the Act.

Those found guilty under the Act are subject to the full force of the law. As enforcement of the Hunting Act is an operational matter for the police, Defra has not assessed the frequency of offences against the Hunting Act committed on public land.

Poaching: Sentencing**Jim Shannon:**[\[72427\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to introduce harsher sentencing for poachers.

Rebecca Pow:

This Government takes wildlife crime, including poaching, seriously and is committed to ensuring the protection wildlife legislation offers is effectively enforced. We also recognise the issues and distress that poaching can cause for rural communities. Crimes such as deer poaching and hare coursing are completely unacceptable. Significant sanctions are already available to judges to hand down to those convicted of wildlife crime. A person guilty of a poaching offence under the Deer Act for example can receive a fine of up to £2,500 and / or up to three months in prison.

The Government has no current plans to introduce harsher sentences for poaching in general. However, our Action Plan for Animal Welfare, published in May this year, sets out our commitment to crack down on illegal hare coursing-related activity, providing law enforcement with more tools to address the issue effectively, including through legislation when Parliamentary time allows.

■ Tree Planting**Steve Reed:**[\[71343\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what calculation his Department has made of the number of trees that will need to be planted each year to meet the Government's target of planting 30 million trees per year by 2025.

Rebecca Pow:

The Government has committed to bring tree planting rates across the UK up to 30,000 hectares per year by the end of this Parliament. This is consistent with the Balanced Net Zero Pathway recommended by the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) in its advice to the Government on setting the Sixth Carbon Budget.

In the financial year 2019/20 (the beginning of this Parliament), 2,300ha of new woodland was created in England. We expect by May 2024 to reach at least 7,000ha of woodland creation per year in England as part of our contribution to the UK-wide efforts.

We will also consider consulting on introducing a long-term statutory tree target through the new powers of the Environment Act.

■ Tree Planting: Northern Ireland**Carla Lockhart:**[\[72631\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will take steps to enable the Woodland Trust to send trees to Northern Ireland to allow local groups to fully participate in The Queen's Green Canopy to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022.

Rebecca Pow:

The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) is a unique tree planting initiative created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022 which invites people from across the United Kingdom to "**Plant a Tree for the Jubilee**".

The QGC is encouraging schools and communities to get involved in planting Jubilee trees, with free tree packs available in Scotland, Wales and England through the Woodland Trust. In Northern Ireland, free tree packs for schools and communities are available through [the Conservation Volunteers](#).

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

■ Abduljalil al-Singace

Brendan O'Hara: [\[71353\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the the oral answer of 26 October 2021 by the Minister for the Middle East and North Africa, Official Report, column 131, and whether he has raised the case of imprisoned human rights defender on hunger strike, Dr Abuljalil AISingace in any bilateral meetings with Bahraini officials in (a) the UK and (b) Bahrain.

James Cleverly:

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

Margaret Ferrier: [\[72473\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether (a) she, (b) Ministers in her Department and (c) officials in her Department have made representations to their Bahraini counterparts in each of the last three months on the case of imprisoned human rights defender, Dr Abuljalil AISingace.

James Cleverly:

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

■ Afghanistan: Economic Growth

Kim Johnson: [\[72619\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to promote and support economic growth in Afghanistan.

James Cleverly:

We are monitoring the situation in Afghanistan closely, including the rapid reduction in economic growth. We have committed to provide £286 million in humanitarian and development support and continue to explore the best ways to provide support to the Afghan people.

■ Afghanistan: Embassies

Kim Johnson:

[\[72618\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, when the Government will establish an embassy in Afghanistan.

James Cleverly:

The British Embassy in Kabul has suspended operations. The UK Mission to Afghanistan based in Doha is leading our diplomatic, security and humanitarian engagement. We intend to re-establish a diplomatic presence in Kabul when the security and political situation in the country allows, and are coordinating this effort with allies.

■ Afghanistan: Humanitarian Situation

Kim Johnson:

[\[72617\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to help prevent a humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan in winter 2021-22; and if the Government will (a) engage in talks with the Taliban and (b) provide aid to support the Afghan population without food.

James Cleverly:

We are pressing the Taliban to respect international humanitarian law and principles, and to allow aid agencies to operate freely to meet needs in Afghanistan. The UK will spend £286 million on humanitarian and development needs in Afghanistan this year. On 31 October the Prime Minister announced that £50 million would be allocated to provide over 2.5 million Afghans with life-saving food, emergency health services, shelter and warm clothing to prepare for winter.

■ Africa: Climate Change

Mr Steve Baker:

[R] [\[71325\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the UK's international climate change strategy on poverty in African countries.

Vicky Ford:

Tackling climate change and biodiversity is the UK Government's number one international priority as set out in the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy, published in March 2021. Evidence shows that poorer people are more vulnerable to the impact of climate change and unless addressed now, these impacts will represent an obstacle to the sustained eradication of poverty. Africa is the continent most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. From cyclones in Southern Africa to locusts in East Africa, changing weather patterns are already having catastrophic impacts for communities living across the continent, impacting lives and livelihoods.

As COP26 President, the UK is committed to driving action to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees and support countries that are most vulnerable to adapt to the impacts of climate change. This will be crucially important for communities in Africa, where the impacts of climate change are already being felt. The UK is a long-standing supporter of African adaptation, with around half of our £2.7 billion adaptation budget between 2016 and 2020 spent in Africa. We have strengthened these commitments at COP26, contributing £20 million to the Africa Adaptation Acceleration Programme to support African countries in designing and implementing transformational adaptation of their economies and post-COVID recovery. We have provided a guarantee to the African Development Bank, releasing up to \$2 billion of climate finance - half of which will be for adaptation. We also recognise the importance of Africa's forested areas to mitigating climate change impacts and limiting global temperature rise. At the World Leaders Summit Forests and Land Use Event, the UK contributed £200 million to a landmark £1.1 billion donor pledge to protect the Congo Basin - the world's second largest rainforest - and support the region's long-term green economic development. These commitments demonstrate that Africa is at the heart of our approach to climate and nature.

■ **Anoosheh Ashoori and Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe**

Tommy Sheppard:

[\[70284\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of the potential merits of extending diplomatic protection to Anoosheh Ashoori and Nazanin Ratcliffe.

James Cleverly:

[Holding answer 15 November 2021]: We have received Mr Ashoori's application for diplomatic protection. The Foreign Secretary is considering the matter carefully. In Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's case, the Foreign Secretary was clear that diplomatic protection would not lead to an overnight resolution. We remain committed to securing Mr Ashoori's, Ms. Zaghari-Ratcliffe's and Mr Tahbaz's immediate and permanent release. The Foreign Secretary raised the UK's strong opposition to Iran's practice of detaining foreign and dual nationals with her Iranian counterpart on 8 November and will continue to do so. Our Ambassador in Tehran regularly raises Mr Ashoori's, Mr Tahbaz's and Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's cases with the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

■ **Bahrain: Human Rights**

Margaret Ferrier:

[\[72472\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what specific human rights (a) issues and (b) cases Ministers in his Department raised with the Bahraini prime minister when they met at the COP26 Summit in Glasgow.

James Cleverly:

We regularly raise human rights issues and individual cases with senior members of the Government of Bahrain, and continue to raise specific cases with senior interlocutors, as well as with the independent human rights oversight bodies.

■ Bosnia: Politics and Government**Mark Pritchard:**[\[71300\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps she is taking to encourage (a) political dialogue and (b) the peaceful resolution of disputes between political parties in Bosnia.

Wendy Morton:

The UK remains committed to ensuring peace, and upholding international law in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). In the UN Security Council in recent weeks, we helped renew the EU's stabilisation force's (EUFOR's) mandate for a further 12 months, and supported the High Representative. The High Representative has an essential role in securing and maintaining lasting peace in BiH, and has the UK's full support, including for the use of executive powers should the situation require. The UK liaises closely with the EUFOR commander and his team on their vital work to ensure a safe and secure environment in BiH. We also support the NATO Headquarters in Sarajevo, including through the secondment of UK staff officers, who are building the capacity of the BiH Armed Forces. The UK also works closely with political parties, civil society and community leaders to support reconciliation efforts, to tackle legacy issues, and to build common purpose around a brighter future for all citizens. The UK rejects efforts to undermine BiH's stability, and will continue to support BiH in implementing domestic reforms and tackling challenges to peace and security.

■ Cameroon: Human Rights**Stephen Doughty:**[\[72453\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions she has had with the Government of Cameroon on the (a) treatment of the Anglophone minority and (b) protection of (i) civilians and (ii) human rights in that country.

Vicky Ford:

The UK Government remains deeply concerned about the crisis in the North-West and South-West (Anglophone) regions of Cameroon, including the disturbing reports of human rights abuses and violations by both armed separatists and the security forces. We continue to raise the crisis with representatives of the Government of Cameroon, including through our High Commission in Yaounde, as well as within multilateral fora. My predecessor visited Cameroon in March and met President Biya, Prime Minister Ngute and Foreign Minister Mbella Mbella to push for a peaceful resolution to the crisis. HMG also urges the Government of Cameroon to engage fully with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. At the UN Security

Council in June, the UK's Permanent Representative reiterated the UN Secretary General's call for the violence to end and for all actors to stop attacks against civilians. At the UN Human Rights Council in September, the UK called for an end to violence and impartial investigations to hold the perpetrators of human rights violations and abuses to account. We have since reiterated these calls in our engagements with the Government of Cameroon.

■ **Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations: Finance**

Preet Kaur Gill:

[\[75963\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, in the context of the UK hosting a 2022 summit to support the work of the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), what funding plans the Government has for CEPI in each of the next three financial years.

Wendy Morton:

As part of the Spending Review process, all future budgets are currently being finalised and we are not yet in a position to confirm individual allocations.

■ **Colombia: Homicide**

Apsana Begum:

[\[71481\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the circumstances surrounding the armed attack that killed trade unionist María Dorfenis López Cordón and injured Rigoberto Cabanzo Arévalo in the Colombian region of Meta on 29 August 2021.

Wendy Morton:

The British Government remains concerned about the persistent level of violence towards human rights' defenders and social leaders in Colombia. Through our Conflict, Stability, and Security Fund (CSSF), which has provided £68 million in support of peace agreement implementation, security, and stability in Colombia since 2015, we will continue to prioritise funding interventions to protect human rights' defenders, including trade unionists, and social leaders.

Colombia is a UK 'Human Rights Priority Country,' and we consistently raise our concerns regarding violence against human rights defenders and social leaders at the UN Security Council, as we did at meetings in July, and on 14 October. We look to the Colombian Government to further integrate its presence in conflict-affected areas, and strengthen the institutions that can investigate and prosecute the criminal actors responsible. We will continue to raise our concerns with the relevant state actors in Colombia.

■ Commonwealth: Capital Punishment

Mark Pritchard:

[\[72376\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will hold discussions with her counterparts in Commonwealth countries on ending the death penalty for (a) minors and (b) people who are mentally incapacitated.

James Cleverly:

It is the longstanding policy of the UK Government to oppose the death penalty in all circumstances, especially in cases that do not meet the minimum standards defined by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. We regularly engage with governments, including in Commonwealth countries, on human rights and the death penalty.

■ Coronavirus: Vaccination

Catherine West:

[\[75952\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether the Government has made an assessment of the potential merits of deploying additional diplomatic efforts to avoid large-scale wastage of covid-19 vaccines around the world.

Wendy Morton:

The UK is deploying our diplomatic influence, development expertise and money to support COVAX, a multilateral mechanism that aims to deliver equitable access by pooling resources to accelerate the development, manufacture, and delivery of Covid-19 vaccines. The UK is working with COVAX, the World Health Organisation and UNICEF, in support of country governments, to allocate vaccines according to need, to ensure rapid rollout of doses to priority groups and to prevent wastage. Ability to roll-out vaccines before they expire is a significant element of our planning of when and where the UK will deploy doses both domestically and with international partners. As part of the UK's G7 Presidency, we are working closely with the G7 to mobilise international financing, increase vaccine supply, build vaccine confidence and support in-country delivery, including through community mobilisation.

■ Developing Countries: Water

Fleur Anderson:

[\[71479\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much her Department spent on water resilience projects in (a) 2019-20 and (b) 2020-21; and what the projected spending is for those projects in 2021-22.

Wendy Morton:

UK Official Development Assistance (ODA) spend is recorded in line with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Assistance Committee coding. This does not specifically record water resilience. Yearly UK bilateral ODA spend on water and sanitation, including water resilience, can be found

in the respective Annual Statistics on International Development publications:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-on-international-development>.

Following the recent spending review and autumn budget, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office has started the process of allocating sectoral funding. This process should provide some more clarity on sector specific funding over the coming months.

■ East Africa: Conflict Resolution

Fleur Anderson:

[71480]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much her Department spent on peace building programmes in (a) Sudan, (b) South Sudan and (c) Ethiopia in (i) 2018-19, (ii) 2019-20 and (iii) 2020-21; and what the projected spending is on those programmes in 2021-22.

Vicky Ford:

In Sudan, the UK provided over £12 million to support peacebuilding through the Conflict, Security and Stability Fund (CSSF) from 2018 to 2021 (£4.3 million in 2018, £5.1 million in 2019/20, and £2.7 million in 2020/21). The CSSF supported a range of interventions related to community security, local peacebuilding and combatting sexual and gender-based violence. This funding focused on enhancing peacebuilding efforts through; developing and sharing better evidence and best practice for those working on peacebuilding; improving the human rights situation and access to justice; and supporting Sudan peace negotiations in Juba. We are reviewing our assistance (with the exception of humanitarian aid) in light of the military coup on 25 October.

In South Sudan, between April 2018 and March 2021, the UK provided £14.6 million in CSSF funding related to peacebuilding activities. This includes the South Sudan 'Peacebuilding Opportunities Fund' (POF), which has funded inter-community peace dialogues in four areas of the country since 2019. In 2021, the POF supported mediation efforts in Jonglei, one of South Sudan's most conflict-affected areas, and culminated in the PIERI Action for Peace Agreement. Implementation of this so far has led to a significantly lower level of conflict than in previous years and improved inter-communal relations. The UK has provided £3.1 million of support to the POF to date. The project continues until March 2022, and the budget for the final year (April 2021-March 2022) is £1 million.

In Ethiopia, UK CSSF has funded peacebuilding NGO Conciliation Resources to support peacebuilding efforts in Somali Regional State. Between 2019-2021, this programme spent £1.325 million and supported structures and processes to sustainably resolve violent conflicts between communities. This included providing advice to former armed groups (notably the Ogaden National Liberation Front) as they transition to participate in Ethiopian party politics, the development of a Peace and Unity Council, the establishment of a Regional Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and support to survivors of human rights abuses. Based on the success

of the programme, this work is being developed further with an additional £500,000 allocated for June 2021-March 2022.

■ Ethiopia: Humanitarian Situation

Jim Shannon:

[72436]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the International Development Committee's Tenth Report of Session 2019-21, The Humanitarian Situation in Tigray, HC 1289, published on 30 April 2021, what steps her Department has taken to implement the recommendations set out in that report; what representations she is making to the Ethiopian government on ensuring protection for (a) Ethiopians from violence and (b) vulnerable communities in the region; what steps her Department is taking to enable access by independent monitors to Tigray to collect criminal evidence and bring those who are responsible to justice; and what steps her Department is taking to ensure that humanitarian agencies have access to vulnerable communities in (i) Tigray and (ii) neighbouring regions.

Vicky Ford:

The UK Government welcomed the International Development Committee's (IDC) report "The humanitarian situation in Tigray" published on 30 April and our response to the recommendations highlighted in the report is available to view online (<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5802/cmselect/cmintdev/554/55402.htm>).

We are extremely concerned by reports of widespread human rights violations and abuses in Ethiopia. The Foreign Secretary spoke to Deputy Prime Minister Demeke on 5 November. HM Ambassador Addis Ababa spoke to Prime Minister Abiy on 28 October. I raised my concerns with Deputy Foreign Minister Redwan on 18 November. We support the conclusions of the joint investigation by the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, which collected harrowing evidence from Tigray. It is essential that all those responsible for human rights violations and abuses be held to account. All parties must implement the report's recommendations and ensure that victims have access to support.

The humanitarian context in Tigray is catastrophic. To avert region-wide famine and massive loss of life we are clear that the Government of Ethiopia must lift the blockade of Tigray and allow aid in. The humanitarian crisis now extends beyond Tigray impacting millions of people in Afar and Amhara following attacks by the Tigray Defence Force (TDF). The TDF's advance must stop and the TDF must allow humanitarian supplies and commercial goods to reach all areas of need. On 16 October, I announced an additional £29 million of humanitarian aid to people affected by the conflict in northern Ethiopia. This increased the UK's commitment to the crisis to more than £76 million making the UK the second largest donor.

■ **Forced Labour: China**

Andrew Percy: [\[68196\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether her Department is taking steps to sanction businesses that are complicit in the use of forced labour in Xinjiang, China.

Amanda Milling:

On the 12th of January, the UK Government announced a series of robust measures in respect of UK supply chains to help ensure that no British organisations - government or private sector, deliberately or inadvertently - are profiting from or contributing to human rights violations against the Uyghurs or other minorities in Xinjiang. These measures include a review of export controls as they apply to Xinjiang, the introduction of financial penalties for organisations that fail to comply with their obligations under the Modern Slavery Act, and new, robust guidance to UK businesses on the specific risks faced by companies with links to the region.

■ **Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria**

Stephen Doughty: [\[72456\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions she has had with the UN Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria ahead of the upcoming replenishment round.

Wendy Morton:

The UK was pleased to join with others on the Board of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria to approve the Global Fund's new strategy for 2023-2028. This will underpin development of the investment case for the next replenishment. The UK Government continues to be a major donor to international health organisations and programmes, including Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, WHO and the Global Fund.

■ **Hezbollah**

Stephen Morgan: [\[72582\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment her Department has made of the threat of Hezbollah-related organised crime to (a) the UK and (b) European allies.

James Cleverly:

We condemn Hizballah's criminal and terrorist activity. The UK proscribes Hizballah in its entirety as a terrorist organisation and has an asset freeze in place against the entire organisation. The UK works with partners around the world to coordinate action and combat organised crime groups operating across borders.

■ Indo-Pacific Region: Climate Change

Alyn Smith:

[\[72595\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to her Department's news story, UK announces £274m boost to climate resilience across Indo-Pacific, published on 8 November 2021, from which budgets that funding will be provided; whether that funding has been previously announced; and whether her Department plans to distribute that funding in the form of grants or loans.

Vicky Ford:

The funding for the Climate Action for a Resilient Asia (CARA) programme comes from the UK's Official Development Assistance budget. This is a new programme providing adaptation finance and was announced for the first time at COP26 on the 8th November 2021. It will contribute to the UK's existing commitment to provide £11.6 billion in International Climate Finance, announced in 2019, including £3 billion towards protecting nature and biodiversity.

The Department will provide funding for CARA in the form of grants. Our partners will then deploy a mix of technical assistance and capital investments to achieve the programme objectives.

■ International Corruption Unit: Overseas Aid

Kevin Hollinrake:

[\[72536\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of cuts to Overseas Development Assistance on the budget of the National Crime Agency's International Corruption Unit.

James Cleverly:

A thorough assessment was carried out in both financial years 2020/21 and 2021/22, of the potential impact of ODA budget reduction on the National Crime Agency's International Corruption Unit (ICU), and before any budget decision was made. Because of the importance of the ICU's work, FCDO decided to prioritise the ICU budget as far as possible, when deciding where to make required cuts to ODA.

In 2020/21, the annual ICU budget was increased from £4.7m to £5.7million. In 2021/22, the budget was reduced by approximately 10% to £5.02 million. This was based on an assessment that the ICU would be able to manage this cut through not expanding into new areas, whilst preserving existing work and staffing. This remains above the pre-pandemic 2019/20 ODA budget of £4.7 million. The impact of the small budget reduction is regularly monitored by the Department.

■ Iran: Detainees

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[72352\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of an international all-faith delegation to

Tehran to petition for the release of Nazanin Zaghari Ratcliffe and other dual citizens being detained within the Islamic Republic of Iran.

James Cleverly:

We remain committed to doing all we can to ensure that British nationals being unfairly detained by Iran are released and allowed to return home to be reunited with their families. We engage international and likeminded partners on these efforts where we deem it helpful to do so.

■ **Iraq: Explosions**

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[71323\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the accuracy of media reports that an explosion occurred on 7 November 2021 outside the Iraqi Prime Minister's residential home in Baghdad.

James Cleverly:

We condemn the attack on Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa Al-Kadhimi that took place at the Prime Minister's home in Baghdad on 7 November. Prime Minister Johnson called Prime Minister Kadhimi later that day. He made clear that the UK stands by the Iraqi people and supports Prime Minister Kadhimi's call for calm and restraint. We stand with the Iraqi government, security forces and people in their rejection of political violence, and urge all disputes around the election to be settled through the proper legal channels.

■ **Members: Correspondence**

Kevin Brennan:

[\[75823\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, when she plans to provide a revised response to the letter dated 6 October 2021 from the hon Member for Cardiff West, relating to the case of Luke Symons.

James Cleverly:

A reply was sent on 22 October. I [Mr Cleverly] sent a revised reply on 18 November.

■ **Mozambique: Politics and Government**

Ruth Jones:

[\[73958\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of the political and security situation in Mozambique.

Vicky Ford:

We welcome the news that Mozambican, Southern African Development Community and Rwandan Forces have recovered areas of Cabo Delgado, north-east Mozambique, that were previously under insurgent control. There is still work to be done and we look forward to the Government working with international partners to ensure humanitarian assistance reaches affected areas, and reconstruction can take

place. We are working with the Government of Mozambique to address the root drivers of the conflict and instability, including by providing targeted assistance under the framework of a Defence Memorandum of Understanding. The UK is also working to strengthen international cooperation, and co-chairs with Ireland a high-level international taskforce on Cabo Delgado.

■ **Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe**

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[72353\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Government's strategy to secure the release of Nazanin Zaghari Ratcliffe.

James Cleverly:

Iran's decision to proceed with these baseless further charges against Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe is an appalling continuation of the cruel ordeal she is going through. Instead of threatening to return Nazanin to prison Iran must release her permanently so she can return home. I have discussed Nazanin's ordeal, alongside that of Anoosheh Ashoori and Morad Tahbaz with Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian on 8 November as did Minister Cleverly with Deputy Foreign Minister Bagheri Kani, 11 November. I have spoken to Nazanin twice since taking up this role and met her family most recently on 28 October to reiterate my commitment to securing her release. In addition, I hold regular meetings with officials to direct activity across the FCDO to secure her release. We will not stop working until those dual British nationals being unfairly detained by Iran are released.

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[72356\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many meetings she has had with foreign counterparts on the release of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe since her appointment.

James Cleverly:

Iran's decision to proceed with these baseless further charges against Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe is an appalling continuation of the cruel ordeal she is going through. Instead of threatening to return Nazanin to prison Iran must release her permanently so she can return home. I have discussed Nazanin's ordeal, alongside that of Anoosheh Ashoori and Morad Tahbaz with Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian on 8 November as did Minister Cleverly with Deputy Foreign Minister Bagheri Kani, 11 November. I have spoken to Nazanin twice since taking up this role and met her family most recently on 28 October to reiterate my commitment to securing her release. In addition, I hold regular meetings with officials to direct activity across the FCDO to secure her release. We will not stop working until those dual British nationals being unfairly detained by Iran are released.

■ Nord Stream 2 Pipeline

Catherine West: [\[75953\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the German Government's temporary block of the NordStream 2 Pipeline; and what discussions she has had with her European counterparts on reconsideration of that project.

Wendy Morton:

In accordance with German law, the certification procedure for the Nord Stream 2 pipeline has been temporarily suspended by the German regulator for technical reasons. The Foreign Secretary has not raised this technical delay with her European counterparts. Decisions on German energy supply are ultimately a matter for Germany.

The UK remains concerned about the impact Nord Stream 2 will have on European energy security and particularly on the interests of Ukraine. The UK will continue to work with Germany and other international partners to call on Russia to fulfil its international obligations.

■ Nuclear Weapons

Jim Shannon: [\[72420\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions has he had with his counterparts in China and the US on nuclear weapons.

James Cleverly:

Nuclear cooperation remains an important element of the enduring special relationship between the US and the UK. Discussions between the Foreign and Defence Secretaries and their US counterparts are reflected and supported by daily cooperation at official level on arms control, nuclear deterrence policy, counter proliferation and strategic stability between the UK and the US, as well as by wider cooperation with NATO Allies.

The UK engages regularly with Chinese officials and civil society on nuclear issues, including through our annual dialogue on Counter Proliferation and discussions with the Chinese Arms Control and Disarmament Association. We discuss nuclear issues with both China and the US within the P5 Process.

■ Occupied Territories: Health Services

Dr Philippa Whitford: [\[75008\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether the UK's foreign aid programs for 2021-22 will support the delivery of essential healthcare services in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

James Cleverly:

The UK remains firmly committed to ensuring access to essential healthcare services for Palestinians. We are a longstanding supporter to the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) which provides core services, including healthcare to Palestinian refugees. Our future spending allocations will be set in the next Spending Review and full budgets for 2021 will be published in due course, including in our regular Statistics on International Development website and in the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office Annual Report and Accounts.

Dr Philippa Whitford:[\[75009\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the impact of the UK's decision to reduce funding that supports the salaries of health and education workers in Palestine on the delivery of essential healthcare services in the occupied Palestinian territory.

James Cleverly:

Following Official Development Assistance (ODA) prioritisation exercises undertaken in March 2021, the UK no longer provides direct funding to the Palestinian Authority to support the salaries of education workers and health professionals. The UK remains firmly committed to ensuring access to essential healthcare services for Palestinians. We are a longstanding supporter to the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) which provides core services, including healthcare to Palestinian refugees.

■ Palestinians: Textbooks**Andrew Gwynne:**[\[71292\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the Answer of 25 January 2021 to Question 143050 on Palestinians: Textbooks, how many mistakes in educational material published by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency UNRWA have been identified by UNRWA since 1 January 2020.

James Cleverly:

We strongly condemn all forms of violence and incitement to violence. We accompany our support for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) with stringent attention to implementation of their neutrality policy, including how they apply this to textbooks and other learning material to ensure they reflect UN values. We understand that UNRWA has continued to review and address any education materials in breach of its policies. We remain confident that UNRWA has taken the issue seriously and has taken steps to improve their risk management system and quality assurance of educational materials.

■ Spain: Travel**Charlotte Nichols:**[\[71494\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she plans to hold discussions with her Spanish counterparts on allowing more

flexible access to Spain for UK nationals than that access allowed under the Schengen Agreement.

Wendy Morton:

During negotiations with the EU, the Government discussed arrangements for British Citizens travelling to the Schengen Area. Regrettably, the EU consistently maintained that British Citizens will be treated as Third Country Nationals under the Schengen Borders Code as of 1 January 2021. This means that British Citizens are able to travel visa-free for short stays for up to 90 days in a rolling 180-day period. This is the standard length of stay that the EU offers to nationals of eligible third countries, in line with existing EU legislation. British Citizens who are planning to stay longer than 90 days in a rolling 180-day period will need permission from the relevant Member State. This may require applying for a visa and/or permit.

The UK's Trade and Cooperation Agreement with the EU notes that both the UK and EU currently provide for visa-free travel for short-term visits for each other's nationals in accordance with their respective laws. The detail of those arrangements is set by domestic law, reflecting the UK's position as a non-EU Member State. The Government does not typically enter into bilateral agreements on visa-free travel.

■ **Sub-Saharan Africa: Coronavirus**

Stephen Doughty:

[\[72458\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many covid-19 vaccines have been provided by the UK to each sub-Saharan African country (a) directly, (b) via Covax and (c) via other initiatives in 2021 as of 9 November 2021.

Vicky Ford:

The UK has contributed £548 million to the COVAX Advance Market Commitment (AMC), which aims to provide up to 1.8 billion doses to low and middle-income countries by early 2022. Our G7 Presidency also secured agreement from leaders to share and finance an additional 1 billion doses by mid-2022. This includes a commitment from the UK to share 100 million doses, 80% of which will go through COVAX.

As of 9 November, the UK has provided 410,000 doses directly to Kenya. In addition to the financial contribution, a further 4,919,680 doses have been donated via COVAX and delivered to the following Sub-Saharan countries: Malawi (119,040), Angola (128,640), Ghana (249,600), Zambia (119,200), Senegal (140,160), Uganda (299,520), Kenya (407,040), Democratic Republic of Congo (51,840), Nigeria (1,292,640), Ethiopia (1,664,640), Niger (105,600), Mozambique (188,160) and Rwanda (153,600).

■ Sudan: Overseas Aid**Jim Shannon:**[\[72435\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much and what proportion of funding allocated by the Government in response to the Tigray crisis is supporting refugees in Sudan; and what steps her Department is taking to ensure that communities that are persecuted as a result of their religion or belief have equal access to that aid within Sudan.

Vicky Ford:

The conflict in Tigray has had significant consequences and has displaced millions of people including more than 63,000 Ethiopian refugees who have sought safety in Sudan. The UK has provided £6.1 million in funding to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the Danish Refugee Council to address urgent needs arising from the Tigray crisis in Sudan. This is part of an overall UK's commitment to of more than £76 million to respond to the humanitarian crisis caused by the conflict, making the UK the second largest donor.

Our priority is to ensure that all Ethiopians in need, irrespective of ethnicity, religion and political affiliation, receive life-saving aid and that humanitarian access to areas affected by insecurity is maintained. Humanitarian operations in Tigray have come to a standstill owing to the de facto blockade imposed by the Ethiopian Government since late June. Prior to the blockade, UK funded partners were working in the most challenging circumstances to provide life-saving assistance to displaced persons, refugees and others. I have called on all parties in Ethiopia to urgently agree a ceasefire to allow humanitarian aid through and for the Ethiopian Government to lift the blockade of humanitarian relief into the Tigray region. I reiterated this at the Westminster Hall Debate on 3 November and in my tweet on the same day. We continue to push both sides of the conflict to prioritise the wellbeing of people in need in northern Ethiopia and allow the flow of badly needed humanitarian assistance.

■ UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara**Alan Brown:**[\[71374\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will raise with her Moroccan counterpart the stamping of MINURSO passports by Morocco.

James Cleverly:

We are closely monitoring the situation in Western Sahara. We have regular discussions with the parties and remain in close contact with the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO). The UK fully supports the UN's efforts to achieve a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution that provides for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara.

■ United Arab Emirates: Detainees

Margaret Ferrier: [\[71355\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if she will make representations to the Emirati government to invite independent impartial human rights monitoring bodies, including UN thematic special procedures, to that country and allow those bodies to visit detention centres and detainees.

James Cleverly:

We encourage all states, including the United Arab Emirates, to uphold international human rights obligations. We believe that the best approach is to engage with Governments and work with international partners and civil society organisations to bring about positive change. Officials have raised cases in which there are allegations of human rights abuses with Emirati authorities.

■ United Arab Emirates: Interpol

Margaret Ferrier: [\[71356\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to the report by Sir David Calvert-Smith entitled, Undue influence: the UAE and Interpol, published in April 2021, and the candidacy of Emirati Major General Nasser Ahmed al-Raisi for the Interpol presidency, what assessment (a) she and (b) officials in her Department have made of evidence in that report that the UAE misused the Interpol Red Notice system for minor offences and political gain against people seen as a threat to the regime.

James Cleverly:

We are aware of this publication. INTERPOL is an independent organisation and is politically neutral in fulfilling its mandate. As with all elections for international organisations, the UK Government will review all candidates for the presidency of INTERPOL and consider our vote carefully. We are committed to the promotion of universal freedoms and human rights and we encourage all states, including the United Arab Emirates, to uphold international human rights obligations.

On 9 September, the Home Secretary with her G7 counterparts committed to strengthening our collective efforts to deter the misuse of INTERPOL notices, to improperly target and detain individuals for exercising their human rights and fundamental freedoms, including through supporting INTERPOL's use of corrective measures, as appropriate and increasing outreach on this issue.

■ United Arab Emirates: Prisoners

Margaret Ferrier: [\[71354\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions (a) she and (b) officials in her Department have had with Emirati counterparts on the treatment, welfare and release of Emirati prisoners of conscience, including academic, Dr Nasser bin Ghaith, human rights defender, Ahmed Mansoor and human rights lawyer, Mohammed al-Roken.

James Cleverly:

We are aware the cases of Ahmed Mansoor, Dr Nasser bin Ghaith and Mohammed al-Roken and the allegations of human rights abuses against them. Officials have raised such cases with the Emirati authorities, including with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Ambassador in London. We encourage all states, including the UAE, to uphold international human rights obligations.

■ Western Sahara: Freedom of Expression**Kim Johnson:**[\[71498\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps she plans to take in response to the concerns of OHCHR on the restrictions imposed by Morocco on the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association in Western Sahara.

James Cleverly:

Human rights, including freedom of expression, is a UK priority around the world. We raise human rights issues with Morocco accordingly and continue to monitor cases in Western Sahara.

■ Western Sahara: Human Rights**Alan Brown:**[\[71375\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will make representations to her Moroccan counterpart on (a) the inability of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to conduct any visits to Western Sahara during the last six years and (b) the resulting gaps in human rights monitoring in that non-self-governing territory.

James Cleverly:

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has conducted several visits to Western Sahara since 2011, the latest of which was in January 2016. Details of these visits can be found on the OHCHR website. We have consistently supported language in the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions which encourages the parties to continue their efforts to enhance the promotion and protection of human rights in Western Sahara.

■ Western Sahara: Natural Resources**Kim Johnson:**[\[71499\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will raise with her Moroccan counterpart the UN Human Rights Committee's recommendation that Morocco obtain the consent of the people of Western Sahara for the realisation of developmental projects and resource extraction operations.

James Cleverly:

The UK notes the United Nations legal view from 2002, which stated that commercial activity in Western Sahara (including the exploration for, and exploitation of natural

resources) is not inherently illegal but must be for the benefit of people of Western Sahara.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ Ambulance Services: North West

Tim Farron:

[\[70251\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the North West Ambulance Service's average response time has been for (a) category 1 calls, (b) category 2 calls, (c) category 3 calls and (d) category 4 calls in each of the last 12 months.

Edward Argar:

The following table shows the average ambulance response times for the North West Ambulance Service for Category 1, 2, 3 and 4 calls in hours, minutes and seconds in each of the last 12 months. Information on Category 4 calls is unavailable from May 2021 due to a reporting error.

	CATEGORY 1	CATEGORY 2	CATEGORY 3	CATEGORY 4
October 2020	8:03	45:40	2:18:38	2:59:01
November 2020	7:51	28:57	1:23:30	2:29:16
December 2020	7:36	26:29	1:17:46	2:56:38
January 2021	8:12	35:35	1:44:39	3:37:39
February 2021	7:12	21:04	49:52	1:48:36
March 2021	7:13	20:44	56:37	2:05:39
April 2021	7:29	23:52	1:21:43	3:08:16
May 2021	7:51	27:13	1:52:11	4:23:45
June 2021	8:19	38:15	3:18:28	-
July 2021	9:02	56:16	4:07:48	-
August 2021	8:42	49:05	3:14:19	-
September 2021	9:12	57:12	3:46:43	-

Source: NHS England

■ Babies: Health Services**Sarah Olney:** [\[71428\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, which Minister oversees the work of the Start for Life Unit in his Department.

Maggie Throup:

I am the Minister with responsibility for the Start for Life Unit.

■ Cardiovascular Diseases: Health Services**Sir John Hayes:** [\[73718\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has a workforce strategy to tackle cardiovascular care in the NHS.

Edward Argar:

NHS England and NHS Improvement's Cardiac Pathway Improvement Programme was launched this year and includes a workstream for workforce optimisation and innovation. The objectives for this workstream include ensuring education and training packages are in place, promoting the use of digital passporting for staff to enable working in trusts across health care systems and e-rostering and e-job planning across trusts and networks.

There are currently 3,469 hospital and community health service doctors working in cardiology in the National Health Service. This is an increase of 397 or 12.9% since July 2019. This includes 1,493 consultants, or an increase of 8.6% since July 2019.

■ Coronavirus: Disease Control**Alex Norris:** [\[72576\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what support clinically extremely vulnerable people will receive in the event that covid-19 restrictions are reintroduced.

Maggie Throup:

The shielding programme in England has now ended. Those who were previously considered clinically extremely vulnerable will not be advised to shield in the future or asked to follow specific national guidance. They are advised to follow the same general guidance as everyone else, in addition to any condition-specific advice that may have been provided by their specialist. The NHS Volunteer Responders programme and a range of other support services continue to be available and information on these has been provided to those previously considered to be clinically extremely vulnerable.

Mr Mark Harper: [R] [\[75839\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Department's Chief Scientific Adviser's oral evidence to the Science and Technology

Committee on 26 October 2021, what progress has been made by his Department on formulating a plan C for covid-19 restrictions.

Maggie Throup:

The Government has published the 'COVID-19 Response: Autumn and Winter Plan 2021' to sustain the progress made through the vaccination programme, avoiding the economic and social restrictions deployed in the past. However, in the event of unsustainable pressure on the National Health Service, we have set out a range of measures under 'Plan B'. We will monitor the data closely, taking action to support and protect the NHS when necessary.

■ **Coronavirus: Medical Treatments**

Alex Norris:

[\[72567\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to invest in alternative covid-19 treatments for immunocompromised people.

Maggie Throup:

Immunocompromised individuals are a priority cohort for research into therapeutic and prophylaxis treatments such as monoclonal antibody therapies, novel antivirals, and repurposed compounds. In August, Ronapreve, a novel monoclonal antibody, was approved by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). Ronapreve is being administered through the National Health Service to treat the most vulnerable, including immunocompromised patients.

The Antivirals Taskforce has secured two antiviral treatments. Molnupiravir has already received approval by the MHRA and will be deployed this winter to protect those at high-risk from COVID-19. The second antiviral will be deployed should it receive approval. The Taskforce is working with partners across the United Kingdom to ensure antivirals are deployed to protect the clinically vulnerable. The Therapeutics Taskforce and Antivirals Taskforce continue to monitor treatments of interest to identify any further promising compounds and ensure that UK patients can access them if they are safe and effective against COVID-19.

■ **Coronavirus: Protective Clothing**

Gareth Thomas:

[\[64529\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many complaints his Department has received from companies complaining that they were unable to get the attention of officials to supply personal protective equipment from February 2020 to August 2020; and if he will make a statement.

Edward Argar:

We processed over 24,000 offers of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) from over 15,000 suppliers who approached the National PPE Sourcing team via the online portals the Government established in March 2020. Using the webform ensured that offers of support were recorded effectively and taken forward as necessary.

Offers were triaged and those which could potentially deliver significant quantities of high-quality PPE quickly were prioritised. All offers then went into exactly the same Technical Assurance, Closing (contract negotiation) and Procurement (contract award) process, managed by officials, leading to the award of 339 contracts. A high number of offers were therefore rejected at different stages of being taken through this process for different reasons. A central log of complaints this generated, including those against officials, was not created.

■ **Coronavirus: Quarantine**

Stella Creasy: [\[75879\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that individuals who have received both doses of an MHRA-approved covid-19 vaccine outside the UK are subject to the same self-isolation requirements following a close contact with a confirmed positive case as those who received vaccines in the UK.

Maggie Throup:

An individual identified as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case is exempt from self-isolation if they have received both doses of a Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency-approved vaccine administered in the United Kingdom. The current system for validating the vaccination status of close contacts relies on checking against records in the National Immunisation Management System, which does not record vaccinations administered overseas. We are exploring options to extend the existing exemption to contacts who have completed an approved vaccination programme overseas.

■ **Coronavirus: Vaccination**

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[71319\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of the covid-19 vaccine booster campaign.

Helen Hayes: [\[71415\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the covid-19 vaccine booster campaign.

Kim Johnson: [\[71500\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the covid-19 vaccine booster campaign.

Maggie Throup:

As of 13 November 2021, more than 12.6 million people in the United Kingdom have received their COVID-19 booster vaccine or third dose to ensure the protection from the first two doses of the vaccine is maintained over the winter months. The Government continues to review the effectiveness of the COVID-19 booster campaign to maximise its impact.

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[71321\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of the rollout of covid-19 vaccines to 12 to 15 year olds.

Helen Hayes: [\[71417\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of roll-out of covid-19 vaccines to 12 to 15 year olds.

Kim Johnson: [\[71502\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the rollout of covid-19 vaccines for 12 to 15 year-olds.

Maggie Throup:

As of 7 November more than 823,000 12 to 15 year olds in England have already received one dose of COVID-19 vaccine. We continue to assess the effectiveness of the programme in order to accelerate the COVID-19 programme in schools. The National Health Service is enhancing the in-school offer to increase the scale and pace of delivery, as well as targeting communications to parents and young people to improve uptake and increase overall confidence in the programme.

Alex Norris: [\[72573\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate his Department has made of the number of Novavax trial volunteers who remain unable to access a covid-19 pass.

Maggie Throup:

All clinical trial participants should now be able to access their NHS COVID Pass via the NHS app or NHS.uk for domestic use in England. The majority of Novavax trial participants in England can now also access their NHS COVID Pass for travel.

Access is subject to data being received from clinical trial sites and participants should confirm that their data has been transferred if they cannot yet access their NHS COVID Pass for domestic or travel purposes.

Alex Norris: [\[72580\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department plans to take steps to grant GPs formal approval to administer the third dose of the covid-19 vaccine to severely immunosuppressed people.

Maggie Throup:

If a person is eligible, they will usually be vaccinated at their hospital or a local service such as their general practitioner surgery. As such, practices offering COVID-19 vaccines are already capable of administering third doses of a COVID-19 vaccine to severely immunosuppressed people.

Dr Luke Evans: [\[72602\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the progress of the pilot for recording overseas vaccinations in the NHS national database.

Maggie Throup:

There is now one vaccination centre in every region in England offering this service and by early December, there will be three sites per region. Further expansion of the service is planned in due course.

Dame Diana Johnson: [\[75843\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the impact on people with chronic asthma of changes to the rules on receiving a booster covid-19 vaccination.

Maggie Throup:

No such assessment has been made.

■ Disability: Children

Helen Hayes: [\[75941\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans his Department has to tackle the backlog in disabled children's health services.

Gillian Keegan:

On 6 September, the Government announced plans to spend over £8 billion over the Spending Review period 2022/23 to 2024/25 for a programme to provide elective care delayed by the pandemic. We have also announced an additional £5.4 billion to support the National Health Service COVID-19 response over the next six months, bringing the total Government support to over £34 billion in 2021/22. This includes £2 billion to reduce the elective backlog and waiting times for patients, including disabled children.

Helen Hayes: [\[75942\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent discussions officials in his Department have had with their counterparts in the Department for Education on the provision of disabled children's social care.

Damien Moore: [\[76005\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions officials in his Department have had with their counterparts in the Department for Education on the provision of disabled children's social care.

Alexander Stafford: [\[76051\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions officials in his Department has had with officials in the Department for Education on the provision of disabled children's social care.

Gillian Keegan:

Officials have regular discussions with the Department for Education, including in relation to Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and implementation of the Building the Right Support national plan to reduce reliance on inpatient care for people with a learning disability and autistic people.

This year councils have access to £51.3 billion to deliver their core services, including a £1.7 billion grant for social care. To support local areas, the Government has given over £6 billion in un-ringfenced funding directly to councils to support them with the immediate and longer-term impacts of COVID-19 spending pressures, including for social care for disabled children.

■ Early Years Healthy Development Review**Sarah Olney:**[\[71429\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish the timetable for announcing a Cabinet Minister to oversee implementation of the Government's Early Years Healthy Development Review, The Best Start for Life: a vision for the 1,001 critical days, published on 25 March 2021.

Maggie Throup:

As outlined in the Early Years Healthy Development Review's report, published in March 2021, a Cabinet Minister will oversee ensuring that Start for Life is kept at the heart of policy-making decisions across government.

The timing and nature of appointments to the Cabinet are at the discretion of the Prime Minister. A decision on responsibilities going forward will be made in due course.

■ Food: Labelling**Tim Loughton:**[\[71262\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if the Government plans to introduce yeast labelling on food packaging to improve information for people with allergies.

Maggie Throup:

It is a legal requirement for all prepacked foods to be fully labelled with an ingredient list. Therefore, if yeast or yeast extract is used as an ingredient in a prepacked food at any level, it must be included in the ingredient list. If one of the 14 major allergens defined in legislation is present in a pre-packed food, it must be emphasised within the ingredient list to distinguish it from other ingredients. Yeast is not currently included in the 14 major allergens. Any additions to this list would only be made based on relevant scientific evidence and views gathered through public consultation.

For those who are hypersensitive to foods not in the major allergens list, the Food Standards Agency recommends that consumers check the ingredients list on prepacked food and speak to businesses when they purchase non-pre-packed food.

■ Food: Sales Promotions

Andrew Lewer: [\[72584\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether manufacturers be able to produce products with on pack promotions until October 2023; and if he will make a statement.

Andrew Lewer: [\[72585\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Food (Promotion and Placement) (England) Regulations 2021, whether non-food and specified food items be promoted together; and if he will make a statement.

Andrew Lewer: [\[72586\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Food (Promotion and Placement) (England) Regulations 2021, what constitutes a meal deal; and if he will make a statement.

Maggie Throup:

In December 2020, we confirmed that we will legislate to restrict the promotion by location and volume price of foods high in fat, salt and sugar (HFSS) in stores and online. Restrictions will apply to medium and large businesses with 50 or more employees in England. The regulations were laid on 21 July 2021 with an implementation date of October 2022. Having considered the industry's feedback, we have extended the implementation date to allow businesses enough time to prepare for these novel restrictions.

For on pack promotions, the purpose of the transition period is to permit existing stock produced before October 2022 to be sold by relevant businesses until October 2023. However, whilst the on pack promotion is permitted to enable products to be sold between October 2022 and October 2023, the volume price promotion offer themselves must be void. After October 2023, products with on pack volume price promotions should not be sold in qualifying businesses.

The regulations explain that specified food must not be offered for sale as part of a volume price promotion, including a promotion in which non specified food items are also included. Offers that are not volume price promotions do not fall in scope of the restrictions.

'Meal deals' will not be in scope of the volume price promotion restrictions. However, HFSS products under a category which is in scope would be subject to the location restrictions, regardless of whether it is part of a meal deal. The intention for the 'relevant special offer' definition in the regulations is to reflect deals where a 'main' included in the deal. In the spirit of the regulations, only relevant special offers that are intended for consumption as a 'typical' meal with a main should be out of scope of the volume price promotions restrictions.

■ General Practitioners

Stephanie Peacock: [\[75967\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what comparative assessment he has made of the availability of in-person GP appointments before the covid-19 outbreak and after the covid-19 lockdown restrictions have been eased.

Maria Caulfield:

Face to face appointments remained available throughout the pandemic and NHS England and NHS Improvement have been clear that practices must provide both in person and remote consultations.

Excluding COVID-19 vaccinations appointments, there were 1.30 million average appointments per working day in September 2021 compared to 1.26 million in September 2019, an increase of 3.5%. In September 2021, 60.8% of all appointments were face-to-face compared to 80.5% in September 2019. However, this was a 3.1% increase on August 2021 and the highest proportion of face-to-face appointments since March 2020.

Stephanie Peacock: [\[75969\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure in-person appointments are available in all GP surgeries.

Maria Caulfield:

On 14 October, we set out measures in 'Our plan for improving access for patients and supporting general practice' to support general practice over the winter period and in the longer term. This included an additional investment of £250 million in a Winter Access Fund to improve the availability of general practitioner (GP) practices and increase the number of face-to-face appointments, while also investing in technology to make it easier for patients to see or speak to their GP. We expect patients to experience the same high quality of care regardless of how they access their GP surgery.

■ General Practitioners: Coronavirus

Stephanie Peacock: [\[75971\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that GP surgeries can meet the demand for their services during the covid-19 outbreak.

Maria Caulfield:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for York Central (Rachael Maskell MP) on 9 November 2021 to Question [69132](#).

■ General Practitioners: Waiting Lists

Stephanie Peacock: [\[75970\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of GP surgeries requiring patients to phone up to book a GP appointment on waiting times for all GP appointments.

Maria Caulfield:

Data on waiting times for general practitioner (GP) appointments is not held centrally therefore no such assessment has been made.

Patients can book GP appointments by visiting the surgery's website, using the NHS App and calling the practice directly. Accessing general practice services has changed during the pandemic, with practices offering triage and remote consultations alongside face-to face appointments, in order to see as many patients as possible while protecting staff and patients from infection risks.

■ Health Services: Children

Kim Leadbeater: [\[76057\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 16 November 2021 to Question 72641, on Health Services: Children, whether his Department has issued guidance on the allocation of the NHS Covid Recovery Fund to SEND and CAMHS services by NHS providers; and whether his Department monitors how much funding from the NHS Covid Recovery Fund is being allocated to SEND and CAMHS by NHS providers.

Gillian Keegan:

This specific guidance has not been issued. The funding provided is allocated to National Health Service providers based on their local plans and programmes, not to services specific to a particular patient group.

■ Health Services: Private Sector

Alex Norris: [\[72572\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department has taken to ensure that private health corporations and their subsidiaries do not move personal health data outside of the UK.

Gillian Keegan:

All organisations providing services to patients in the United Kingdom, whether in the National Health Service or privately, must abide by UK data protection legislation - the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the common law duty of confidentiality. These place strict conditions on how identifiable patient data can be used and shared.

■ Health Visitors: Babies

Sarah Olney: [71424]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the proportion of babies born since March 2020 that have been seen face-to-face by a health visitor.

Sarah Olney: [71425]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the proportion of health visitor contacts that fulfil the May 2021 Public Health England guidance which states that mandated reviews should be face-to-face, delivered by a health visitor, or under their supervision, since that guidance was published.

Maggie Throup:

The information is not available in the format requested. However, NHS Digital has recently published monthly health visitor statistics, including information on the proportion of mandated reviews delivered face to face, which is available at the following link:

<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/community-services-statistics-for-children-young-people-and-adults/august-2021/data-sets>

■ Health Visitors: Children

Sarah Olney: [71426]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the number of health visitors in England to deliver the Healthy Child Programme.

Maggie Throup:

No recent assessment has been made. The Healthy Child Programme should be led by health visitors alongside a range of delivery partners. It is the responsibility of local authorities, with their provider, to determine service requirements based upon local needs.

■ Heart Diseases: Rehabilitation

Sir John Hayes: [73719]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department has taken to increase access to cardiac rehabilitation.

Maria Caulfield:

The NHS Long Term Plan committed to improve care and outcomes for people with cardiovascular disease. To increase access to cardiac rehabilitation, NHS England and NHS Improvement are accelerating lessons learned from the pandemic, such as the enhanced use of digital technology and a greater application of remote consultations. This includes additional targeted funding for local National Health Service teams to enhance existing cardiac rehabilitation services.

NHS England and NHS Improvement have also partnered with University of Exeter to fund nationwide training of 60 cardiac healthcare professionals, to facilitate home based cardiac rehabilitation programmes, offering a choice of setting for heart failure patients.

■ Hospices

Robert Halfon: [\[73808\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to support hospices.

Gillian Keegan:

Most hospices are independent, charitable organisations that receive some statutory funding, mainly from clinical commissioning groups for providing local services. To support the palliative and end of life care sector, including hospices, NHS England and NHS Improvement have made funding available to seven palliative and end of life care strategic clinical networks to support the delivery of clinical care, with sustainability and commissioning as guiding principles.

NHS England and NHS Improvement have also funded Hospice UK to explore sustainable approaches to future care delivery. Their 'Future Vision Programme - Discovery Phase' report sets out a range of options for exploring future sustainability.

■ Hospitals: Construction

Daisy Cooper: [\[76030\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 1 November 2021 to Question 62857 on Hospitals: Construction, how many of the eight pathfinder trusts have asked his Department to release funding for the detailed design and enabling works required to help them meet the New Hospital Programme's timescales.

Edward Argar:

All trusts in the pathfinder cohort have asked the Department to release funding for the detailed design and enabling works. Before any funding can be provided, business cases are submitted, which must follow the appropriate governance routes to ensure that the works demonstrate maximum value for money for the taxpayer. In some cases, this is still in progress. All schemes which are part of the programme remain on track, which will result in 40 new hospitals built by 2030.

■ Independent Mental Health Advocates

Philip Davies: [\[73791\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to help expand entitlement to independent mental health advocacy to voluntary or informal patients as part of his reforms of the Mental Health Act.

Philip Davies: [\[73792\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of introducing an opt-out independent mental health advocacy service as part of his reforms of the Mental Health Act.

Gillian Keegan:

The white paper 'Reforming the Mental Health Act', published in January 2021, set out proposals to expand access to an advocate to voluntary or informal patients and to consider an 'opt out model'. These proposals received significant support at public consultation and we are now exploring the associated costs and practicalities. This includes examining current independent mental health advocate uptake and existing opt out models which have been successfully implemented in some areas.

■ **Infectious Diseases: Children**

Sarah Olney: [\[71430\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of allocating funding to health visiting services to help prevent respiratory infections in young children.

Maggie Throup:

Preventing respiratory infections, including bronchiolitis and other potentially serious diseases, is an established high impact area for health visiting. The Spending Review has confirmed that Public Health Grant funding will be maintained in real terms, enabling local authorities to continue commissioning these services.

■ **Long Covid: Health Services**

Andrew Gwynne: [\[73757\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many Long Covid referrals were made in (a) England, (b) each region and (c) each NHS Trust in each of the last 12 months for which data is available.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[73758\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the waiting time for treatment for people diagnosed with Long Covid in (a) England, (b) each region and (c) each NHS Trust in each of the last 12 months for which data is available.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[73759\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what information his Department collects on waiting times for people diagnosed with Long Covid.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[73760\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many patients with Long Covid have waited longer than 18 weeks for referral to the Post Covid Assessment Service in (a) England, (b) each region of England and (c) each NHS Trust.

Maria Caulfield:

[Holding answer 17 November 2021]: NHS England and NHS Improvement publishes monthly activity data and demographic information for patients referred to a post COVID-19 assessment clinic, by region and in England, which is available at the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/covid-19-post-covid-assessment-service/>

The following table shows the number of accepted referrals to post COVID-19 assessment clinics from July 2021 in England and at a regional level. Data at National Health Service trust level is not available.

NHS ENGLAND REGION	5 JULY – 1 AUGUST 2021	2 AUGUST – 29 AUGUST 2021	30 AUGUST – 26 SEPTEMBER 2021
England	5,029	4,846	5,182
East of England	574	580	491
London	740	797	761
Midlands	1,139	1,347	1,497
North East and Yorkshire	1,012	85	785
North West	424	671	552
South East	805	426	605
South West	335	240	354

From October 2021, NHS England and NHS Improvement have published information on waiting times from referral to an initial assessment. A table showing initial specialist assessments by waiting time for England and at a regional level between 30 August and 26 September 2021 is attached. Data at NHS trust level is not available. Data on waiting times for the period between 2 to 29 August 2021 is available at the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/covid-19-post-covid-assessment-service/>

These are new clinics and as a result there will be variation in the maturity of services. NHS England and NHS Improvement are working closely with clinics to support them to reduce waiting times. As this is a relatively new data collection, some variation may be attributable to incomplete data submissions and NHS England and NHS Improvement are working to improve data quality.

Attachments:

1. Table showing September waiting times [FORMATTED TABLE FOR MINISTERIAL CLEARANCE Attachment - table showing September waiting times.docx]

■ Mental Health Services: Autism and Learning Disability**Matt Vickers:**[\[74002\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to reduce the number of (a) people with learning disabilities and (b) autistic people detained in inpatient mental health hospitals in England.

Gillian Keegan:

In 2021/22, we are investing more than £90 million for community support and to facilitate the discharge of people with a learning disability and autistic people.

The cross-Government Building the Right Support Delivery Board is responsible for progress in reducing the number of people with a learning disability and autistic people in mental health inpatient settings, through oversight of relevant activities and by commissioning specific workstreams. The Board is overseeing development of an Action Plan, which will complement the NHS Long Term Plan commitment to achieve at least a 50% reduction in the number of people with a learning disability and autistic people who are inpatients in mental health hospitals by 2023/24.

■ Mental Health Services: Children**Rachael Maskell:**[\[75922\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that children at risk of harm with complex needs are not given out of area placements in mental health services.

Rachael Maskell:[\[75923\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that all children and young people with mental health conditions are able to receive placements in mental health services in their local area.

Gillian Keegan:

NHS England and NHS Improvement have made additional funding available for medium term schemes nationally from 2020/21 to 2023/24. Initiatives include additional beds to allow children and young people to receive care and treatment closer to home, training for staff and capital to update units. While it is always the aim that people receive care and treatment as close to home as possible, there are times when a patient may be placed further from home. This may be either outside or inside the 'natural clinical flow' in their area, in which patients would usually be expected to utilise a particular service, or group of services.

Patients can be placed appropriately outside of their 'natural clinical flow' due to specific circumstances other than the lack of local capacity for the service required, which includes:

- Patient, family or carer choice;
- Placement is close to family or carer;
- Safeguarding reasons;
- Offending restrictions in place; and
- Requires more specialised provision or specific clinical intervention.

Where an appropriate bed type is not available close to home, the admission placement is considered with the prime focus on clinical need and the urgency of the admission.

■ NHS 111

Munira Wilson:

[\[58525\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the (a) average call duration, (b) average waiting time and (c) the total number of calls wherein the person calling dropped the call, were to the NHS emergency advice service number 111 in (i) 2018, (ii) 2019, (iii) 2020 and (iv) 2021; what the average call duration has been over the last 12 months to 111; and how many calls to 111 were abandoned over the last 12 months.

Edward Argar:

The average call duration for NHS111 calls is not held centrally.

The average waiting time for NHS111 calls is only available for April – August 2021, and not for previous years. The average waiting from April to August 2021 was 271 seconds.

The total number of calls abandoned is only available for April – August 2021, which is 1,452,574. This data is not available for 2018, 2019, 2020 and current year to August, where only the number of calls abandoned after at least 30 seconds is available. This data is provided in the following table:

	2018	2019	2020	2021: JANUARY – AUGUST
Calls abandoned after at least 30 seconds	708,548	661,906	2,160,595	1,266,546

Source: NHS England

The total number of calls abandoned over the last 12 months is not available.

■ NHS and Social Services: York

Rachael Maskell: [\[72526\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many (a) NHS and (b) social care staff in York are yet to receive a covid-19 vaccine.

Maggie Throup:

As of 31 October 2021, there are 522 staff that working in York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust reported to have not received a first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. As of 4 November, there are 1,010 social care staff working at providers based in the City of York reported as not receiving their first dose.

Rachael Maskell: [\[72528\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the impact of mandatory covid-19 vaccinations for workers in (a) NHS and (b) social care settings on staffing levels in those settings in York.

Maggie Throup:

While no specific assessment has been made, an impact statement setting out an estimate of the potential range of impacts on National Health Service and social care workforce levels in England is available at the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1032255/making-vaccination-a-condition-of-deployment-in-the-health-and-wider-social-care-sector-impact_statement.pdf

■ NHS: Coronavirus

Sir Desmond Swayne: [\[75801\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the mandatory covid-19 vaccination of frontline NHS staff, which clinician will decide whether a member of staff may receive an authorised exemption from that requirement on the basis of individual medical history.

Maggie Throup:

To apply for a medical exemption, an individual should contact the NHS COVID Pass Service via 119. The published guidance on medical exemptions from COVID-19 vaccination sets out that applications will be clinically reviewed by a general practitioner, specialist clinician or midwife. The guidance is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-medical-exemptions-proving-you-are-unable-to-get-vaccinated>

Daisy Cooper: [\[76020\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of NHS staff who have been deemed to be unvaccinated because they (a)

received a covid-19 vaccine that is not recognised in the UK or (b) currently have covid-19 and thus cannot receive a vaccination.

Maggie Throup:

The Department has made no specific estimate.

■ **NHS: Protective Clothing**

Angela Rayner:

[\[75898\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what items of surplus PPE purchased through the high priority lane his Department has placed for sale to other NATO countries via e-portal.

Edward Argar:

None of the items placed for sale on the NATO Portal were sourced through contracts that were processed through the high priority lane.

■ **Obesity**

Alex Norris:

[\[72568\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the King's Fund report Tackling obesity: the role of the NHS in a whole-system approach, published on 4 July 2021, what (a) assessment his Department has made of the implications for his policy of the findings of that report on the comparative rates of hospital admission due to obesity in the most and least deprived areas; and (b) steps he is taking to tackle the discrepancy of hospital admissions due to obesity between the most and least deprived areas.

Maggie Throup:

'Tackling obesity: empowering adults and children to live healthier lives' sets out a range of measures to reduce the prevalence of obesity, improve diets and promote healthier lifestyle behaviours, including addressing inactivity and preventing ill-health.

To target areas with higher levels of deprivation and obesity prevalence, we have introduced a £30.5 million grant for local authorities in England to commission adult behavioural weight management services in 2021/22, with funding allocated based on population size, obesity prevalence and deprivation. An additional £4.3 million has also been allocated based on need to 11 local authorities to support the expansion of child weight management services in 2021/22.

■ **Obesity: Coventry**

Colleen Fletcher:

[\[75903\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of childhood obesity levels in (a) Coventry North East constituency and (b) Coventry in each of the last five years; what assessment he has made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on levels of obesity among children in those areas; and what steps his Department is taking to tackle childhood obesity.

Maggie Throup:

The National Child Measurement Programme collects data on children aged four to five years old and 10 to 11 years old. Data is not available at Parliamentary constituency level.

For children aged four to five years old, the prevalence of obesity in the Coventry local authority area was 11.7% in the academic year 2019/20; 10.2% in 2018/19; 10.5% in 2017/18; 10.1% in 2016/17; and 9.4% in 2015/16. For children aged 10 to 11 years old, the prevalence of obesity in Coventry was 25.3% in 2019/20; 22.6% in 2018/19; 23.5% in 2017/18; 24.2% in 2016/17; and 23.1% in 2015/16.

Data is not currently available for Coventry for 2020/21 therefore the impact of COVID-19 is not yet known.

The Department published 'Tackling obesity: empowering adults and children to live healthier lives' in 2020, which aims to reduce obesity, taking forward actions from previous chapters of the childhood obesity plan.

■ Oral Tobacco**Martyn Day:****[72543]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make a statement on The Global Burden of Disease study published in The Lancet in September 2017 which reported no evidence of harm caused by long-term use of snus for any health outcome.

Maggie Throup:

The Department continues to monitor the international evidence on harms from tobacco, including snus. A report by The Norwegian Institute of Public Health published in 2019 reports that the use of Swedish snus may increase the risks of some serious adverse health outcomes and some less serious adverse health outcomes. The report is available at the following link:

<https://www.fhi.no/en/publ/2019/health-risks-from-snus-use2/>

■ Parkinson's Disease: Research**Helen Hayes:****[75943]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what (a) assessment has he made of the adequacy of current levels of funding available for research into cures for Parkinson's and (b) steps is he taking to increase research funding for that purpose.

Maria Caulfield:

No specific assessment has been made. The Department funds research through the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). Additionally, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) funds research primarily through the Medical Research Council, the Biotechnology Biological Sciences Research Council, and the Economic and Social Research Council. From 2015/16 to 2019/20, the Government spent £114.8 million on research into Parkinson's disease through the NIHR and UKRI. On 14 November 2021 we committed to invest £375 million over the next five years to

improve understanding and treatment for a range of neurodegenerative diseases, including Parkinson's disease.

■ **Pharmaceuticals Direct: Protective Clothing**

Gareth Thomas: [\[64522\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the value for money to the public purse of contracts awarded to Pharmaceuticals Direct since February 2020; and if he will make a statement.

Gareth Thomas: [\[64524\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the basis was for awarding Pharmaceuticals Direct a £102.6 million contract to provide 20 million FFP3 masks, at £5.13 per unit; and if he will make a statement.

Gareth Thomas: [\[64525\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the average price paid per unit was, by Government, for a FFP3 mask in June 2020; and what the average price paid per unit was for FFP3 masks as part of the £102.6 million contract awarded to Pharmaceuticals Direct in the summer of 2020; and if he will make a statement.

Gareth Thomas: [\[64526\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, for what reasons his Department agreed a £102.6 million deal with Pharmaceuticals Direct for FFP3 face masks subsequent to correspondence with alternative suppliers who were told that further supplies were not needed as Government had sufficient supplies in place; and if he will make a statement.

Edward Argar:

All offers of personal protective equipment (PPE) were subject to the same assurance process which selected suppliers based on the product type, clinical acceptability, price, forecasted delivery dates, volume and financial standing. The overall basis for awarding contracts, including the value for money consideration, involved a balanced judgement of all these factors. While the price per unit is a factor, FFP3 masks require FIT testing onto the wearer which is required by law. Pharmaceuticals Direct Ltd offered a mask which was already in use within the National Health Service and one which healthcare workers had provided a positive evaluation of.

Information on the unit price of PPE ordered under each contract is commercially sensitive. While the unit price for the FFP3 masks under this contract were higher, the Department considered the urgent need for the product; the product had previously passed FIT testing and was in use within the health system; and that other tried and tested FFP3 masks were not available from other European sources at the time.

The demand and supply signals for PPE varied on a daily basis in light of infection rates within the United Kingdom. The availability of product also fluctuated regularly due to competition over manufacturing capacity and scarce supply. The Government

supported the UK Make programme for UK suppliers to develop manufacturing capacity for PPE at the end of 2020. The Pharmaceuticals Direct Ltd contract provided a clinically approved product before UK Make suppliers were able to distribute their products.

■ **Primary Health Care: Private Sector**

Stephanie Peacock: [\[75968\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what comparative assessment he has made of the number of patients seeking private primary care as a result of NHS GP and referral waiting times in the periods (a) following the lifting of covid-19 lockdown restrictions and (b) before the covid-19 outbreak.

Maria Caulfield:

The data requested is not collected centrally, therefore no assessment has been made.

■ **Public Health England: Expenditure**

Alex Norris: [\[72569\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what (a) the budget was for Public Health England in (i) 2017, (ii) 2018 and (ii) 2019; and (b) assessment his Department has made of the effect of those budgets on the funding of women's health services not including maternity services; and if he will make a statement.

Maggie Throup:

The following table shows the operating budget for Public Health England in the financial years requested.

2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
£292 million	£287 million	£287 million

Source: Public Health England Annual Report and Accounts.

The Department has made no assessment of the effects of these budgets on the funding of women's health services.

■ **Smoking: Carcinogens**

Martyn Day: [\[72542\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he would publish the data his Department holds on the average level of TSNA carcinogens found in (a) cigarettes, (b) heated tobacco, (c) e-cigarettes and (d) snus made according to the Gothiatek standard.

Maggie Throup:

The Department does not hold data on the average level of TSNA carcinogens found in cigarettes, heated tobacco, e-cigarettes or snus.

Smoking: Young People**Rosie Cooper:**[\[71299\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish data comparing the rates of smoking among 18 to 24 year olds in Norway and in the UK for (a) 2000 and (b) 2020.

Maggie Throup:

Data on smoking prevalence in Norway is available for 16 to 24 year olds. Daily smoking prevalence has fallen from 29% in 2000 to 1% in 2020. However, prevalence of occasional smoking among this age group has remained similar since 2000 and was 14% in 2020.

Comparable data on smoking prevalence for the United Kingdom is not available. In England, current smoking prevalence among 16 to 24 year olds, which includes occasional smokers, fell from 32.9% in 2000 to 19.4% in 2019. In Great Britain, prevalence fell from 32.3% in 2000 to 18.3% in 2019. Data for smoking prevalence in England and Great Britain in 2020 is expected in December 2021.

Social Services: Coronavirus**Jonathan Ashworth:**[\[75891\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what data his Department holds on the number of social care staff who have left their jobs as a result of changes to covid-19 vaccine requirements; and if he will publish that data.

Gillian Keegan:

NHS England and NHS Improvement publish weekly statistics on the workforce size in care homes as part of their vaccination series. Data on the reasons for staff exit are not collected.

Travel: Coronavirus**Sir Alan Campbell:**[\[72364\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, for what reason passengers entering the UK from overseas cannot use an NHS issued covid-19 lateral flow test.

Maggie Throup:

Free National Health Service tests cannot be used for travel in order to preserve existing lateral flow device testing supplies to protect public health. Since requirements were introduced for international travel testing, the costs have fallen significantly and we are committed to working with the travel industry and private providers to reduce the cost of travel testing further.

■ Vaccination: Children

Sarah Olney: [\[71431\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has commissioned research to investigate trends in the level of health visitor numbers and childhood immunisations since 2015.

Maggie Throup:

No specific research has been commissioned.

HOME OFFICE**■ Asylum: Standards**

Ian Lavery: [\[72437\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to tackle delays to (a) interviews and (b) asylum decisions for asylum seekers processed by her Department.

Kevin Foster:

The Home Office is pursuing a wide range of programmes which will transform our systems and processes alongside a number of business improvement initiatives to speed up decision making, reduce the time people spend in the system and reduce the numbers who are awaiting an interview where required or a decision.

Additionally to transformation, in response to the raising number of asylum claims and delays, we are working to increase decision makers as well as providing improved training and career progression opportunities to aid retention of staff. This investment in our people will speed up processing times and increase the throughput of asylum decisions.

■ British Nationality: Fees and Charges

Ben Lake: [\[75979\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the potential merits of removing the non-administrative costs of British citizenship application fees.

Ben Lake: [\[75980\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of eligible applicants in (a) Wales and (b) the rest of the UK who cannot make an application for British citizenship as a result of being unable to pay the non-administrative costs.

Kevin Foster:

The Home Office publishes data on citizenship applications and grants at

[Immigration statistics data tables, year ending June 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-data-tables-year-ending-june-2021).

An incomplete payment is just one of a number of reasons which could lead to an application being rejected and included under the ‘*rejected applications*’ heading in Table 4.

The Home Office does not have accessible management information on applications rejected in Wales specifically, as a result of being unable to pay the non-administrative costs of citizenship fees.

Fees are regularly reviewed and set within the parameters agreed by Parliament in section 68 of the Immigration Act 2014.

■ **Catalytic Converters: Theft**

Ruth Cadbury: [71357]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the trend in the number of catalytic converter thefts in London in the last three years.

Ruth Cadbury: [71359]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the adequacy of the provisions of the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 in decreasing theft of catalytic converters.

Ruth Cadbury: [71360]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with the Metropolitan Police on the theft of catalytic converters.

Kit Malthouse:

The Government is committed to tackling the theft of catalytic converters, working 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. The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) is represented on the Working Group, and discussions between the Home Office and MPS are ongoing about local policing operations.

In December 2017, the Home Office published a review of the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013. The review took into account views from a range of interested parties and found the measures in the 2013 Act had been effective in addressing metal theft and should be retained. A copy of the review is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-the-scrap-metal-dealers-act-2013>.

Enforcement of the 2013 Act is key to tackling this crime. The Government funded the set-up of the National Infrastructure Crime Reduction Partnership (NICRP), 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. The British Transport Police, through the NICRP, has conducted two national weeks of actions, which resulted in

64 arrests, over 1,400 stopped vehicles and over 1,000 catalytic converters and other items of stolen property were recovered.

■ Children: Exploitation

Rachael Maskell: [\[71392\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of encouraging youth work as a mechanism to help reduce the risk of child exploitation.

Rachael Maskell: [\[71393\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has had discussions with the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on funding for youth services to prevent child exploitation.

Rachael Maskell: [\[71394\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has had discussions with the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on the provision of youth services for girls and young women and the impact of those services on the creation of safe spaces for girls and young women at risk of exploitation.

Rachel Maclean:

Child exploitation has a devastating impact on victims, families and the wider community, and this government is committed to tackling it. My officials engage regularly with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, and we work together to ensure young people – including those at risk of exploitation - can access youth services.

In addition, the Home Office funds a range of targeted activity which seeks to support young people at risk of, or involved in, exploitation. This includes:

- £35.5m for Violence Reduction Units (VRUs) which bring together local partners to tackle the drivers of serious violence in their area. Where exploitation is identified as a local concern, VRUs deliver a range of interventions, including detached youth work and targeted mentoring schemes, to those most at risk.
- £200m over 10 years through the Youth Endowment Fund to test what works in preventing young people becoming involved in violence. The Fund evaluates a range of activity, including some youth work programmes, to identify the best-evidenced interventions.
- £20m for new early intervention programmes that will help stop young people from being drawn into violence, including cognitive behavioural therapy, family therapy, as well as specialist support in crisis moments such as when a person is admitted to A&E with a knife injury.
- £13.2m over four years for the Trusted Relationships Fund, which is testing innovative approaches to tackling vulnerability among young people at risk of exploitation. The Fund aims to build resilience to harm through fostering healthy,

trusting relationships with responsible adults, using a variety of methods, including one to one support, community group work and detached youth work.

- £1m of specialist support to under 25s from London, the West Midlands and Merseyside who are criminally exploited through county lines, to help them safely reduce and exit their involvement.

We are also working specifically with young women and girls through our £435k Young People's Advocate fund, which provides one-to-one support to young women and girls at risk of or experiencing all forms of exploitation by gangs. More widely, the Home Office are providing £43m this financial year to tackle violence against women and girls, including through frontline support with young victims.

■ **Drugs: Organised Crime**

Carolyn Harris:

[\[72541\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the national county lines operation reported by the National Police Chiefs Council on 21 October 2021, how many people have been charged with criminal offences in respect of the act of cuckooing; and of those charged, how many charges have been brought under section (a) one and (b) two the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

Kit Malthouse:

As a part of our County Lines programme we are supporting the National County Lines Co-ordination Centre (NCLCC) which has been established to strengthen the law enforcement response and enable police forces to work together to tackle this complex issue.

The NCLCC regularly coordinates weeks of intensive action against county lines gangs, which all police forces take part in. As reported by the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC), the most recent of these took place between 11-17 October and resulted in more than 1,400 arrests, nearly £2m worth of class A drugs, over £1m in cash and nearly 300 weapons seized, more than 2,600 vulnerable people safeguarded, and 894 cuckooed addresses visited.

The NPCC do not report on charges for the week of intensification. However, the NCLCC have identified all national law enforcement initiatives in relation to 'cuckooing' and are sharing best practice. Examples include working with local authorities and housing associations to disrupt this malicious crime and signpost vulnerable victims to support.

■ **Fraud: Property**

Peter Gibson:

[\[R\] \[71469\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to support victims of fraud by false representation seeking redress for damages, particularly in fraudulent land transactions.

Peter Gibson:

[R] [71470]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to support serious fraud investigation units in England particularly in relation to fraudulent property transactions.

Peter Gibson:

[R] [71472]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to crack down on fraud by false representation particularly in relation to fraudulent property transactions.

Damian Hinds:

The Government is boosting police capacity and is committed to strengthening our criminal justice system to put victims first. As part of the Police Uplift Programme to recruit an additional 20,000 officers by 2023, we have prioritised more investigators in the City of London Police to fulfil their role as a world class fraud specialist force. We have also channelled additional officer resource into the Regional Organised Crime Unit network to work on a host of serious and organised crime threats including fraud.

The Government is also aware of the harms caused by identity theft and that criminals use this to commit and enable a range of offences, from benefit fraud, credit card fraud to fraudulently obtaining property.

We are actively working on a number of initiatives to reduce identity-enabled crime and deny criminals the opportunity to exploit false or stolen personal data. This includes developing proposals for a digital identity system that would enable people to prove their identity easily and securely, without the need to provide physical documents, with the aim of reducing identity-enabled fraud and crime. However, the Government recognises there is more to do, and we are working closely with industry, regulators, and consumer groups to tackle fraud and close those vulnerabilities that criminals too easily exploit.

Reporting incidents of fraud helps us stop fraudsters and protect other people from becoming victims. Any experience of property fraud should be reported directly to HM Land Registry through their dedicated Property Fraud Line at reportafraud@landregistry.gov.uk. Owners who are concerned their property might be subject to a fraudulent sale or mortgage should also register an Anti-Fraud Restriction with HM Land Registry. We also continue to ask the public to report fraud to the police through Action Fraud by phone on 0300 123 2040 or through their website: http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/report_fraud.

It is important that victims of fraud receive the support that they are entitled to. Action Fraud also provides protective advice to individuals who contact the service and Citizens Advice can provide options for redress.

■ National Vehicle Crime Working Group

Ruth Cadbury: [\[71358\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when the most recent meeting of the National Vehicle Crime Working Group took place.

Kit Malthouse:

The most recent meeting of the National Vehicle Crime Working Group took place on 20 September 2021. The Working Group is chaired by the National Police Chiefs' Council lead for vehicle crime, ACC Jenny Sims.

■ Passports

Damien Moore: [\[72592\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of passports applied for under the 1 Week Fast Track scheme were delivered within one week in each of the 12 months to 31 October 2021.

Kevin Foster:

There is no integration of the system used for passport application processing and the one used by third-party suppliers for delivery services. This means whilst Her Majesty's Passport Office is able to monitor performance on a case-by-case basis for customer service purposes, there is no accurate measure of whole service performance to the point of delivery.

Under the terms of the Fast Track service, passports will be delivered on or before the seventh day following an appointment before 12.30pm, or the eighth day for appointments after this time. Passports printed under the Fast Track service are delivered to customers the following day through a 24-hour service level.

The data attached shows the volume of passports printed under the Fast Track service within 144 hours (six days) of the application being submitted. Due to COVID-19, the Fast Track service was suspended until April 2021, with exceptions primarily on compassionate grounds.

Attachments:

1. volume of passports printed under the Fast Track s [72592 attachment.png]

■ Police: Ipswich

Tom Hunt: [\[72600\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to Police funding for England and Wales 2015 to 2022; Police Force Area Population Statistics for England & Wales, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of disparities in funding per resident for police forces on levels of policing in urban Ipswich.

Kit Malthouse:

It has been clear for some time that the current police funding formula is out of date and no longer accurately reflects demand on policing. A new review of the funding

formula is now underway and will rightly consider all aspects of the formula, including an evidence-based assessment of drivers of the risk of crime and demand on policing, and issues that affect costs at a local level.

Reviewing the funding formula will ensure a fairer distribution of the circa £8 billion of annual core grant funding to the 43 police forces in England and Wales. I have previously confirmed the Government's intention to complete this work before the next General Election.

■ **Road Traffic Offences: Disclosure of Information**

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[72401\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to enable members of the public to submit dashcam footage of moving vehicle offences to the police.

Kit Malthouse:

Enforcement of road traffic law is an operational matter for the police to determine in conjunction with local policing plans.

The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) issued national guidance on minimum standards for managing Dashcam submissions in June 2021. The Government will continue to work with them, including through the Roads Policing Review, in developing the support for members of the public submitting dashcam type evidence to policing.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ **Department for International Trade: Hikvision**

Alicia Kearns:

[\[76037\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether Hikvision CCTV or other surveillance software or equipment from Hikvision, is used on any property owned or administered by her Department.

Penny Mordaunt:

It is not government policy to comment on security procedures in government buildings.

■ **Department for International Trade: Telephone Services**

Emily Thornberry:

[\[75845\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, under the terms of the contract agreed by her Department on 26 August 2021 for provision of an Export Support Services Contact Centre, on what date her Department is due to receive the first profit and audit transparency reports from the supplier; and if she will publish a copy of those reports upon their receipt.

Mike Freer:

HGS UK Ltd is committed to providing a transparency report to the Department for International Trade. The report will not be published as it will contain commercially sensitive information.

■ UK Export Finance: Legal Opinion**Emily Thornberry:**[\[73781\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to her Department's procurement exercise for the General Aerospace Legal Panel, reference 260167/1011745, if she will publish the business case for the expenditure of £40 million on the provision of a General Aerospace Legal Panel.

Mike Freer:

The purpose of the General Aerospace Legal Panel is to procure a panel of law firms to provide specialist legal advice and representation to UK Export Finance (UKEF), primarily in relation to when it provides 'financing' support to exporters in the aviation sector. The cost of such legal advice provided by the panel firm is typically met by the borrower rather than UKEF. The contract value advertised is the maximum value that can be spent through the framework during its four year term through subsequent call-off contracts and not the value of any committed spend.

Emily Thornberry:[\[73782\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether the £40 million contract for the provision of a General Aerospace Legal Panel, put out to tender by her Department on 5 November 2021, is reserved for UK companies only.

Mike Freer:

The General Aerospace Legal Panel is not reserved to UK companies only.

■ UK Export Finance: Recruitment**Emily Thornberry:**[\[75848\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many full time equivalent individuals have been hired to work for UK Export Finance as (a) interim managers, (b) specialist contractors and (c) temporary members of staff through the public sector resourcing framework managed by Alexander Mann Solutions Ltd in financial years (i) 2018-19, (ii) 2019-20, (iii) 2020-21 and (iv) 2021-22 up to the end of October 2021.

Mike Freer:

Using the public resourcing sector framework managed by Alexander Mann Solutions Ltd, UK Export Finance hired:

FINANCIAL YEAR	INTERIM MANAGERS*	SPECIALIST	
		CONTRACTORS*	TEMPORARY STAFF*
2018/19	4	2	8
2019/20	7	10	6
2020/21	9	11	8
2021/22	8	10	4

*The numbers quoted are full time equivalents

JUSTICE

■ Child Rearing

Apsana Begum: [\[71484\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the prevalence of the use of parental alienation accusations in the family courts.

Apsana Begum: [\[71485\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the implementation of the recommendations made by his Department's expert panel on reforming the family court response to domestic abuse, what steps he plans to take to help ensure that accurate data is collected on the (a) number of allegations made of parental alienation and (b) outcome of child contact in cases where those allegations are made.

James Cartlidge:

Incidences of alleged parental alienation by either parent in relation to family proceedings about child arrangements are not recorded centrally. Such information can only be obtained from individual case files at disproportionate cost.

In assessing the child's best interests, the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass) assess and report any concerns about alienating behaviours to the court, focusing on the impact on the child's safety and welfare and in the context of wider family dynamics. Parents are also able to inform the court of any concerns they may have about the other parent. Cafcass' Child Impact Assessment Framework includes various tools and guidance that further support social work practitioners in identifying where a child expresses reluctance to have an ongoing relationship with a parent, including domestic abuse, persistent and harmful conflict and alienating behaviours.

■ Courts

Yasmin Qureshi: [\[72386\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to tackle the rise of cases being withdrawn due to court delays and case backlogs.

James Cartlidge:

We continue to take action to tackle the impact the pandemic has had on our criminal justice system.

We have allocated over a quarter of a billion pounds on recovery in the last financial year, making court buildings safe, rolling out new technology for remote hearings, recruiting additional staff and opening Nightingale courtrooms, including retaining 32 Nightingale Court rooms until the end of March 2022.

We are now focused both on increasing capacity of the criminal courts and maximising use of that which we already have in areas where it is needed most. There is no limit on the number of days Crown Courts can sit this financial year. The department is also working closely with the judiciary to ensure we have the capacity required to maximise the number of court hearings taking place this year and to minimise disruption to cases listed for hearings.

The Spending Review will also provide an extra £477m for the criminal justice system to meet the increased demand from additional police officers and to recover performance following the pandemic.

■ Domestic Abuse: Child Rearing

Apsana Begum: [\[72611\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he has made of the number of cases in which allegations of parental alienation have been made by an alleged perpetrator of domestic abuse.

James Cartlidge:

Incidences of alleged parental alienation by either parent in relation to family proceedings about child arrangements are not recorded centrally. Such information can only be obtained from individual case files at disproportionate cost.

■ Family Courts: Parents

Apsana Begum: [\[71486\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what progress his Department has made on the review of the application of the presumption of parental involvement in the family courts, announced on 9 November 2020.

James Cartlidge:

The Government launched the review into the presumption of parental involvement in child arrangements cases in November 2020. This review focuses on understanding how the presumption, together with its 'risk of harm' exception, is applied by the

courts, including where there is evidence to suggest that the involvement of a parent will put the child at risk of harm. It also focuses on the impact on children's welfare of the courts' application of the presumption and its exception. An Advisory Group was established in November 2020 to inform the direction of the review, which has faced delays, largely due to COVID 19 restrictions. Work on the literature review, the qualitative research project, and the case file analysis continues.

■ **Family Courts: Training**

Apsana Begum: [\[71487\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what (a) organisations and (b) other relevant stakeholders have been contacted by his Department on the matter of introducing a wide range of training for all participants in the family justice system.

James Cartlidge:

The Lord Chief Justice, the Senior President of Tribunals, and the Chief Coroner have statutory responsibility for judicial training, under the Constitutional Reform Act 2005, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007, and Coroners and Justice Act 2009 respectively. These responsibilities are exercised through the Judicial College.

Additional training requirements for all family justice professionals involved in the private law reform pilots are being developed.

■ **HM Courts and Tribunals Service: ICT**

Yasmin Qureshi: [\[72392\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the HM Courts and Tribunal Service Common Platform roll-out.

James Cartlidge:

The Common Platform will help make the criminal justice system more efficient, effective, timely, transparent and resilient for everyone. It is replacing a network of existing systems in both the Crown and Magistrates' Courts that are coming to the end of their life and will no longer be fit for purpose in a modern court system. It is central to the wider HMCTS reform programme, and vital to bringing about improvements for collecting and managing data.

■ **Prison and Probation Service: Pay**

Yasmin Qureshi: [\[72391\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent assessment he has made of the effect on (a) recruitment, (b) morale and (c) retention of Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service staff of the Government's pay policy for public-sector workers.

Victoria Atkins:

Pay awards for this financial year across HMPPS are subject to the public sector pay pause, introduced by the Chancellor in 2020. This has assisted Government in

protecting public sector jobs and investment in public services as Covid-19 continues to have an impact.

The Secretary of State announced the prison pay award on 19 October, which delivered a pay increase of £250 to those earning less than £24,000, and progression pay of up to 5% for those who are eligible. Even with the restrictions of public sector pay policy for this year, this year's award sees over half of prison service staff receive an increase to their pay. My Department is also currently engaging with our recognised trade unions on the 2021/22 pay award for the Probation Service, which – like the prison pay award – will be backdated to April 2021.

I welcome the Chancellor's recent budget announcement regarding public sector pay, which will see public sector pay from 2022 return to a normal pay setting process. Following this announcement, we are developing proposals for a pay and reward package for all our staff over the coming years.

Recruitment and retention and morale are driven by a range of factors, including pay, staff health and wellbeing, leadership and line management, and how safe, secure and supported officers feel at work. When making decisions over pay, it is important that the department balances investment proportionally across these issues.

■ **Prison Officers: Pension Age**

Dan Carden: [\[75116\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent discussions he has had with the Prison Officers Association on the prison officer pension age.

Victoria Atkins:

Soon after being appointed, I met the Prison Officer's Association for our introductory meeting at which a range of issues were raised, including pension age. I intend to meet the POA and other trade unions regularly to discuss matters relating to staff welfare and working conditions.

■ **Prisons: Repairs and Maintenance**

Catherine McKinnell: [\[74977\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the cost was of planned maintenance for HM Prisons in England and Wales in each year from 2012 to 2018.

Victoria Atkins:

The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

■ **Young Offenders: Females**

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[71301\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the report, Out of sight: Girls in the Children and Young People's Secure Estate, published by Centre for Mental Health on 5 October 2021, what recent discussions he has had with (a) the Secretary of State for

Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, (b) the Secretary of State for Education and (c) the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on steps that can be taken to improve early interventions in the community for girls at risk of involvement with the criminal justice system.

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[71302\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the report, *Out of sight: Girls in the Children and Young People's Secure Estate*, published by Centre for Mental Health on 5 October 2021, what steps he is taking to reduce the use of remand for girls.

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[71304\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the report, *Out of sight: Girls in the Children and Young People's Secure Estate*, published by Centre for Mental Health on 5 October 2021, what recent assessment he has made of the efficacy of the use of short custodial sentences for girls.

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[71305\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the report, *Out of sight: Girls in the Children and Young People's Secure Estate*, published by the Centre for Mental Health on 5 October 2021, what steps he is taking to implement the recommendations in that report in relation to (a) girls from racialised communities in the children's and young people's secure estate, (b) transitions into the children's and young people's secure estate, (c) girls' placement far from home, (d) gender-responsive approaches, (e) use of force/restraint with girls, (f) educational, vocational and growth opportunities, (g) self-harm, (h) transitions to adult settings, (i) transition to inpatient settings, (j) residential accommodation issues, (k) workforce issues, (l) girls from LGBTQ+ communities, (m) Mother and Baby Units for teenage girls and (n) research and data monitoring.

Victoria Atkins:

To better understand the needs and care pathways of girls in the youth secure estate, the Youth Custody Service and NHS England & Improvement co-commissioned the Centre for Mental Health to undertake this report. We are considering all the recommendations carefully. The report will inform our strategy for girls and helping us to continue to build a gender-responsive approach to children in custody.

HMI Prisons is conducting a thematic on girls in custody which will also feed into our strategy.

The Ministry of Justice is undertaking and supporting a range of community-based interventions to address underlying causes of offending behaviour by children and young people, including girls. MoJ ministerial and official engagement has contributed to, for example, DLUHC's Supporting Families programme; DfE's programmes (such as the Alternative Provision and the Support, Attend, Fulfil, Exceed taskforces) and on Family Hubs; and DHSC's Long Term Plan rollout of the Community Integrated Care Framework.

Custody should always be a last resort for all children. Measures in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill will tighten the tests courts must apply in order to remand

children in custody and will strengthen community sentencing options. This will better ensure that remand and short custodial sentences are only used for girls where necessary and appropriate. The department is also undertaking a review into youth remand and will publish its findings in due course.

LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

■ Antisemitism

Alberto Costa:

[\[71369\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps his Department is taking to tackle the increase in hate crimes committed against people of the Jewish faith.

Kemi Badenoch:

Antisemitism has absolutely no place in our society, which is why we are taking a strong lead in tackling it in all its forms. We are clear that victims should be supported and the individuals who carry out these heinous attacks must be brought to justice. The Government is providing £14 million this year for the Protective Security Grant to protect Jewish schools and community buildings and we have encouraged the adoption of the IHRA definition of antisemitism across universities and local authorities.

■ Buildings: Fire Prevention

Royston Smith:

[\[72539\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the independent expert group's report entitled Independent expert statement in building safety in medium and lower-rise blocks of flats, published on 12 July 2021, when his Department will change the Government's fire safety advice for residential buildings under 18 metres in height in line with the recommendations of that report.

Christopher Pincher:

Following the July Independent Expert Statement on Building Safety in medium and lower rise blocks of flats, the Government strongly supports the expert group's position that EWS1 forms should not be required on buildings under 18 metres. New guidance for the risk assessment of external wall systems will soon be introduced. The PAS9980 will ensure that fire risk assessments are consistent, proportionate to risk and actions to manage risk are cost-effective, and the Consolidated Advice Note will shortly be withdrawn. The combination of these changes and the commencement of the Fire Safety Act, and associated Fire Safety Order, will create a clear new proportionate and risk appropriate system for assessment.

■ Buildings: Insulation

Royston Smith:

[\[72540\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to Royal Institution for Chartered Surveyors' guidance on EWS1 guidance on buildings below 18 metres in height, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of that guidance on the housing market.

Christopher Pincher:

Government continues to challenge industry on the use of the EWS1 process, as well as pressing for more data so that we can get a sense of how the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors' (RICS) guidance is being applied, and the impact of the process on mortgage applications. The first tranche of EWS1 data will be published shortly. The Department intends to withdraw the Consolidated Advice Note by the end of the year. Following this, RICS will update their guidance accordingly.

■ Conditions of Employment and Pay: Scotland

Alex Sobel:

[\[71445\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will offer support to (a) Glasgow city council, (b) the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities and (c) the Scottish Government to reach an agreement with trade unions on pay and conditions.

Kemi Badenoch:

This is a devolved matter for the Scottish Government to consider.

■ Council Tax

Stuart Anderson:

[\[72596\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps his Department is taking to protect residents from excessive increases in council tax payments.

Kemi Badenoch:

Council tax levels are set by local authorities, although the Secretary of State determines referendum principles to ensure that residents can have the final say over excessive increases. The provisional local government finance settlement will set out full details of the proposed referendum principles for 2022-23. The settlement and referendum principles will be subject to agreement by Parliament in the usual way. Local authorities maintain locally designed council tax support schemes to help people facing financial difficulty.

■ Councillors: Political Parties

Paul Bristow:

[\[71491\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what guidance or advice his Department has provided to local authorities on whether councillors who

have been suspended by a national political party should be considered to remain members of that party's political group on a local authority for the purposes of allocating seats on committees.

Kemi Badenoch:

The allocation of committee seats should be reviewed by a local authority annually, or upon request following a by-election or where a councillor joins a new political group. It is for the political groups on a local authority to determine their own membership as they see fit.

■ **Evictions**

Helen Hayes: [\[71412\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what estimate has his Department made of the number of section 21 eviction notices been issued in each year since 2019 in (a) London and (b) England.

Eddie Hughes:

There is no requirement on landlords to notify the Government when they serve notice of their intention to seek possession to their tenant. As such, the Department does not hold data on the number of Section 21 notices issued.

The Government remains firmly committed to the Renters Reform programme, including abolishing section 21 evictions. We will publish a White Paper that sets out government's plans in 2022.

■ **General Elections: Voting Rights**

Clive Lewis: [\[72545\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the open letter from the Association of Electoral Administrators and Society of Local Authority of Chief Executives, what steps his Department plans to take to help ensure that the proposed shortening of the UK general election timetable will not lead to voter disenfranchisement.

Kemi Badenoch:

There are no provisions in the Elections Bill or in the Dissolution and Calling of Parliament Bill on this matter.

■ **National Insurance**

Alex Sobel: [\[71446\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what plans he has to mitigate the effect on local authority's finances of the 1.25 per cent rise in National Insurance.

Kemi Badenoch:

I refer the Honourable Member to my answer to Question UIN 69093 on 8 November 2021.

■ Non-domestic Rates: Appeals

Helen Hayes:

[\[71414\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps he is taking to support businesses seeking to appeal business rates valuations after changes in circumstances during the covid-19 pandemic.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Government has announced an additional £1.5 billion business rates relief fund to support those businesses affected by the pandemic that have not otherwise been eligible for existing reliefs. My Department will publish guidance to help local authorities set up their local schemes once the legislation relating to COVID-19 Material Change of Circumstances provisions has passed.

■ Private Rented Housing

Sir George Howarth:

[\[71271\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how many buy-to-let properties there are in the UK.

Christopher Pincher:

55% of landlords in England have a Buy-to-Let mortgage, as detailed in the English Private Landlord Survey 2018. This data can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-private-landlord-survey-2018-main-report>.

■ Private Rented Housing: Coronavirus

Sir George Howarth:

[\[71278\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the impact of the covid-19 outbreak on the buy-to-let sector.

Christopher Pincher:

Mortgage arrears continued to fall to near historic lows from July to September 2021, with government support for household incomes through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) remaining in place until the end of September as well as mortgage payment holidays. According to publicly available information from UK Finance, which represents over 300 firms across the banking and finance industry, there were a total of 5,670 buy-to-let mortgages in arrears of 2.5 per cent or more of the outstanding balance from July to September 2021. This is a decrease of six per cent compared with April to June of the same year. In terms of possessions, 320 buy-to-let mortgaged properties were taken into possession from July to September 2021, which is significantly down on the same period in 2019 prior to the pandemic when 800 mortgage possessions took place.

■ Private Rented Housing: Costs**Sir George Howarth:** [\[71274\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what the average cost is of a buy-to-let property in each region of the UK.

Christopher Pincher:

The department does not hold data on the average cost of buy-to-let properties in each region of the UK.

The English Private Landlord Survey 2018 included data on the average market value per rental property. The mean average market value per rental property was £261,885.

■ Public Lavatories: Disability**Rachael Maskell:** [\[71391\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the availability of Changing Places toilets in local communities; and what steps he is taking to ensure adequate provision.

Eddie Hughes:

Where people shop, go out, or travel should not be determined by their disability. As society starts to open up again as we recover from the pandemic, it's crucial that our built environment allows everyone to enjoy the benefits of lockdown easing.

Changing Places toilets are a vital facility for people who cannot use standard accessible toilets and for their family and carers. It is estimated that there are currently only around 1200 Changing Places toilets in England.

In January this year, my Department amended Building Regulations' statutory guidance to provide a 12m² Changing Places Toilet in certain types of new, large public buildings, such as places such as art galleries, cinemas, concert halls, museums, theatres, places of worship and motorway service areas, plus larger retail facilities, shopping malls, sport and leisure buildings, and in hospitals, primary care, crematoria and cemetery buildings.

To accelerate the provision of these facilities, my Department is also making up to £30 million available to local authorities in England. The funding will boost the number of Changing Places Toilets in existing buildings. Local authorities were invited to lodge an expression of interest by 26 September 2021 and successful applications should expect to receive initial grant funding later this year, subject to ministerial approval.

■ Regional Planning and Development: North of England**Chi Onwurah:** [\[72413\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made for the implications of his policy of the IPPR's report entitled,

Time to act: Understanding the impact of Covid-19 on disabled people in the north of England, published 3 September 2021 on levelling up to address inequalities.

Eddie Hughes:

Since the start of this pandemic, this Government has worked hard to ensure disabled people have access to employment support, disability benefits, financial support, food, medicines, as well as accessible communications and guidance during the COVID-19 outbreak.

As we recover from the pandemic, we are committed to taking action to create a society that works for everyone so we can build back better, and fairer, levelling up opportunities for disabled people. That is why the Government published the National Disabled Strategy on 28 July, ensuring we improve disabled people's everyday lives across jobs, housing, transport, education, shopping, culture, justice, public services, and data and evidence.

We are also making a systemic change in the way we tackle regional inequalities to ensure no one is left behind. The forthcoming Levelling Up White Paper will build on existing action across Government to drive change for years to come in every part of the UK.

We are already taking action to improve public services, particularly where they are weakest, including health and education services:

- We have announced a £2.6 billion over the Spending Review period for school places for children with special educational needs and disabilities, more than tripling current capital funding levels to over £900 million by 2024-25.
- We are improving access to critical diagnostic services across the country whilst targeting investment at areas of deprivation, by investing £2.3 billion over the Spending Review period to increase the number of Community Diagnostic Centres, including building 8 in the North East and Yorkshire and 5 in the North West.
- As part of the Plan for Jobs, we are continuing funding worth £339 million per year for existing disability employment programmes such as the Access to Work scheme and the Work and Health programme.
- We are also providing an additional £156 million over the Spending Review period to provide job finding support for disabled people, with a focus on additional work coaches.

■ **Sleeping Rough**

Chi Onwurah:

[\[72412\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, in the context of the Government's commitment to end rough sleeping by 2024, what recent progress his Department has made in forming a strategy to meet that commitment.

Eddie Hughes:

The Government is fully committed to ending rough sleeping within this Parliament and has already made considerable progress to reduce rough sleeping. Much of this

work provided the capacity to deliver Everyone In response during the pandemic both locally and nationally.

The Annual Rough Sleeping Snapshot for 2020 showed that there was a 37% decrease in rough sleeping levels from last year.

Our work continues to focus on helping people find longer term accommodation, providing multi-disciplinary support as well as supporting those new to the street. The department is working with partners across government and the sector to consider the role of health, justice, immigration, and employment, alongside housing.

The Government will be spending £2 billion to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping over the next three years, including an 85% increase in resource funding in cash terms in 2024/25 compared to 2019/20.

■ **Tree Houses: Construction**

Alberto Costa:

[\[71367\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of including the construction of low-level tree houses within permitted development rights.

Christopher Pincher:

In determining whether planning permission would be required for a particular treehouse the first consideration for the local planning authority would be to determine whether it constituted 'development' as defined under the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. If the proposed treehouse did not constitute such development, no planning permission would be required.

The householder permitted development rights enable homeowners to extend their homes and erect outbuildings without the need to apply for specific planning permission. To protect the privacy of neighbours the rights do not enable the construction of verandas, balconies or raised platforms over 0.3 metres without planning permission.

■ **Wholesale Trade: Government Assistance**

Gavin Newlands:

[\[72495\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of including wholesalers in the forthcoming Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund guidance for the wellbeing of that sector.

Gavin Newlands:

[\[72496\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of specifically referencing the wholesale sector in the forthcoming guidance for the £1.5 billion business rates relief fund announced for businesses outside of the retail, hospitality and leisure sector on 25 March 2021.

Gavin Newlands:

[\[72497\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps his Department is taking to ensure wholesalers have access to the forthcoming Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund.

Kemi Badenoch:

My Department will publish guidance for the Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund to help local authorities set up their local schemes, once the legislation relating to MCC provisions has passed. This will set out the relevant eligibility criteria alongside funding allocations. Business rates are devolved so the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will receive an additional £285 million through the Barnett formula and will be able to determine the parameters of their own schemes.

TRANSPORT

■ Leamside Railway Line

Bridget Phillipson:

[\[75876\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department has undertaken an assessment of the potential economic benefits to the (a) North East and (b) UK of reopening the Leamside Line.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

In January 2020 the Government pledged £500 million for the Restoring Your Railway programme to deliver on our manifesto commitment to start reopening lines and stations to reconnect smaller communities, regenerate local economies and improve access to jobs, homes and education. The bid for the Leamside Line to the third round of the Ideas Fund was unsuccessful. My Officials have provided feedback on the scheme and advice on alternative funding routes to the Hon Member and her colleagues

■ Network Rail: Land

Mike Amesbury:

[\[73952\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to dispose of surplus Network Rail land in accordance to the updated Cabinet Office guidance, Government Functional Standard GovS 004: Property.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

Network Rail have robust management, governance and assurance systems to ensure property disposals meet government standards. Cabinet Office have recently updated the Government Property Functional standards and they will be working with Departments to conduct functional assurance in the coming months in order to ensure all property work undertaken by Departments and their delivery bodies continues to meet the updated standards.

■ Roads: Lighting

Sir Greg Knight:

[\[75822\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will issue guidance to local authorities when considering cost-saving measures that they should make an assessment of the potential effect on (a) road safety and (b) safety of pedestrians of turning off street lighting.

Trudy Harrison:

Local highway authorities such as East Riding of Yorkshire Council, have a duty under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 to maintain the public highways in their charge, including street lighting. Authorities do not have a duty to light their network but, where lighting has been provided, have a duty to maintain it.

Whilst it is for each local highway authority to decide the level of service they wish their street lighting network to deliver, it is important that local authorities consider the safety implications, cost, and environmental savings before reducing the hours of operation, or dimming lighting levels within their area. The Department advises councils to monitor the impacts following any street lighting reduction to ensure they can reverse any changes if the need arises. Local authorities should also liaise closely with the emergency services, community safety, and other key partners when considering their lighting needs and policy.

TREASURY

■ Children: Day Care

Tulip Siddiq:

[\[75071\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the (a) forecast and (b) actual expenditure was for the tax-free childcare scheme in the last five financial years to date.

Mr Simon Clarke:

Tax-Free Childcare began to be rolled out from April 2017.

Forecasted expenditure from the Autumn Budget 2017 and actual expenditure from the latest Official Statistics publication (November 2021) is shown in the table below for years 2017-18 to 2020-21.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Autumn Budget 2017 Forecasted Expenditure	£0.04bn	£0.30bn	£0.57bn	£0.71bn
Actual Expenditure	£0.03bn	£0.12bn	£0.24bn	£0.24bn

Stella Creasy: [\[75882\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the tax-free childcare scheme, how many (a) active accounts and (b) children eligible there were for that scheme on 31 March in each of the last 5 years.

Mr Simon Clarke:

Tax-Free Childcare began to be rolled out from April 2017.

The figures for Open and Used accounts for Tax-Free Childcare are published in Official Statistics (latest release November 2021 for figures up to September 2021).

The estimated figures for eligible children from 2017-18 onwards, as well as the annual Open and Used account figures can be found in the table below.

	NUMBER OF(000s)		FINANCIAL YEAR	
	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Children with Open Accounts	314	537	768	901
Children with Used Accounts	72	203	396	462
Eligible Children	1,800	1,900	1,900	1,700

Stella Creasy: [\[75883\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 16 November 2021 to Question 72406, how many and what proportion of user accounts for the tax-free childcare scheme that have not had their details reconfirmed in the last three months relate to children under the age of 12.

Mr Simon Clarke:

There were 125,800 accounts that had reached the end of an eligibility period but had not reconfirmed details between 1st August and 31st October 2021. Of these, 125,300 or over 99% relate to children aged under 12 on 31st October.

There can be many reasons why a family might not reconfirm their account in a 3-month period. For example, there may have been changes to their childcare arrangements or their working arrangements which mean they are no longer eligible for TFC or don't need it. They may still reactivate and use their TFC account in a future period.

■ Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

Jim Shannon: [\[72422\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what support will be offered to people who struggle financially when the furlough scheme ends.

Mr Simon Clarke:

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) was set up to support employers to retain their employees through the Covid-19 pandemic. To date, the scheme has succeeded in supporting 11.7 million jobs across the UK with employer claims totalling £70 billion, aiding businesses, and protecting livelihoods. At the start of this crisis, unemployment was expected to reach 12 per cent by the OBR. They now expect it to peak at less than half that, which means more than 2 million fewer people out of work than previously feared.

Now that the scheme has ended, the government is prioritising support for those coming off furlough and onto Universal Credit (UC) by providing immediate referral to the online Job Finding Support (JFS) scheme. Previously furloughed jobseekers on UC will get immediate voluntary access to 1-2-1 advice from a skilled adviser, with support including writing CVs, access to group sessions, a mock interview, understanding digital recruitment processes, presenting transferable skills and applying for jobs in new sectors. The offer will run until the end of December 2021.

The government is committed to helping low-income families with the cost of living, including providing £500m for a new Household Support Fund to help vulnerable households with costs for essentials such as food, clothing and utilities over the Winter.

The government is also taking decisive action to make work pay by cutting the UC taper rate from 63p to 55p, and increasing UC work allowances by £500 p.a. These measures mean that 1.9m working households will be able to keep substantially more of what they earn, and they effectively represent a tax cut, worth around £2.2 billion a year in 2022-23 for the lowest paid in society.

■ Government Departments: Fines**John Healey:**[\[75808\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many fines have been issued by his Department to other Government departments in each year since 2010 for accountancy misconduct; and what the value of each fine was.

Mr Simon Clarke:

Government entities are required to produce annual reports and accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Manual, which adapts and interprets UK adopted International Financial Reporting Standards for the UK public sector context and sets out how to account for the use of resources. The annual reports and accounts are independently audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG), supported by the National Audit Office (NAO), to offer assurance that the underlying transactions have appropriate parliamentary authority and that the accounts have been properly prepared and are free of material misstatements.

The C&AG may qualify his opinion should the findings of the audit suggest that there has not been appropriate parliamentary authority, that the accounts have not been properly prepared or that they are materially misstated. Such matters are drawn to

the attention of the Public Accounts Committee which may call the Accounting Officer to account for the findings of the audit. HM Treasury does not issue fines or penalties over the quality of financial reporting as audited by the C&AG.

However, as set out in the [Consolidated Budgeting Guidance](#), the budgeting framework allows for The Chief Secretary to consider further remedial action to incentivise good financial management and penalise actions that break certain rules or actions that fall below expectations. This may include asking the NAO to investigate the value for money that the department achieves, conducting a financial management review, reducing delegated authorities, removing access to Budget Exchange and/or making deductions to administration budgets. In all cases, the Treasury retains the right to apply whatever penalties are appropriate to incentivise good financial management and value for money. The Treasury does not hold a central record of the remedial actions that have historically been taken.

■ Non-domestic Rates: Appeals

Helen Hayes:

[71413]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent estimate has he made of the number of businesses at each stage of the business rates appeal process in the latest period for which figures are available; and what estimate has he made of the average waiting time for a business rates appeal to be decided.

Lucy Frazer:

The Valuation Office Agency (VOA) published official statistics on non-domestic rating challenges and changes, including Check, Challenge, Appeal (CCA) figures on 28 October 2021:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/non-domestic-rating-challenges-and-changes-2017-and-2010-rating-lists-september-2021>

Table 1.1 shows there were 7,200 Checks and that 63,780 Challenges were outstanding as of 30 September 2021 in England.

These figures represent the number of cases, not the number of businesses. Each Check or Challenge could involve more than one business, and a business could have more than one case.

The vast majority of outstanding Challenge cases are related to COVID-19 and are on hold pending legislation. The Rating (Coronavirus) and Directors Disqualification (Dissolved Companies) Bill sets out, with retrospective effect, that matters attributable to COVID-19 are not to be taken into account in respect of determinations to alter 2017 rating lists in England. Once this comes into effect, these cases will be closed.

The average timeliness of resolving Check and Challenge cases between 1 April 2017 and 30 September 2021 in England, was around two months for Checks, and nine months for Challenges. This figure excludes those COVID-19 related Challenges which are on hold.

Clearance of outstanding Challenge cases remains a priority for the VOA. The VOA are prioritising hardship cases and non-COVID Challenge cases approaching 18 months old.

■ **Non-domestic Rates: Tax Allowances**

Matt Vickers: [\[71511\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what (a) retail, (b) hospitality and (c) leisure properties will be eligible for the temporary business rates relief as announced in the Autumn Budget 2021.

Lucy Frazer:

Guidance setting out eligibility for the 2022-23 retail, hospitality and leisure relief will be published by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities in due course.

■ **Police and Crime Commissioners: Cleveland**

Bridget Phillipson: [\[75874\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on which dates in the last six months the Chief Secretary to the Treasury has (a) met and (b) spoken to the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland.

Mr Simon Clarke:

Details of HMT Ministers' official meetings with external organisations are published and can be found on Gov.uk

■ **Private Education: Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme**

Fleur Anderson: [\[72609\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 4 November 2021 to Question 67285 on Private Education: Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and with reference to the detailed sector breakdowns for the education sector, how many private schools claimed support from the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme to pay staff over the 2021 summer holidays.

Lucy Frazer:

The objective of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) was to support employers to retain their employees. It was therefore not for the Government to decide whether an individual firm should take its staff off furlough. That was a decision for the employer, in consultation with the employee.

HMRC produce monthly Official Statistics on the CJRS. The most granular breakdown they provide for the education sector is split by pre-primary, primary and secondary. but does not cover a breakdown by type of school.

■ Property: Valuation

Matt Vickers: [\[71512\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what rateable value-increasing improvements to existing properties will be eligible for the 100 per cent improvement relief, as announced in the Autumn Budget 2021.

Matt Vickers: [\[71513\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plant and machinery used in onsite renewable energy generation and storage will be eligible for the targeted business rate exemptions as announced in the Autumn Budget 2021.

Matt Vickers: [\[71514\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what heat networks will be eligible for the 100 per cent business rates relief as announced in the Autumn Budget 2021.

Lucy Frazer:

Further details on the eligibility for the improvement relief, heat networks relief, and green plant and machinery exemptions will be set out in a technical consultation later this year.

■ Revenue and Customs

Kevin Hollinrake: [\[72537\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the (a) annual budget and (b) number of staff was for HMRC's Fraud Investigation Service in each of the last five years.

Kevin Hollinrake: [\[72538\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the (a) annual budget and (b) number of staff was for HMRC's Proceeds of Crime Unit in each of the last five years.

Lucy Frazer:

HMRC is determined that tax fraud should not pay. Since the launch of our Fraud Investigation Service in 2015-16, we have secured and protected nearly £30 billion for our vital public services and secured more than 3,800 criminal convictions. In addition, HMRC's Spending Review settlement includes £100 million for more resources for HMRC to tackle all forms of non-compliance, including avoidance and evasion, and continued funding of over £70 million for the Taxpayer Protection Taskforce to combat fraud and abuse of the Covid-19 schemes.

The tables below detail the full-time equivalent staffing levels in both Fraud Investigation Service (1) and the Proceeds of Crime unit (2).

1. HMRC'S FRAUD INVESTIGATION SERVICE

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 *
a) Annual Budget (approx.)- includes Pay-bill, Other Resource Costs, Income & Capital .	£240m	£260m	£300m	£300m	£300m
b) Full-time equivalent staff at the end of the year (approx.)	4,100	4,400	4,900	4,400	4,900

*2021-22 staff number is a year-end projection

2. HMRC'S PROCEEDS OF CRIME UNIT (HMRC'S FRAUD INVESTIGATION SERVICE HOSTS THIS FUNCTION) A) THE ANNUAL BUDGET FOR THIS FUNCTION HAS NOT BEEN PROVIDED AS IT FORMS A PART OF THE WIDER BUDGET ALLOCATION FOR THE FRAUD INVESTIGATION SERVICE.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 *
b) Full-time equivalent staff at the end of the year (approx.)	400	350	400	350	400

*2021-22 staff number is a year-end projection

■ Treasury: Aquind

Bridget Phillipson:

[\[75875\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on which dates in the last six months each of the Ministers in his Department (a) met and (b) spoke to (i) directors and (ii) other representatives of Aquind Energy.

Helen Whately:

Details of HMT Ministers' official meetings with external organisations can be found here: www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmt-ministers-meetings-hospitality-gifts-and-overseas-travel.

Wholesale Trade: Government Assistance**Gavin Newlands:** [72498]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of including wholesalers in the forthcoming Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund guidance for the wellbeing of that sector.

Gavin Newlands: [72499]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to ensure wholesalers have access to the forthcoming Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund.

Lucy Frazer:

Funding for businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic that have not otherwise been eligible for existing reliefs will be available once the legislation relating to material change in circumstance provisions, the Rating (Coronavirus) and Directors Disqualification (Dissolved Companies) Bill, has passed and Local Authorities (LAs) have established their own local relief schemes. The Government will support LAs to do this as quickly as possible, including through new burdens funding.

Formal guidance will follow in due course, setting out the specific considerations that LAs should have regard for when providing relief. Relief will be for LAs to award on a discretionary basis.

WORK AND PENSIONS**Jobcentre Plus: Interpreters****Thangam Debbonaire:** [73893]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that Jobcentre Plus clients who need interpreters are provided with interpreting services at appointments with their Work Coach.

Mims Davies:

DWP offers interpreting and translation services under the Language Services Contract, currently provided by The Big Word. All DWP staff, including Work Coaches, have access to spoken and non-spoken face to face interpreting, telephone interpreting, British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation through the video relay services, and written translation. These services are readily available to support customers who have additional communication needs.

■ Members: Correspondence**Robert Largan:** [\[71516\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when she plans to respond to the enquiry from the hon. Member of 28 July 2021, reference RL24952.

Guy Opperman:

Despite a thorough search, we are unable to locate any correspondence from the hon. Member for this reference or date. We have contacted the hon. Member's office for further information.

Mr David Lammy: [\[72350\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when she plans to respond to the email of 9 November 2021, reference ZA54061, from the hon. Member for Tottenham regarding the waiting time for National Insurance number applications.

Guy Opperman:

The email in question was dated 5 November 2021 and a response was sent on 9 November 2021.

■ Pensions and Social Security Benefits**Rebecca Long Bailey:** [\[72483\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what equality impact assessment has been of benefit and pension claimants being required to provide proof of identity when cashing vouchers under the new Payment Exception Service.

Guy Opperman:

The Equality Assessment showed no impact relating to the protected characteristic groups for the new Payment Exception Service; all users are required to show proof of identity.

A wide range of documents are accepted as proof of identity including a recent benefit entitlement letter, which is available on request by everyone in receipt of a DWP payment for State Pension or benefit.

Rebecca Long Bailey: [\[73890\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what equality impact assessment has been made of the impact of benefit and pension Payment Exception Service users being required to collect payment claims by a 90 day expiration date.

Guy Opperman:

The Equality Assessment showed no impact relating to the protected characteristic groups for the new Payment Exception Service. A 90-day expiry date ensures the Department is alerted where a benefit claimant or pensioner has not cashed a voucher and may require additional support to access their payments. The Department can then put in place and re-issue payments where appropriate.

■ Social Security Benefits

Rebecca Long Bailey: [\[72481\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the potential cost converting to the Payment Exception Service payment card scheme from the current Post Office card account system.

Guy Opperman:

The Department is realising a reduction in costs by encouraging use of transactional bank building society, credit union or internet based accounts, for benefit claimants and pensioners that are able to provide such an account, and contracting for a single payment exception service, for benefit claimants and pensioners that do not.

Rebecca Long Bailey: [\[72484\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what equality impact assessment has been made of the effect on benefit and pension claimants no longer being able to redeem cash from ATMs and cashpoints with the new Payment Exception Service cards following the closure of the previous Post Office cards.

Guy Opperman:

The Equality Assessment showed no impact relating to the protected characteristic groups for the new Payment Exception Service; Post Office card account customers were able to use Post Office branded ATM's to cash their payments, however, this was not extended to ATM's more generally.

■ Social Security Benefits and State Retirement Pensions

Rebecca Long Bailey: [\[72480\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if her Department will make an estimate of the number of people claiming (a) benefits and (b) state pensions who do not have a bank account.

Guy Opperman:

Under successive governments of different persuasions, the Department has never held information on the reason that benefit claimants or pensioners do not provide details of a transactional account.

In October 2021, there were less than 300k active Post Office accounts.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

EDUCATION

■ School Uniform Update

The Secretary of State for Education (Nadhim Zahawi): [\[HCWS405\]](#)

The Department for Education will today publish statutory guidance on the Cost of School Uniforms. This guidance is issued under the Education (Guidance about Costs of School Uniforms) Act 2021. This Act requires the appropriate authorities of relevant schools to have regard to this guidance when developing and implementing their school's uniform policy.

Through creating a common identity amongst all pupils, regardless of background, a school uniform can act as a social leveller, but to do so it must be affordable. No school uniform should be so expensive as to leave pupils or their families feeling unable to apply to, or attend, a school of their choice.

This guidance will provide a framework to schools to help them keep the costs of uniform affordable for parents. The guidance sets out the key principles which schools should consider when setting their uniform policy and is based on views from members of both Houses, feedback from stakeholders and our own research. Throughout the guidance we encourage schools to take a holistic approach to the cost of school uniform, therefore, the guidance covers a range of issues such as branded items, supply arrangements and second-hand uniform.

Schools will not be expected to make sudden, drastic, changes to their uniform policy. We want schools to implement changes in a timely and considered manner to ensure it works effectively but in doing so we would want to ensure that parents don't incur additional costs from sudden uniform changes. However, we would like parents to see the benefits of the guidance as soon as possible. The guidance provides more information to schools on how they can be compliant with the guidance and when any changes need to be made by.

I will place a copy of the Cost of School Uniform guidance in the Libraries of both Houses.

TRANSPORT

■ International Travel Update

Secretary of State for Transport (Grant Shapps): [\[HCWS406\]](#)

Red List Review The Government has conducted a further review of the red list under our new and simplified system of international travel.

Following this review, it continues to be the case that no countries and territories are on the red list. 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 22 November, the Government will recognise vaccines on the World Health Organization's Emergency Use Listing (WHO EUL) at the border. As a result, Sinovac, Sinopharm Beijing and Covaxin will be added to our existing list of approved vaccines for inbound travel, benefitting more fully vaccinated passengers. The WHO Emergency Use Listing process includes a review of quality, safety and efficacy data performed by WHO experts, and many countries such as the United States, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Iceland are already recognising the WHO Emergency Use Listings vaccines.

Alongside expanding the list of approved vaccines for inbound travel, we will also expand our inbound vaccination policy to include proof of vaccine certification from the following 15 countries and territories:

BELARUS BOLIVIA DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC OF THE
CONGO DOMINICAN
REPUBLIC ECUADOR FAROE
ISLANDS LAOS LIBYA MALAWI MOZAMBIQUE SAMOA SENEGAL VANUATU ZAMBIA ZIMBABWE

Our inbound vaccination policy now covers over 150 countries and territories.

From 4am on Monday 22 November, the Government will also be simplifying travel rules for all under-18s coming to England from a non-red list country or territory, who will be treated as fully vaccinated at the border, regardless of their individual vaccination status. This means they will be exempt from self-isolation requirements on arrival and will only be required to take a lateral flow test post-arrival, with a free confirmatory PCR test if they test positive.

Inbound Vaccination Policy: US Residency Requirements and State Certification Solutions

From 4am on Monday 22 November, the Government will remove the requirement for people to provide proof of US residency when proving their fully vaccinated status with a US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) card. We will accept the US CDC card or one of the below US state-issued certification solutions as proof of full vaccination:

- California Digital COVID-19 Vaccine Record
- New York State Excelsior Pass Plus
- Washington State WA Verify

We will consider additional US state led certification solutions in the future.

Booster Vaccinations in the NHS COVID Pass Finally, travellers who have had a booster or a third dose will be able to demonstrate their vaccine status through the NHS COVID Pass from today. This addition will enable those who have had their booster or third dose

to travel to countries such as Israel, Croatia and Austria who have already introduced a time limit for the COVID-19 vaccine to be valid for quarantine free travel.

Whilst public health is a devolved matter, the Government works closely with the devolved administrations on any changes to international travel and aims to ensure a whole UK approach.