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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.
BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

Bulb Energy: Insolvency

Dr Alan Whitehead: [86032]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 2 December 2021 to Question 82263, if he will list the various options available to Government for exiting the Special Administration Regime with Bulb energy.

Greg Hands: [Holding answer 7 December 2021]: There are a range of possible options that could be taken to end the Special Administration Regime. These include through a restructuring, a trade sale or transferring the customers to other suppliers.

The Government will work closely with the Energy Administrators to ensure that any exit from the SAR achieves the best result for Bulb’s customers, creditors, taxpayers and the wider energy sector.

Carbon Emissions: Research

Rachael Maskell: [83419]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he will take to ensure that research and development projects to reduce carbon output in the UK are accelerated to quicken the pace of a green transition.

George Freeman:

The 2021 Spending Review reconfirmed BEIS’s flagship £1 billion Net Zero Innovation Portfolio to accelerate the commercialisation of low-carbon technologies, systems and business models in power, buildings, and industry.

Following the Spending Review, BEIS will set R&D budgets through to 2024/25. Further details of how this funding will be allocated will be announced in due course.

Coronavirus: Vaccination

Rachael Maskell: [83428]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he is having with patent holders of covid-19 vaccines on scaling up vaccination manufacturing, in country, in the global south.

Rachael Maskell: [83433]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential for pharmaceutical companies to maintain their patent and intellectual property rights while allowing vaccine production to scale up in the global south, including where vaccine access is the lowest.
George Freeman:
Intellectual Property rights have underpinned innovators’ confidence to form over 300 partnerships - an unprecedented number - which have contributed to the production and dissemination of vaccines and other health products and technologies across the world.

Licensing and technology transfer partnerships have made real, positive impacts on vaccine delivery; examples include AstraZeneca and the Serum Institute of India, Pfizer-BioNTech and BIOVAC in South Africa.

John Spellar:
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, where the new orders for Pfizer and Moderna vaccines will be produced.

George Freeman:
[Holding answer 7 December 2021]: In line with existing MHRA approved production procedures, we expect these doses to come from various European countries.

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Location

Olivia Blake:
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, in the context of relocating his Department’s policy official roles from Sheffield to London in 2016, what assessment he had made of the implications for (a) staff welfare and (b) value for money of the decision to begin relocating 1,350 BEIS roles out of London.

George Freeman:
I am unable to comment on the decisions taken by the former BIS Department, to close the Sheffield office as part of the BIS 2020 programme and relocate policy roles to London, as this was taken by senior officials from a legacy department. Following the EU Exit referendum in 2016, the consequential machinery of government change that brought about the formation of the new BEIS department, also brought an end to the BIS 2020 programme and since then, BEIS policy roles have not been confined to London only.

BEIS’ contribution to the Government’s Places for Growth agenda was agreed in 2019/20 and forms part of the overall 22,000 roles that are being relocated, of which our commitment is 1350 roles outside London by 2025. Support is in place for line managers and members of staff working in these new locations, including managing cross-site teams. As the organisation becomes less London-centric, we will see a cost saving for the Department.

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Sheffield

Olivia Blake:
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the total cost was to close the Department’s Sheffield Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) office in 2016, including redundancy payments made to civil servants.
George Freeman:
I am unable to comment on the decisions taken by the former BIS Department, to close the Sheffield office as part of the BIS 2020 programme and relocate policy roles to London, as this was taken by senior officials from a legacy department.

Energy Company Obligation
Dr Alan Whitehead:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of when final guidance for the Energy Company Obligation 4 scheme will be in place.

Greg Hands:
The Energy Company Obligation scheme (ECO) is an obligation that the Government has placed on larger energy suppliers to install energy efficiency and heating measures to low income and vulnerable households across Great Britain.

The current scheme ends in March 2022, followed by a successor scheme (ECO4). The publication of the government response to the ECO4 consultation is planned before the current scheme ends, followed by further guidance by Ofgem, who are the scheme administrators.

Hydrogen
Alex Cunningham:
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to finalise hydrogen business models; and when he plans to publish those models.

Greg Hands:
[Holding answer 7 December 2021]: Alongside its world-leading Hydrogen Strategy, the Government has consulted on a business model to provide revenue support to low carbon hydrogen production plants. Revenue support is needed to close the cost gap, between producing low carbon hydrogen and counterfactual higher carbon fuels, to unlock investment in hydrogen projects.

The Government is analysing stakeholder responses to the consultation and aims to publish the Government response in Q1 2022, alongside indicative Heads of Terms for the business model contract. The Government aims to finalise the business model in 2022.

Music: Copyright and Royalties
Justin Madders:
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment she has made on the effectiveness of the arrangements on royalties, music copyright and licensing for (a) small musicians and (b) new and upcoming acts.
George Freeman:  
As set out in its response to the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee’s report on the economics of music streaming, the Government has launched a comprehensive programme of work to ensure the music industry, including grassroots musicians and new and upcoming acts, can continue to thrive in the age of streaming.

Power Failures: North of England

Grahame Morris:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make representations to Northern Powergrid on creating a fast-track streamlined compensation system for residents left without power as a result of Storm Arwen.

Greg Hands:  
[Holding answer 7 December 2021]: Ofgem, the independent regulator for the UK’s energy networks, sets service levels which Distribution Network Operators must meet, with rules on how quickly compensation payments are issued to consumers if the standards are not met. This is set out in the Quality of Service Guaranteed Standards.

Renewable Energy

Fleur Anderson:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department categorises burning trees as a source of renewable energy.

Greg Hands:  
The Government considers biomass a renewable, low-carbon energy source. The Government only supports the use of biomass where it complies with strict sustainability criteria. The sustainability criteria require that where biomass is sourced from forests, these should be ‘forest waste or residues’ derived from existing forestry operations and not whole trees purposely grown for bioenergy.

Skills Workers: Environment Protection

Jack Lopresti:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of implementing a green skills roadmap to help meet environmental targets; and what steps his Department is taking to ensure a joined up approach by the Government on improving green skills.

Greg Hands:  
In the Net Zero Strategy, the Government set out its plans for working with industry to develop a skilled workforce and enable workers, industries, and places to transition to a net zero economy. The policies set out in the Net Zero Strategy represent a first step in addressing the challenges and opportunities identified by the Green Jobs Taskforce.
This includes delivering a Lifetime Skills Guarantee and growing key post-16 training programmes (such as apprenticeships, Skills Bootcamps and T levels) in line with the needs of employers.

In order to drive this agenda, the Government has announced a cross-cutting delivery group to include representatives from across different government departments, industry, the skills sector and other key stakeholders, maintaining the momentum generated by the Taskforce to drive action across the green skills agenda. The Government will set out further details in due course.

### STEM Subjects: Young People

**Justin Tomlinson:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the Government is planning any further national schemes like the Year of Engineering in 2018 to encourage more young people into STEM careers.

**George Freeman:**

Through UKRI, BEIS currently funds a variety of national programmes open to young people in all parts of the UK, to encourage them to take up the study of STEM subjects and to consider STEM careers.

These include the STEM Ambassadors programme, a nationwide network of over 30,000 volunteers representing over 7,000 employers, who engage with young people to increase their interest in STEM subjects and to raise awareness of the range of careers that science qualifications offer. BEIS also supports the CREST Awards, the UK’s largest national award scheme for project work in STEM subjects is based on enquiry-based learning principles which encourage motivation and engagement.

Programmes such as this are critical to inspiring more young people from all backgrounds to study STEM subjects and take up relevant careers. UKRI is currently reviewing these youth engagement programmes and their impacts to ensure that they remain effective in encouraging more young people into research and innovation careers.

### Weather: North of England

**Grahame Morris:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, once power has been restored, if he will commission an independent public inquiry into the national and local response to Storm Arwen.

**Greg Hands:**

*Holding answer 7 December 2021*: My Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has commissioned a post-incident review into Storm Arwen to identify lessons and best practice for communications, resourcing and system resilience.
As the independent regulator for energy, Ofgem has also announced a review into the impact of Storm Arwen. This will focus on the role of the network companies in maintaining resilience of the system and their emergency response.

**CABINET OFFICE**

**UK Domestic Advisory Group and UK-EU Civil Society Forum**

**Brendan O’Hara:**
To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many applications were received for places on the (a) Domestic Advisory Group and (b) Civil Society Forum.

**Brendan O’Hara:**
To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the process was for selecting organisations for the (a) Domestic Advisory Group and (b) Civil Society Forum.

**Brendan O’Hara:**
To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps he took to ensure the application of equalities principles to the selection of organisations for places on the (a) Domestic Advisory Group and (b) Civil Society Forum.

**Brendan O’Hara:**
To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether there is a balance in (a) social partners and (b) representation from the devolved nations on the (i) Domestic Advisory Group and (ii) Civil Society Forum.

**Michael Ellis:**
We launched an Expression of Interest campaign on 19 October to determine membership of the Domestic Advisory Group (DAG) and Civil Society Forum (CSF). The expression of interest campaign was extended from 9 November until 29 November following requests for an extension from a number of stakeholders.

We received 83 Expressions of Interest for the DAG or the CSF (or both). We are working closely with departments and devolved administrations to ensure a balanced representation of civil society organisations, including business organisations, Trade Unions, NGOs and charities, to represent all four nations of the UK.

To be considered for appointment under this campaign, the organisations must meet the eligibility criteria outlined on the Expression of Interest page on GOV.UK. We have encouraged applications from the widest range of qualified groups in line with our Public Sector Equality Duty.

Successful candidates for the DAG will be informed in the coming weeks. The participants for the Civil Society Forum will be confirmed once the guidelines which underpin the forum are agreed by the UK-EU TCA Partnership Council.
Africa: Military Aid

Chi Onwurah: [64609]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many African countries the Government has agreements with affording British military personnel diplomatic status while on training; how many complaints against British soldiers by local authorities in Africa her Department has been made aware of in the last five years; and how many of those complaints involved violence against women.

James Heappey:

[Holding answer 1 November 2021]: Diplomatic status is not afforded to British military personnel while on training, these personnel are subject to separate bilateral Status of Forces Agreements between the UK and the host nation, as well as subject to the Armed Forces Act 2006.

We do not hold information regarding complaints made by local authorities centrally, but when serious complaints are made, they are directed to the appropriate authority.

Complaints involving violence against women should be directed to the police authority with jurisdiction, as set out in the UK’s defence agreements with individual countries. Statistics on investigations and prosecutions for sexual offences that are dealt with through the Service Justice System are compiled by the Ministry of Defence annually. This database does not cover civilian systems in the UK or abroad.

We are currently reviewing our databases to examine improvements such as the recording of geographic locations.

In addition, I have directed the creation of a new central database for collating information about non-criminal complaints by host nations local authorities or individuals in Sub-Saharan Africa starting on 1 January 2022.

Armed Forces: Public Expenditure

Wendy Chamberlain: [904142]

What assessment he has made of the impact on armed forces personnel and their families of the decrease in average annual real-term growth from 2021 to 2025 in day-to-day spending of his Department, as a result of the Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021.

Mr Ben Wallace:

[Holding answer 15 November 2021]: Defence’s budget is growing year on year over the spending review period. We received a record settlement for Defence in 2020 of £16.5 billion. From 2019-20, the total Defence budget’s annual growth is 1.5% in real terms, with CDEL increasing from £10.3 billion in 2019-20 to £16.2 billion in 2024-25, and RDEL increasing from £30.6 billion to £32.4 billion.
This year Defence also received over £2 billion additional funding for running costs to counteract costs arising from the Health and Social Care Levy and expected increases in inflation in the wider economy.

**BOWMAN Combat Radio System**

**Mr Mark Francois:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he plans to begin withdrawing the Bowman communications system from service; and which system his Department plans to replace the Bowman system with.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The out of service date for Bowman ComBAT Infrastructure and Platform (BCIP) 5.6 is currently 2025-26. Defence is working through Morpheus to identify and implement the range of systems we will require to replace Bowman.

**Defence Equipment and Support: Public Appointments**

**Mr Mark Francois:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when the contract for the Head of Defence Equipment and Support expires.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The employment contract for the Chief Executive Officer of Defence Equipment and Support is due to end in May 2022.

**Defence: Procurement**

**Mr Mark Francois:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the status of (a) his Department's Approach to Investment Decisions project and (b) the associated Acquisition Review is as of 2 December 2021.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The key recommendations of Project MAID (MOD’s Approach to Investment Decisions) were implemented in 2020 with the transition to a three-step approvals process and the introduction of the Strategic Outline Case, bringing MOD in line with wider Government practice. Given their common themes, implementation of the remaining Project MAID recommendations, and those arising from the internal review of the Department’s acquisition system, have been taken forward through the Acquisition and Approvals Transformation Portfolio.

**Mr Mark Francois:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether he plans to publish the conclusions of his Department’s Approach to Investment Decisions project; and if he will make a statement.
Jeremy Quin:
The key recommendations of Project MAID (MOD's Approach to Investment Decisions) were implemented in 2020 with the transition to a three-step approvals process and the introduction of the Strategic Outline Case, bringing MOD in line with wider Government practice. This is now reflected in both the Department's internal policy and in guidance available externally through the Knowledge in Defence portal.

Diversity and Inclusion Directorate: Complaints
Stephanie Peacock:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many complaints of (a) bullying, (b) sexism, (c) sexual assault, (d) physical abuse and (e) emotional abuse has the Diversity and Inclusion Directorate received since April 2021; and how many complaints have resulted in (i) dismissal or (ii) discharge.

Leo Docherty:  
Complaints of this nature are not dealt with by the Diversity and Inclusion Directorate. For members of the Armed Forces, complaints of this nature can be raised and investigated in the form of a Service Complaint. Criminal allegations are referred to the Service Police for investigation. For Defence civilian staff, complaints of this nature can be raised and investigated by Defence Business Services' Civilian Human Resources. Where a complaint relates to an incident which may constitute a criminal offence, the matter is referred to the police.

Diversity and Inclusion Directorate: Telephone Services
Stephanie Peacock:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many calls to the Diversity and Inclusion Directorate’s Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination helpline have been received since it was established.

Leo Docherty:  
The wholeforce bullying, harassment and discrimination helpline was established in September 2020. Since opening, it has received 489 calls.

Joint Strike Fighter Aircraft: Accidents
Chris Evans:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment his Department has been made of the risk to flight crew following the crash of an F-35 from the HMS Queen Elizabeth.

Chris Evans:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment his Department has made of the safety of the F-35 fleet following a crash off the HMS Queen Elizabeth.
James Heappey:
The Aviation Duty Holders for Lightning have reviewed the initial and emerging evidence following the crash of the F-35B Lightning from HMS Queen Elizabeth and remain satisfied that Risks to Life remain Tolerable and As Low As Reasonably Practicable. A Service Inquiry has been convened and it will be inappropriate to comment on the nature of that evidence while the Inquiry continues. However, if any new safety critical evidence emerges during the Inquiry process this will be considered further by the Aviation Duty Holders.

LE TacCIS Programme: Contracts

Mr Mark Francois:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what deliverables have been received by his Department from contractors in relation to Project Morpheus as of 2 December 2021.

Jeremy Quin:
The assessment phase has matured the MORPHEUS Evolving to Open design and architecture, and specific MORPHEUS deliverables include a Joint Programme Office, a Test and Reference Centre, Target Architecture and an Installation Design and Certification project. Progress on MORPHEUS Evolve to Open Assessment Phase has fallen considerably short of what was anticipated. The Department is reviewing next steps on how best to achieve our objectives on MORPHEUS.

LE TacCIS Programme: Expenditure

Mr Mark Francois:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the total expenditure on (a) Le TACsIS and (b) the associated Project Morpheus is as of 2 December 2021.

Jeremy Quin:
As at 30 Nov 21, the total expenditure on the Land Environmental Tactical Communication and Information System (LETacCIS) is £1.536 billion of which Project MORPHEUS represents £572 million.

LE TacCIS Programme: Military Vehicles

Mr Mark Francois:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, which vehicles in the British Army’s vehicle fleet the Army plans to (a) fit or (b) upgraded with the Morpheus communications system.

Jeremy Quin:
The Ministry of Defence is planning to resource all of those vehicles in the new ‘Future Soldier’ Army structure announced last week which require tactical communications capability with MORPHEUS.
Queen's Guards: Uniforms

Martyn Day: [85327]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment his Department has made of the quality of the new faux bear fur that has been manufactured as an alternative to real bear fur to make the Queen's Guard's caps; and if he will make a statement.

Jeremy Quin:
Our analysis of recent tests conducted on a fake fur fabric commissioned by PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals), showed it met one of the five requirements to be considered as a viable alternative for ceremonial caps. Whilst it met the basic standard for water absorption, it showed unacceptable rates of water shedding and performed poorly on the visual assessment. As the man-made fur sadly didn't meet the standards required for a ceremonial cap which is worn throughout the year and in all weathers, the Ministry of Defence has no plans to take this man-made fabric forward.

Russia: Ukraine

Jim Shannon: [85270]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assistance the Government has provided to Ukraine to respond to recent Russian aggression.

James Heappey:
Defence has a longstanding relationship with our Ukrainian counterparts and continue to provide support in many areas including security assistance and defence reform. Since 2015, the UK has helped build the resilience and capacity of the Armed Forces of Ukraine through Operation ORBITAL which has trained around 22,000 Ukrainian troops.

Of course, we have significant concerns about Russia's aggressive pattern of military build-ups on Ukraine's border and in illegally-annexed Crimea. The UK and our Allies do not seek to be adversarial to Russia, and will ensure that our activity, alongside Allies and Partners, is calibrated. We remain clear that Russia's threatening and destabilising behaviour is unacceptable and will have costs. We continue to monitor events on the ground closely.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Live Events Reinsurance Scheme: Theatre

Jamie Stone: [85339]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what estimate he has made of the number of theatre events that have been successfully insured under the Live Events Reinsurance Scheme.
**Julia Lopez:**
The Government recognises the important contribution the theatre sector makes to the UK’s culture and economy and the significant challenges the sector has faced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Live Events Reinsurance Scheme provides live events across the country with the confidence to plan for future events, and as such will support the UK’s post-Covid economic recovery.

We are unable to share commercially sensitive data about the events that have purchased eligible policies.

**Pornography: Internet**

**Jim Shannon:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps she is taking to prevent access to porn websites by school-age boys.

**Chris Philp:**
The strongest protections in the draft Online Safety Bill are for children.

The draft Bill covers many the most visited pornography sites, social media platforms, video-sharing sites, forums and via search engines - thereby capturing many of the sites through which children access pornography. Under our proposals, companies in scope will need to put in place technologies such as age verification to prevent children accessing pornography or demonstrate that the approach they are taking delivers the same level of protection for children.

The Joint Committee scrutinising the Bill is expected to report by 10th December and the government will introduce the Bill as soon as possible thereafter.

**EDUCATION**

**Autism: Special Educational Needs**

**Feryal Clark:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent steps he has taken with the Minister for Women and Equalities to ensure that autistic children are receiving appropriate educational support in (a) Enfield North and (b) the London Borough of Enfield.

**Will Quince:**
The department wants every autistic young person to reach their potential and feel heard at every stage of their life, no matter where they live. That is why, in its first year alone, the department is investing £74 million into our cross-government National Autism Strategy to promote a straightforward route to diagnosis, the correct support, increasing understanding and improving access to a quality education and social care.

In total, £600,000 of this funding has gone towards the department’s contract with the Autism Education Trust (AET) for the 2021/22 academic year. The department has
funded the AET since 2011 to deliver autism awareness training to education staff in early years, schools, and further education settings. As the funding is to provide national coverage across the country, rather than specific allocations to regions or local authorities, the department does not have the exact figure for Enfield. However, it has so far reached more than 305,000 people across the country. As well as teachers and teaching assistants, this includes support staff such as receptionists, dining hall staff and caretakers, encouraging a 'whole school' approach to supporting autistic pupils.

In addition to our existing commitments, the department is determined to ensure that the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) system works more effectively for those children who need extra support, including autistic children. That is why the department is completing the SEND Review, to improve outcomes and build a sustainable SEND system, where there is clear accountability.

- **Children: Immunosuppression**

**Justin Madders:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what enforcement steps his Department has taken against parents of clinically extremely vulnerable children who have not returned to school following the lifting of the shielding guidance for that group of children.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The department has not taken direct enforcement steps against parents of clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) children who have not returned to school following the UK Clinical Review Panel recommendation that no children and young people under the age of 18 should be considered CEV. Where a pupil is not regularly attending, schools and local authorities are expected to discuss the reasons behind the child’s absence with their parents and agree a plan to help them return to regular and consistent education. Schools and local authorities have a range of measures that they can use to improve attendance including parenting orders, parenting contracts, and fixed penalty notices. The use of these measures is determined locally as schools and local authorities are best placed to understand the individual circumstances of each case.

Children and young people previously considered CEV should attend school and should follow the same COVID-19 guidance as the rest of the population. However, if advised to isolate or reduce their social contact by their specialist, due to the nature of their medical condition or treatment they should continue to follow the advice of their specialist.

Schools continue to be able to grant leaves of absence for pupils subject to the normal rules and should consider all applications for leave of absence on an individual basis, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances, and relevant background context behind the request.
Educational Institutions: Antisemitism

Andrew Percy:
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department plans to take steps against (a) universities and (b) other bodies receiving funding from his Department who (i) refuse to accept the IHRA definition of antisemitism and (ii) take insufficient action to protect Jewish students on campus.

Michelle Donelan:
On 10 November 2021, the Office for Students (OfS) published a list of higher education (HE) providers who have adopted the definition. I am pleased to report good progress in the last year: an increase from around 30 to over 200 providers have adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s (IHRA) definition. This includes the vast majority of universities and I continue to urge all providers to adopt this definition.

The government has also asked the OfS to undertake a scoping exercise, to identify providers that are reluctant to adopt the definition and find out why. The department has asked them to consider introducing mandatory reporting of antisemitic incident numbers by providers, with the aim of ensuring a robust evidence base, which the OfS can then use to effectively regulate in this area.

Adoption of the IHRA definition is only a first step towards ridding HE of antisemitism. I want to be very clear that, whilst the government considers that adoption of the definition is crucial, it is not enough on its own. That is why I will continue to work with the sector to ensure it better understands antisemitism and does more to end it.

Universities also have clear responsibilities to ensure that there is no place for antisemitism. All HE providers should discharge their responsibilities fully and have robust policies and procedures in place to address hate crime, including any antisemitic incidents that are reported.

The department and I are keen to hear from Jewish groups about what more can be done to make Jewish students and staff feel safe on campus. As part of this, we intend to set up a round table in the new year, specifically focused on tackling antisemitism in HE.

Further Education: Apprentices

Jane Stevenson:
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what support is available for full-time further education students seeking apprenticeship opportunities.

Alex Burghart:
Apprenticeships provide people with the opportunity to earn and learn the skills needed to start an exciting career in a wide range of industries, everything from artificial intelligence, archaeology, data science, business management, and banking. We want more young people to benefit from high-quality apprenticeships.
To encourage more young people to consider apprenticeships, we are promoting apprenticeships in schools and colleges through our Apprenticeship Support and Knowledge programme. This free service provides resources and interventions to help better educate young people about apprenticeships and has reached over 600,000 students across England in the 2020/21 academic year.

In the 'Skills for Jobs' White Paper, published in January 2021, we announced the introduction of a three-point-plan to enforce provider access legislation. This requires that all maintained schools and academies provide opportunities for providers of technical education and apprenticeships to visit schools to talk to all year 8-13 pupils. This plan includes creating clear minimum legal requirements, specifying who is to be given access to which pupils and when. This is an important step towards real choice for every pupil.

We are introducing a range of measures to incentivise schools and colleges to prioritise careers guidance and hold them to account for the quality of their careers programmes. In addition to a strong statutory framework, this includes tougher enforcement and an Ofsted review of provision. To build a whole-school or whole-college approach, we will build careers awareness into every stage of teacher professional development and embed careers education into the secondary curriculum.

The National Careers Service, a free, government-funded careers information, advice and guidance service draws on a range of labour market information to support and guide individuals. The National Careers Service is impartial, and careers guidance is tailored to individual needs. Young people aged 13 to 18 can access ongoing in-depth information, advice and guidance from the service via local telephone-based advisers or the National Careers Service website.

The department offers guidance and support to young people who are considering applying for apprenticeships through our apprenticeships.gov.uk website, which explains the application stages in a step-by-step process. Students can search for new apprenticeship opportunities on our Find an Apprenticeship (FAA) service; over 15,000 apprenticeship vacancies were advertised on FAA in October 2021.

### Nurses: Training

**Tulip Siddiq:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the accessibility of the Government’s free childcare offer to student nurses who are required to work a weekly minimum of 16 hours in the NHS but do not receive a job-related income.

**Will Quince:**

All three and four-year-olds are eligible for 15 hours free early education per week, which includes children of parents undertaking full or part time study. This entitlement provides young children with high quality early education and helps to prepare them for school.
Students on a low income, or whose children have special educational needs, may also be eligible for the government's 15 hours free childcare per week entitlement for disadvantaged two-year-olds. The full criteria for this entitlement can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs/free-childcare-2-year-olds.

30 hours free childcare is an entitlement for working parents of three and four-year-olds, with the aim of helping working parents with childcare costs so that they can take up paid work or can work additional hours if they want to.

The Childcare Bill policy statement, published in December 2015, sets out that students are not eligible for the government’s 30 hours free childcare entitlement, unless they are in work. Students who undertake paid work in addition to their studies and meet the income requirements will be eligible. To qualify, students do not have to physically work 16 hours a week, but they do need to earn the equivalent of a weekly minimum of 16 hours at national minimum wage or national living wage (currently just over £7,400 a year for parents aged over 23).

With regards to student nurses, the government keeps the funding arrangements for all NHS health professionals’ education under close review, to ensure that students are appropriately supported.

The government has already introduced new maintenance funding for many healthcare courses. In September 2020, the Department of Health and Social Care introduced the new, non-repayable, training grant of at least £5,000 per academic year, for all eligible new and continuing pre-registration nursing, midwifery and most allied health profession students studying at English universities.

There is a further £2,000 available for parental support, available for eligible students attending a full-time pre-registration healthcare course. More information can be found here: https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/nhs-learning-support-fund/parental-support-formerly-child-dependants-allowance. This grant is in addition to funding provided by the Students Loans Company.

This generous support package enables healthcare students to focus on their studies and placements and contributes to alleviating any financial pressures students might be facing.

Pre-school Education

Stella Creasy:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Sutton Trust report entitled A fair start: Equalising access to early education, published 19 August 2021, what assessment he has made of the effect of not being able to access 30 hours of Government funded childcare on the development of children from low-income families.

Will Quince:

All 3 and 4 year olds, as well as some disadvantaged 2 year olds, in England are eligible for 15 hours free childcare. This provides them with high-quality early education and helps to prepare them for school.
Working parents of 3 and 4 year olds can access an additional 15 hours (‘30 hours’) free childcare, helping them with the cost of childcare and supporting parents back into work, or to work more hours if they wish to. To be eligible, parents must earn the equivalent of at least 16 hours a week at national minimum/living wage (for parents aged over 23, this is equivalent to just over £7,400 per year), and under £100,000 per year. The government currently has no plans to extend this scheme.

There is no analysis available that compares children who access 30 hours free childcare with those who do not. However, findings from the department’s longitudinal Study of Early Education and Development (SEED) suggests that by age 5, greater use of formal group childcare (average hours per week) between age 2 and the start of school was associated with some negative effects on socio-emotional well-being and development in school year 1. SEED is our best evidence source for early years education.

A range of factors affect a child’s development, including their wider learning environment. This could include, for example, their home learning environment.

**Schools Commissioner**

**Justin Tomlinson:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, on how many occasions regional schools commissioners have made interventions in each year since their inception in 2014.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

Regional Schools Commissioners (RSC) take key operational decisions delegated to them by my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, and will intervene in schools in the following circumstances:

- Maintained schools that have been judged inadequate by Ofsted are required to become sponsored academies to receive additional support to secure rapid and sustainable improvement from a strong sponsor. In these circumstances the RSC issues the academy order, matches the school with a suitable sponsor, and agrees at which point the funding agreement can be signed.

- To commission high quality support for under-performing academies and free schools to improve them quickly.

The below table sets out how many sponsored academies have been opened because of an academy order being issued to a local authority-maintained school having been judged inadequate. It also shows how many academies and free schools have been judged inadequate between academic years 2014/15 and 2021/22 and therefore the number of academies and free schools that have been eligible for intervention over this period. The department’s policy on intervening in inadequate academies is set out in the published schools causing concern guidance.

Source: Get Information About Schools, and Ofsted Official Statistics 2014/15 to 2021/22
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACADEMIC YEAR</th>
<th>NUMBER OF SPONSORED ACADEMIES THAT HAVE BEEN OPENED DUE TO INTERVENTION</th>
<th>NUMBER OF INADEQUATE ACADEMIES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014/2015</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015/2016</td>
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<td>96</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021/2022</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>586</strong></td>
<td><strong>537</strong></td>
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**Schools Commissioner: Finance**

Justin Tomlinson: [85245]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the annual budget is for regional schools commissioners; and how that budget is allocated among commissioners.

Justin Tomlinson: [85246]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will provide the overall cost to the public purse for regional schools commissioners since their inception.

Mr Robin Walker:

The annual workforce budgets for the National Schools Commissioner, Regional Schools Commissioners and wider Regional Delivery Directorate (RDD) that support them in their roles is set annually through the internal departmental business planning process. Funding is allocated proportionately amongst commissioners according to the size of region, delivery challenges and staffing requirements. However, the directorate works flexibly and collaboratively to ensure priorities are delivered in an effective and efficient manner.

Since the financial year 2014-15, the overall cost for the National Schools Commissioner, Regional Schools Commissioners and the regional teams that support them is £197.65 million.

**WORKFORCE BUDGET SPEND FOR REGIONAL SCHOOLS COMMISSIONERS AND RSC REGIONS**

WORKFORCE BUDGET SPEND FOR REGIONAL SCHOOLS COMMISSIONERS AND RSC REGIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>£ million</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>£34.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£32.15</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


With regard to the costs set out above, the costs for the National Schools Commissioner, Regional Schools Commissioners and their teams were £4.1 million in financial year 2014-15 and £4.75 million in 2015-16. This was funded from existing departmental resources.

As a result of structural changes within the Department for Education in 2016-17, the Academies Regional Delivery Group (ARDG) was created, which amalgamated the National Schools Commissioner and Regional Schools Commissioners with complementary regional and other functions. Workforce costs for ARDG and its successor, RDD, are therefore not comparable with predecessor structures and organisation.

Schools Commissioner: Standards

Justin Tomlinson: [85248]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, who holds regional schools commissioners accountable for their performance.

Mr Robin Walker:

Regional Schools Commissioners (RSCs) are Senior Civil Servants who act on behalf of my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, and are held to account by the National Schools Commissioner. Their performance is managed through the normal and existing service arrangements for Senior Civil Servants. The department publishes annual reports relating to school and academies performance, within which the work of RSCs is included, available here: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dfe-annual-reports.

Schools: Freedom of Expression

Andrew Rosindell: [86067]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to promote free speech in schools.

Andrew Rosindell: [86071]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has made and assessment of the potential merits of requiring schools to fly the Union Flag.
Mr Robin Walker:
Schools play an important role in preparing pupils for life in modern Britain. There are opportunities in the school curriculum and other school duties for pupils to learn about their rights as citizen of the United Kingdom, including about free speech.

The programmes of study for citizenship cover topics that help to prepare pupils to play a full and active part in society and teach them how to explore political and social issues critically, to weigh evidence, to debate, and to make reasoned arguments. Further information on the programmes of study can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-citizenship-programmes-of-study.

Pupils should be taught about the liberties enjoyed by the citizens of the United Kingdom and use and apply their knowledge and understanding while developing skills to research and interrogate evidence, debate and evaluate viewpoints, present reasoned arguments, and take informed action.

Since September 2020, relationships education has been compulsory for all primary school-aged pupils, relationships and sex education compulsory for all secondary school-aged pupils, and health education compulsory for all pupils in primaries and secondaries.

The statutory guidance sets out that pupils should know their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online and the Teacher Training Modules set out that teachers should explain that this includes the right to freedom of expression. Further information on the statutory guidance can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education, and further guidance on the teacher training modules can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teaching-about-relationships-sex-and-health.

The department has produced a relationships, sex and health education ‘Teacher training: respectful relationships’ module that includes advice on how to explain the harm caused by ‘cancel culture’ and the importance of freedom of speech and freedom of association to a tolerant and free society. It also includes teaching that censorship and ‘no platforming’ are harmful and damaging, and that seeking to get people ‘cancelled’ simply because you disagree with them, is a form of bullying and is not acceptable. Further information on this can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-training-respectful-relationships.

Schools are required to actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs. Freedom of speech is relevant to, and could be considered, in the context of all these values. Ultimately, school leaders are best placed to make their own decisions about what they teach in this respect and how they teach it, subject to their obligations to ensure political balance.

The department is developing guidance for schools on political impartiality, to help schools to understand their responsibilities in this area, including the importance of
exposing pupils to a diverse range of views during their time at school. The department expects to publish this guidance early next year.

With regards to flying the Union Flag, schools are free to display the national flag and it is a matter for individual schools to decide. The department does not provide specific guidance or restrictions on this.

### Schools: Internet

**Mr Jonathan Lord:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to support schools with internet connectivity.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The department wants all schools in the country to have access to fast internet. We are committed to continued investment, ensuring that every school has access to modern internet connectivity in the classroom and benefiting thousands more children and teachers.

Recognising the importance of broadband infrastructure in education, we are working with industry and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to accelerate the full-fibre internet connectivity rollout to all schools in England. Children in more than 1,000 schools are now enjoying next generation internet speeds thanks to government investment, with around a further 2,000 to be connected by 2025.

Most schools in the UK are in urban or suburban areas which already have access to fast full fibre broadband, so this government investment is focused on mostly rural or hard-to-reach areas, to ensure they do not miss out on next-generation speeds.

The government remains committed to investing £5 billion to bring gigabit coverage to the hardest to reach areas and will continue to work with suppliers to accelerate this investment, taking account of industry capacity to bid for, and deliver, contracts to build in uncommercial areas alongside their commercial plans. GigaHubs is one of the programmes DCMS is using to deliver the government’s ambition of gigabit capabilities across the UK by 2030. As part of the wider Project Gigabit, GigaHubs will use up to £110 million to connect public buildings such as rural schools, doctors’ surgeries, and libraries to gigabit broadband. This will allow whole classes of schoolchildren to be online, at once, with no interruptions.

Ensuring good connectivity is just the first step. The actual internet speed experienced is also affected by the technology and Wifi arrangements in place within institutions. We have published a suite of resources to help steer schools, colleges and other providers through the key questions and issues to consider when implementing technology infrastructure, including broadband and local infrastructure issues. To ensure investment made in fast broadband carries through into a high-quality experience in the classroom, we have also set up the ‘connect the classroom’ pilot programme, which is investing up to £30 million to upgrade Wifi for around 1,000 schools.
Teachers: Labour Turnover

Mr Jonathan Lord:
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to (a) recruit and (b) retain teachers.

Mr Robin Walker:
The number of teachers remains high, with over 461,000 (full-time equivalent) working in schools across the country, 20,000 more than in 2010.

The department aims to continue attracting and retaining the highly skilled teachers that every child needs. To do this, we are taking action to improve teacher recruitment and retention by transforming the training and support we provide, not only to attract more people into teaching, but to encourage them to stay and thrive in the profession.

The department is creating an entitlement to at least three years of structured training, support and professional development for all new teachers, to bring teaching into line with other prestigious professions such as law, accountancy and medicine. Underpinning this is the new Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Core Content Framework and the Early Career Framework. Together, these ensure that new teachers will benefit from at least three years of evidence-based training, across ITT and into their induction.

Beyond the first few years of teaching, our priority is to help all teachers and school leaders to continuously develop their expertise throughout their careers so every child in every classroom in every school gets the best start in life. Teachers and school leaders at all levels can now benefit from an updated suite of National Professional Qualifications. Aimed at those who want to develop expertise in high-quality teaching practice, to those leading multiple schools across trusts, these professional development programmes are now free to access for those eligible to apply.

These measures will create a golden thread running from ITT through to school leadership, rooting teacher and leader development in the best available evidence.

To support recruitment and retention of specialist teachers in subjects that are harder to recruit for, we have put in place a range of measures, including bursaries worth £24,000 tax-free and scholarships worth £26,000 tax-free. This will encourage talented trainees for key subjects such as chemistry, computing, mathematics and physics. Additionally, we have announced a Levelling Up Premium worth up to £3,000 tax-free for maths, physics, chemistry and computing teachers in years 1 to 5 of their careers.

The department remains committed to increasing teacher starting salaries to £30,000 to make teaching an attractive graduate option. We are continuing our efforts to support teacher wellbeing, including by launching the education staff wellbeing charter, and driving down unnecessary burdens and reducing teacher workload though the use of our workload reduction toolkit. Further information on the staff wellbeing charter and workload reduction toolkit are available here:
Training and Vocational Guidance: Finance

Mr Jonathan Lord: [86095]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what progress his Department has made on providing fiscal support to encourage people to (a) upskill and (b) change career paths.

Michelle Donelan:

At the recent Spending Review we announced that we are investing £3.8 billion more in further education and skills to ensure people can access high-quality training and education that leads to good jobs, addresses skills gaps, boosts productivity and supports levelling up.

We are continuing to invest in education and skills training for adults through the Adult Education Budget (AEB) (£1.34 billion in academic year 2021/22). The AEB fully funds or co-funds skills provision for eligible adults aged 19 and above from pre-entry to level 3, to support adults in gaining the skills they need for work, an apprenticeship or further learning.

The National Skills Fund will help adults learn valuable skills and prepare for the economy of the future and we are investing £1.6 billion through the fund in the next three years, on top of the £375 million already committed in financial year 2021/22. This will include extending the eligibility for Free Courses for Jobs to more adults and further expanding Skills Bootcamps. More details will be announced in due course.

Since 1 April this year, the National Skills Fund (NSF) is supporting any adult who does not have A level equivalent or higher qualifications, to access over 400 fully funded level 3 courses, with Free Courses for Jobs. This offer is a long-term commitment, backed by £95 million from the NSF in year one.

Complementing this support for adults, Skills Bootcamps offer free, flexible courses of up to 16 weeks, giving people the opportunity to build up sector-specific skills and fast-track to an interview with a local employer.

As part of the Lifetime Skills Guarantee, from 2025 we will introduce a Lifelong Loan Entitlement (LLE) equivalent to four years of post-18 education. It will be available for both modules and full years of study at higher technical and degree levels (levels 4 to 6), regardless of whether they are provided in colleges or universities. The LLE will support study throughout a learners’ life, with the opportunity to train, retrain and upskill as needed in response to changing skills needs and employment patterns. Under this flexible skills system, people can space out their studies and learn at a pace that is right for them. We will consult on the scope and policy of the LLE in due course, as part of our planned pathway to delivery from 2025.
Universities: Carbon Emissions

Rachael Maskell: [86115]
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the (a) cost to universities to reach net zero targets and (b) potential Government support that may be needed to meet those costs.

Rachael Maskell: [86116]
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether the higher education settlement in the Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021 takes account of the (a) expansion of targets set out in the Government's draft sustainability strategy for education and (b) Government support that may be required for that expansion.

Rachael Maskell: [86117]
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he plans to take to incorporate the (a) development of the Government's draft sustainability strategy and (b) implications for universities of that strategy in potential reforms to higher education that may result from Sir Philip Augar's review of post-18 education and funding.

Michelle Donelan:
I would like to recognise the excellent work already happening across the higher education sector to reach net zero. Ahead of COP26 in November, 125 universities had signed up to the Race to Zero.

The costs to reach net zero will vary across institutions. The government has committed to work with the sector to explore the mandatory reporting for carbon emissions by universities, which will help to gather a fuller picture of the challenge ahead.

Universities are eligible to receive funding through the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme. Some universities have already received millions of pounds through this scheme.

Universities: Freedom of Expression

Mr Jonathan Lord: [86094]
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to protect freedom of speech on university campuses.

Michelle Donelan:
I refer my hon. Friend, the Member for Woking, to the answer I gave on 10 September 2021 to Question 41864.

The Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill, introduced on 12 May, has now passed through committee stage in the House of Commons.
ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Agriculture: Hedges and Ditches

Helen Hayes:

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effect of the removal of cross compliance in 2024 on hedgerows on agricultural land in terms of (a) sustainable management and (b) carbon sequestration.

Victoria Prentis:

Now that we have left the EU, we have an opportunity to reform our regulatory system for farming and land management to better meet the country’s needs, unconstrained by the Common Agricultural Policy. We will take this opportunity to develop a modern regulatory system that effectively targets and addresses the causes of harm but is fair to farmers and reflects the realities of farming today.

While no formal assessment of the effect of the removal of cross compliance provisions on management of hedgerows and carbon sequestration has been undertaken, we will ensure that our high environmental standards are maintained as we move away from cross compliance.

There are existing legal protections for hedgerows in England and Wales outside of cross compliance, through the Hedgerows Regulations 1997. These regulations prohibit the removal of most countryside hedgerows (or parts of them) without first seeking approval from the local planning authority. It decides whether a hedgerow is ‘important’ and should not be removed because of its wildlife, landscape, historical or archaeological value. Alongside the Hedgerows Regulations, all wild birds, their eggs and their nests are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which prohibits killing, injuring or taking of wild birds or taking or damaging their eggs and nests. These regulations jointly provide important protections for most countryside hedgerows and for farmland birds.

In addition to these legislative protections, our new environmental land management schemes will also continue to fund the management of hedgerows, in recognition of their historical, cultural and environmental value to our countryside.

We will also continue to keep our domestic regulatory standards under review, raising standards according to new evidence and research, in line with our ambition for an improved future regulatory system.

Aviation: Tetraethyllead

Sarah Olney:

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, by what date he expects the substance tetraethyllead to be banned from use by all sectors of the UK aviation industry.
Jo Churchill:
Annex 14 of UK REACH (the Authorisation List) lists substances of very high concern that cannot be used after a specified ‘sunset date’ unless an authorisation has been applied for and been granted. As part of its recent draft recommendation for substances that are a priority for adding to Annex 14, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) recommended that no action on tetraethyllead is needed under UK REACH at the moment. The HSE set out that it may be appropriate to revisit the regulatory approach to tetraethyllead when technical evaluations of potential alternatives are completed, as none are currently available. This is expected to happen by the mid-2020s. As the process for recommending substances for Annex 14 prioritisation is a regular one, the regulatory approach to tetraethyllead will be reassessed in future prioritisation rounds.

The Department for Transport is working to encourage industry to transfer to cleaner aviation fuels where possible. In December 2020, the Secretary of State for Transport asked officials to speed up work on encouraging the aviation sector to use unleaded fuels such as UL91 which it is believed a significant proportion of the piston engine aviation fleet can use.

Deposit Return Schemes
Paul Bristow: [84493]
To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when he plans to publish his response to the consultation on the Introduction of a deposit return scheme in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Jo Churchill:
Final details and next steps for the deposit return scheme will be presented in a Government response which will be published early next year.

Fisheries: Trade Agreements
Chris Loder: [84482]
To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she (a) has taken and (b) will take to protect the UK fishing industry from cheaper imports of seafood from countries with which the UK (i) has agreed and (b) seeks to agree a trade deal with during trade negotiations with those countries.

Victoria Prentis:
The UK is a nation that trades seafood internationally. The majority of UK fleet landings are exported, whilst most of the fish we consume is imported.

Through direct engagement with industry and by working in partnership with Seafish and other organisations, Defra works closely with seafood businesses to inform our negotiating positions in Free Trade Agreement negotiations.

Defra will always champion UK seafood producers. In line with the government’s manifesto commitment to build markets for British produce at home and abroad, we
are committed to increasing domestic consumption of locally sourced seafood and expanding opportunities for the UK seafood sector overseas.

■ Hunting

Sarah Olney:

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans he has to (a) curb trail hunting on Government-owned land and (b) improve the effectiveness of the law on hunting.

Rebecca Pow:

This Government's manifesto was clear that no changes will be made to the Hunting Act. 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, and completely bans hare coursing. Those found guilty under the Act are subject to the full force of the law.

■ Nature Conservation: Land

Dr Matthew Offord:

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what progress has been made on (a) defining the metrics for measuring and (b) setting a long-term legally binding target for the condition of (i) land and (ii) sea sites protected under the Environment Act 2021 to help meet the Government's commitment to increase the amount of protected land in the UK to 30 percent by 2030.

Rebecca Pow:

In early 2022, we will publish a public consultation on the proposed long-term targets to be set under the Environment Act 2021 framework. This will include a rationale and specify the metric for each of the proposed targets. Alongside the consultation, we intend to publish an evidence pack and Impact Assessment that will provide more detailed information about the evidence approach used to develop the targets. We are required by the Environment Act 2021 to set at least one long term target for biodiversity, and are currently considering several potential options, including related to habitats.

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

■ Afghanistan: British Nationals Abroad

Judith Cummins:

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many British citizens does she estimate still remain in Afghanistan.

James Cleverly:

The FCDO does not routinely ask British nationals to register with a British Embassy or High Commission overseas. Recognising the circumstances in Afghanistan, British
nationals still in Afghanistan were asked to register their continued presence to allow the FCDO to maintain contact after the evacuation phase ended. British nationals continue to receive updates from the FCDO on the situation in Afghanistan.

**Afghanistan: Females**

**Rachael Maskell:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps she is taking to support girls' access to education in Afghanistan.

**James Cleverly:**
We are committed to prioritising women and girls in the Government's response to the situation in Afghanistan. Secondary schools are now open to girls in at least 10 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces and the Taliban has said they are working towards a plan to get all girls back to school. We continue to press the Taliban to ensure the full and equal access to education for all. The Foreign Secretary has discussed women's rights, including girls' education, with international counterparts including at the G7 and at the 12 October extraordinary meeting of G20 Leaders on Afghanistan, where the Foreign Secretary represented the Prime Minister.

**Afghanistan: Foreign Relations**

**Mark Logan:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will meet with the hon. Member for Bolton North East as Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Afghanistan to discuss issues relating to that country and the Afghan diaspora in the UK.

**James Cleverly:**
The Minister of State for South Asia would be pleased to meet with the Hon. Member for Bolton North East as part of his ongoing engagement on matters relating to Afghanistan.

**Afghanistan: Humanitarian Aid**

**Rachael Maskell:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much funding her Department allocates to humanitarian support in Afghanistan each month.

**James Cleverly:**
We are doubling our humanitarian and development assistance for Afghanistan this year, taking this up to £286 million. This will provide emergency humanitarian aid and minimise the humanitarian catastrophe over the winter months. In all, between April and November 2021, we have disbursed over £70 million for life-saving humanitarian support for Afghanistan, including for emergency food, health, nutrition, shelter, water and sanitation, and mine action. We are developing firm plans for the allocation of the remainder of the £286 million and will make further announcements in due course.
Afghanistan: Non-governmental Organisations

Rachael Maskell:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps is she taking to support NGOs in Afghanistan.

James Cleverly:  
We are providing life-saving humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan through the UN, NGOs and the Red Cross Movement on the ground, who are continuing to ensure vital aid reaches those who need it most. We have made the humanitarian situation and access a major subject of our engagement with the Taliban. They have assured us and the UN that aid workers are able to operate freely, and the UN is reporting that this is broadly happening. We continue to monitor this closely.

Afghanistan: Refugees

Rachael Maskell:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps she is taking to support people from religious minorities in Afghanistan to access a safe passage out of that country.

James Cleverly:  
We are monitoring the situation for religious minorities closely. We have made human rights, including rights of minorities, a central feature of our political engagement with the Taliban to date, including the visit to Kabul on 5 October by the Prime Minister's High Representative for Afghanistan Transition, Sir Simon Gass. On 7 October, the UK supported a Human Rights Council resolution that created a Special Rapporteur mandate to monitor human rights in the country. We have also announced the Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme (ACRS), which in its first year will welcome up to 5,000 vulnerable Afghans to the UK who have been forced to flee the country, with up to a total of 20,000 over the coming years. ACRS will provide protection for Afghan citizens at risk, including members of minority groups.

Afghanistan: Repatriation

Judith Cummins:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many British citizens and their dependents have been returned to the UK from Afghanistan since international forces left on 29 August 2021.

James Cleverly:  
Between 15-28 August over 8,300 British nationals and dependents were evacuated from Afghanistan. Since the end of Operation Pitting, the FCDO has assisted over 700 British nationals and their dependents back to the UK. This includes helping 210 British nationals and their dependents leave Afghanistan through Qatari Government charter flights. We continue to work to support British nationals and their eligible dependants to leave Afghanistan if that is their wish.
Judith Cummins:
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many British citizens are seeking assistance to return back to the UK from Afghanistan as of 30 November 2021.

James Cleverly:
The FCDO does not routinely ask British nationals to register with a British Embassy or High Commission overseas. Recognising the circumstances in Afghanistan, British nationals still in Afghanistan were asked to register their continued presence to allow the FCDO to maintain contact after the evacuation phase ended. British nationals continue to receive updates from the FCDO on the situation in Afghanistan.

Judith Cummins:
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what plans are in place to improve the assistance provided to British citizens and their dependents to leave Afghanistan.

James Cleverly:
Providing assistance to those individuals eligible for HMG support remains a top priority and we will continue to work to take advantage of all opportunities to help those eligible to come to the UK. We have created a new Joint Afghanistan Casework Unit (JACU), staffed by officials from the Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office, Home Office and Ministry of Defence, which is taking forward the UK’s commitment to resettle individuals and those family members confirmed to be eligible. We continue to facilitate the departure of British nationals and eligible family members on flights organised by the Qatari government, and we are working closely with international partners on further possible flight options. Our Afghan Citizens’ Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) will welcome up to 5,000 vulnerable Afghans to the UK in its first year, with up to a total of 20,000 over the coming years.

Afghanistan: Violence
Rachael Maskell:
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of the level of violence in Afghanistan; and whether she has made representations to the Taliban on the level of violence in that country.

James Cleverly:
We are aware of the human rights in Afghanistan and we have made it central feature of all of our political engagement with the Taliban to date, including the visit to Kabul on 5 October by the Prime Minister’s High Representative for Afghanistan Transition, Sir Simon Gass. We are closely tracking the situation and working with international partners and allies to respond to violations and abuses and to push for those responsible to be held to account. On 7 October, the UK supported a Human Rights Council resolution that created a Special Rapporteur mandate to monitor human rights in the country. 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.

**BBC World Service: Finance**

**Sarah Olney:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the future of funding for the BBC World Service after March 2022.

**James Cleverly:**

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office is committed to providing grant-in-aid funding for the BBC World Service through to 2025. The details of the settlement are still to be finalised.

**Bosnia and Herzegovina: Politics and Government**

**Catherine West:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she has made an assessment of the potential merits of convening an international meeting on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**Wendy Morton:**

The UK is committed to the integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a single, sovereign state, comprising two entities, and works closely with NATO, the EU and, other international partners to support stability in the region. The Western Balkans are regularly raised in multilateral fora, most recently at the NATO Foreign Ministers' meeting in Riga, and the OSCE Ministerial in Stockholm.

**Coronavirus: Vaccination**

**Dr Rupa Huq:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many covid-19 vaccinations the Government has distributed to developing countries as of 2 November 2021.

**Wendy Morton:**

As of 2 November, the UK had distributed 11.1 million COVID-19 vaccine doses to developing countries as part of its donation programme. In addition, on 26 October, COVAX accepted 10 million doses to allocate and distribute to low and middle-income countries, with another 10 million doses accepted on the 12 November.

**Developing Countries: Basic Skills**

**Marion Fellows:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, which countries receive the most Official Development Assistance for improving foundational literacy and numeracy outcomes.
Vicky Ford:
Foundational literacy and numeracy are essential and effective tools for reducing poverty and inequality, especially when focused on girls. That is why, under the UK’s G7 presidency, we secured pioneering endorsement to two new global access and learning objectives, to ensure that all children - particularly girls - secure foundational learning. In 2020, Pakistan, Lebanon, Tanzania, Rwanda and Bangladesh were the five largest recipients of bilateral UK Official Development Assistance (ODA) for basic education. The UK continues to support around 15 more countries bilaterally in foundational learning. We are also the largest donor to the Global Partnership for Education, from which a further 70 countries are eligible to receive support to improve foundational learning. ODA is reported on a calendar year basis and ODA figures for 2021 will be available next year after reporting to the OECD.

Marion Fellows:
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps she is taking to ensure that her Department’s programming to support improved foundational literacy and numeracy is being targeted to countries where literacy rates and proficiency in maths are lowest.

Vicky Ford:
HMG's Girls Education Action Plan, launched in May by the Prime Minister sets out how we plan to deliver the global girls' education targets and ensure all children, particularly girls, have access to quality education. The plan identifies the need to address the gap in children's foundational learning to ensure children achieve basic literacy, numeracy as well as other transferable skills as the building blocks needed to make progress in school, attain higher order skills, and reap the full rewards of education. UK support is underpinned by evidence and focuses on supporting the most marginalised. The bulk of our education programmes are in Africa where the needs are greatest and learning levels lowest, such as in Malawi and Uganda. The UK is also ensuring that children's learning is prioritised in very challenging contexts, such as in Nigeria and Syria, and building strong relationships to identify and support governments that are committed to education reform, such as in Rwanda and Sierra Leone.

Marion Fellows:
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what indicators her Department uses to track the impact of its education Official Development Assistance on foundational literacy and numeracy outcomes.

Vicky Ford:
The UK, where available, uses national data systems to track and monitor progress of its Official Development Assistance spend on foundational literacy and numeracy and in a number of countries is working to strengthen these national systems. UK-funded centrally managed programmes and research programmes are also building the global public goods on evidence and data that are needed to better track foundational learning for all. The UK is committed to press for better accountability
and coordination in the international education system to deliver the greatest impact for girls' education. We are working with like-minded partners to deliver stronger accountability for Sustainable Development Goal 4 progress, including through better use of education data to focus global efforts on areas of greatest need. A UK-funded programme in Tanzania was recently included as a leading example in a global review of how best to improve learning at scale. It showed how the programme, EQUIP-T, successfully improved literacy and numeracy skills for pupils, especially girls and the most marginalised. We are committed to ensuring there are more programmes like EQUIP-T - whether funded by governments, donors, or multilaterals - that both improve learning outcomes for all children and can prove it.

**Ethiopia: Armed Conflict**

Helen Hayes:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions she has had with her Ethiopian counterpart on the need to ensure that all sides in the conflict in northern Ethiopia and the Tigray region commit to (a) allowing unfettered access to (i) international aid agencies and (ii) international observers and (b) restoring lost communications where they have been removed.

Vicky Ford:  
The UK is at the forefront of international efforts to improve access for humanitarian agencies working in conflict affected regions of northern Ethiopia.

I have called on all parties in Ethiopia to urgently agree a ceasefire, allow humanitarian aid through, and restore communications and banking services. I spoke with Ministry of Foreign Affairs State Minister Redwan on 18 November, stressing the need for all parties to the conflict to engage in peace talks, lift the blockade on humanitarian aid into Tigray, and end ethnically targeted arrests. I spoke to the Ethiopian Minister of Justice Gedion on 6 December and pressed for an end to the fighting and for peace talks. I have continued to emphasise the need for a ceasefire through recent calls with my international counterparts, including Kenya and the African Union.

Since November 2020 The Special Envoy for Famine Prevention and Humanitarian Affairs has travelled to Tigray on several occasions to assess the humanitarian situation. The UK's Ambassador to Ethiopia travelled to Tigray last month. We continue to highlight the urgent need for unfettered access for humanitarians and the restoration of communication and banking services to all parties to the conflict.

Helen Hayes:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 27 October 2021 to Question 58899, on Tigray: Armed Conflict, what recommendations have been put forward following the scoping mission into gender-based violence in northern Ethiopia and the Tigray region.
Vicky Ford:
In June we deployed an expert from the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative UK Team of Experts to conduct an initial scoping mission to identify ways to enhance the response to gender-based violence in Tigray. Their recommendations are being taken forward by the FCDO. This includes the deployment of a Gender Based Violence and Gender Adviser, who is now in post and enhancing the integration of gender into humanitarian and human rights initiatives. Other recommendations being acted upon include: the provision of capacity building support to the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission; a new project to work with women’s rights-focused organisations to enhance support services to survivors of violence; new research into the drivers and dynamics of conflict-related sexual violence; and efforts to ensure strong collaboration with and UK leadership on all forms of gender based violence in the international community.

We are continuing to develop options to address the immediate needs of survivors, prevent further sexual violence and deliver justice and accountability.

Ethiopia: Humanitarian Aid

Helen Hayes:
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much and what proportion of the £29 million of humanitarian aid allocated to people affected by the conflict in northern Ethiopia, announced on 15 October 2021, has been given to aid agencies working in Tigray and neighbouring regions.

Vicky Ford:
The majority of the £29 million of humanitarian funding announced on 15 October has been allocated to needy communities in Tigray and neighbouring Afar and Amhara.

£18.4 million has been allocated to humanitarian projects in Tigray and the neighbouring regions, including health supplies, nutrition, water and sanitation, and protection services. £9 million has been allocated to Ethiopia-wide humanitarian funding mechanisms (the International Committee of the Red Cross and Ethiopia Humanitarian Fund) which distribute resources according to where the greatest needs are. We expect the majority of those funds will also reach Northern Ethiopia given the significant needs due to the conflict. The remaining £1.6 million has been used to provide additional staff for humanitarian agencies scaling up in Northern Ethiopia, including Gender Based Violence specialists, and improve data and analysis on the humanitarian situation.

Overall, the UK has provided more than £76 million of funding to respond to the humanitarian crisis caused by the conflict, making the UK the second largest donor.

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Training

Mr Alistair Carmichael:
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what (a) training and (b) awareness raising (i) Ministers and (ii) officials in her Department
receive on their obligations under the Geneva Conventions Act 1957 and subsequent legislation not to commit, aid, abet or procure the commission by any other person of a grave breach of the Geneva Conventions.

**James Cleverly:**
The Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols are at the core of international humanitarian law (IHL). FCDO staff undertake training through the International Academy which includes modules on the Conventions and other aspects of IHL. More detailed training is available for those who work in this field. Additionally the FCDO undertook to produce a voluntary report on the domestic implementation of IHL, including the Conventions. This report was published on GOV.UK in 2019 [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/implementation-of-international-humanitarian-law-at-domestic-level-voluntary-report]. In response to a pledge made at the International Committee of the Red Cross Quadrennial Conference, the UK is promoting and assisting other states to produce similar reports, in conjunction with the British Red Cross, and have produced a toolkit in several languages to assist them to do so. In 2019 the UK hosted a conference at Lancaster House to mark 70 years of the Conventions and to address the challenges to compliance.

**Hong Kong: Detainees**

**Andrew Rosindell:** [86065]
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether her Department has made an estimate of the number of people that (a) hold a British passport and (b) are being detained in Hong Kong under the National Security Law.

**Amanda Milling:**
We do not comment on individual cases. Consular Transparency Data for 2020 can be found on GOV.UK ([https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/foreign-commonwealth-development-office-consular-data-2021](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/foreign-commonwealth-development-office-consular-data-2021)). This includes the number of new arrest or detention cases that have been opened by consular staff relating to British nationals in Hong Kong.

**Israeli Settlements**

**Hywel Williams:** [84312]
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions she has had with her Israeli counterpart on the proposed construction of a settlement on the site of Qalandia airport.

**James Cleverly:**
Settlements are illegal under international law and undermine the physical viability of the two-state solution. We repeatedly call on Israel to abide by its obligations under international law and have a regular dialogue with Israel on legal issues relating to
the occupation. We understand the Israeli authorities shelved their latest proposals for development at Qalandia airport on 25 November.

Jerusalem and West Bank: Demolition

Dr Philippa Whitford: [85292]
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many UK-funded humanitarian aid structures in the West Bank including East Jerusalem have been demolished or seized by the Israeli authorities since 1 January 2021.

James Cleverly:
Data on demolition and displacement in the West Bank is published by The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) at: https://www.ochaopt.org/publications/west-bank-demolitions-and-displacement. On the issue of confiscations and demolitions, the UK’s position is clear; in all but the most exceptional of circumstances, demolitions and evictions are contrary to International Humanitarian Law. We call on Israel to end these practices, and to allow the delivery of emergency humanitarian aid for those who have had their homes demolished or confiscated.

Jerusalem: Palestinians

Dr Philippa Whitford: [85291]
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment her Department has made of the equity of provision by the Jerusalem Municipal Authorities of essential (a) health, (b) education, and (c) welfare services to Palestinian neighbourhoods compared to Jewish Israeli neighbourhoods in Jerusalem.

James Cleverly:
The UK remains firmly committed to ensuring access to essential health, education and welfare services for all Palestinians. The UK Embassy in Tel Aviv regularly raises the importance of access to essential services with the Israeli authorities.

Saudi Arabia: Political Prisoners

Sarah Olney: [84450]
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions she has had with her Saudi Arabian counterparts on reports of torture and arbitrary detention of political prisoners in that country.

James Cleverly:
FCDO Ministers and senior officials regularly raise human rights in our engagement with the Saudi authorities. We have consistently pressed for due process and raised concerns about the use of solitary confinement, lack of family contact and allegations of torture. On 26 October 2021, Lord Ahmad spoke to the President of the Saudi Human Rights Commission, and raised a number of human rights issues, including specific cases and women’s rights defenders.
### Trade Agreements: Israel

**Nadia Whittome:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions she has had with her Israeli counterpart on ending the occupation of the occupied Palestinian territories in the course of negotiating the new Trade and Defence Pact.

**James Cleverly:**

The UK's position on the Middle East Peace Process is clear and longstanding. The Foreign Secretary and Israeli Foreign Minister Lapid discussed the Middle East Peace Process, including how to improve the situation in Gaza, during their meeting on 29 November. The memorandum of understanding, signed on 29 November and accessible here: [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-israel-strategic-partnership-memorandum-of-understanding-2021](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-israel-strategic-partnership-memorandum-of-understanding-2021), commits to the development of a new, bespoke UK-Israel Bilateral Roadmap. This Roadmap will define UK-Israel cooperation for the next decade across the breadth of the bilateral relationship.

### HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

#### Care Homes: Electricity

**Grahame Morris:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make it a statutory requirement for care homes to have backup electricity generators in order to manage power outages.

**Gillian Keegan:**

The Care Quality Commission’s (CQC's) role as the independent regulator of health and adult social care is to ensure that services meet the fundamental standards of quality and safety in the statutory regulations. If as part of its inspection and monitoring of care providers, the CQC becomes aware that a care home does not have a contingency plan in place for serious incidents, such as the loss of power or heating, it would take the appropriate regulatory action.

#### Community Diagnostic Centres: Recruitment

**Helen Hayes:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate his Department has made of the additional staff it may need to deliver the 100 new Community Diagnostic Centres announced at the Spending Review 2021.

**Edward Argar:**

Community diagnostic centres will be launched to expand diagnostic services in England. Professor Sir Mike Richards’ review of diagnostic services estimates that to support this expansion, it would require an additional 2,000 radiologists, 3,500 radiographers and approximately 500 advanced practitioners to undertake image
reporting. The review also recommends expanding the workforce in endoscopy, cardiorespiratory, genomics and pathology to support the diagnostic services in England.

NHS England and NHS Improvement and Health Education England are considering staff training and role redesign to enable additional diagnostic capacity and improving workforce productivity using digital diagnostic investments.

Coronavirus: Vaccination

Sir Christopher Chope:

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when the Minister for Covid Vaccine Deployment will respond to the dossier of cases of alleged damage caused by covid-19 vaccines presented to her on 18 October 2021 by the hon. Member for Christchurch during the meeting to discuss his Vaccine Damage Payments Bill.

Maria Caulfield:

[ Holding answer 7 December 2021]: A response will be sent in due course.

Dental Services: Standards

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to reduce NHS dentist waiting times.

Maria Caulfield:

We are working with NHS England and NHS Improvement to increase activity levels as quickly as possible based on the levels of care which can be provided safely whilst protecting staff and patients from the risk of COVID-19. National Health Service dentists have been asked to meet as many prioritised needs as possible, firstly on urgent care and vulnerable groups, including children, followed by overdue appointments.

Dentistry: Assessments

Kim Leadbeater:

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when the Overseas Registration Exam for prospective overseas dentists will restart; and what assessment his Department has made of the (a) demand from candidates to sit the exam, and (b) need to fund a catch up programme of for the exam to address the backlog that has been created during the covid-19 pandemic.

Maria Caulfield:

As a result of the safety restrictions brought in as part of the COVID-19 response, the General Dental Council suspended Parts 1 and 2 of the Overseas Registration Exam (ORE) last year. The General Dental Council announced on 2 December that the Part 2 exam has a planned sitting in January 2022. The Council is reviewing options to prepare a 2022 schedule of both Part 1 and Part 2 of the exam.
The Department has engaged with the General Dental Council regarding the suspension of the ORE and proposed changes to the Dentists Act 1984 to provide greater flexibility to amend processes for assessing applications for registration from all internationally qualified dentists. The Council has advised that there are currently 2,067 candidates that have applied or are registered to complete the ORE process. The Department has no current plans to fund a catch-up programme.

General Practitioners: Recruitment

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the British Medical Association's analysis of pressures in general practice and the equivalent of 1,704 fewer full-time GPs as of September 2021 than in 2015, published 1 December 2021, what strategies his Department has developed to recruit, train and retain GPs in (a) Slough, (b) the South East, (c) England and (d) the UK.

Maria Caulfield:

We are working with NHS England and NHS Improvement, Health Education England and the profession to boost recruitment, address the reasons why doctors leave the profession, and encourage them to return to practice. To boost recruitment, we have increased the number of GP training places. The highest ever number of doctors accepted a place on GP training this year - a record 4,000 trainees, up from 2,671 in 2014.

The updated GP Contract Framework announced a number of new retention schemes alongside continued support for existing schemes for the general practice workforce. These include the GP Retention Scheme, the International Induction Programme, the Return to Practice Programme, the Fellowship Programme, the New to Partnership Payment and Supporting Mentors Scheme.

The Department has not developed strategies for Slough or the South East. NHS England and NHS Improvement’s regional teams continue to deliver these initiatives at a local level to increase the number of doctors in general practice. Elsewhere in the United Kingdom, this is a devolved matter.

General Practitioners: Shropshire

Daisy Cooper:

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of fully qualified, full-time GPs that were recruited in Shropshire in each of the last six years.

Daisy Cooper:

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of GPs in Shropshire who retired in each of the last five years.

Maria Caulfield:

The data requested is not held centrally.
Health Services: Autism and Learning Disability

Rachael Maskell:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that there is an adequate number of placements in the health service for people with learning difficulties and other mental and physical complex needs.

Gillian Keegan:  
The Health and Social Care Act 2012 states that commissioners are responsible for ensuring the provision of services based on the local needs of their population. Commissioners should take any relevant guidance into consideration, such as the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence’s clinical guidelines. While these guidelines are not mandatory, we expect commissioners to take them into account alongside local priorities in the design of services. Our reforms to the Mental Health Act 1983 propose new duties on commissioners to monitor the risk of crisis at an individual level for people with a learning disability and autistic people in the local population and ensure that there are sufficient community-based services to support them.

Rachael Maskell:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will develop a specific workforce plan for supporting people with learning disabilities and complex needs.

Gillian Keegan:  
We have no plans to produce a specific workforce plan for supporting people with learning disabilities and complex needs.

The white paper ‘People at the Heart of Care’ sets out our vision for a well-trained adult social care workforce which is developed, healthy, supported and sustainable and recognised. This includes a Knowledge and Skills Framework and training to ensure staff feel recognised, rewarded and equipped to support adults with learning disabilities and complex needs.

Health Services: Waiting Lists

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the British Medical Association’s August and September 2021 NHS data analysis, what steps his Department is taking to reduce the backlog of non-covid related care.

Edward Argar:  
We have made available a further £1 billion this year, in addition to the £1 billion Elective Recovery Fund. We plan to spend more than £8 billion from 2022 to 2025, which could deliver the equivalent of nine million more checks, scans and procedures. The National Health Service aims to deliver the equivalent of 30% more elective activity by 2024/25 than prior to the pandemic.

We have established a new £700 million Targeted Investment Fund which includes a Elective Recovery Technology Fund of £250 million to enable cutting edge
technologies and £250 million to increase operating theatre capacity and improve productivity in hospitals. A further £5.9 billion of capital funding was announced in the October 2021 to support elective recovery, diagnostics and technology.

**Hospitals: Ventilators**

**Ian Byrne:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment their department has made of the adequacy of availability of Continuous Positive Airway Pressure machines in NHS hospitals in (a) England and (b) Merseyside; and what urgent steps the Government is taking to ensure adequacy of supply of that equipment during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Edward Argar:**
The availability of Continuous Positive Airway Pressure machines for hospitals is monitored at a national level as part of the COVID-19 response. The current stock of machines held by NHS Supply Chain exceeds the demands of the Scientific Pandemic Influenza Group on Modelling’s scenarios for this winter. National Health Service trusts can order additional equipment as required from the national reserve.

**Incontinence: Health Services**

**Jim Shannon:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of levels of adherence to NHS England’s guidance Excellence in Continence Care 2018.

**Edward Argar:**
No such assessment has been made. However, NHS England is planning an assessment of adherence to Excellence in Continence Care in 2022.

**Learning Disability: Nurses**

**Rachael Maskell:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he will take to increase the number of nursing staff working in learning disabilities.

**Gillian Keegan:**
In March 2020 the Chief Nursing Officer for England launched an ‘All-England action plan for learning disability nursing’. The plan, delivered in partnership with Health Education England, sets a mandate for increasing and enhancing the number of people choosing a career in learning disability nursing.

Since September 2020, the NHS Learning Support Fund has offered an additional £1,000 to support those studying learning disability nursing courses. This is in addition to a training grant of £5,000 a year and a parental allowance of £2,000 a year. This has coincided with a 20% increase in the number of acceptances to learning disability nursing courses in England in 2020 compared to 2019.
Rachael Maskell:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will review nursing training to ensure that all nursing schools provide learning disability training pathways.

Edward Argar:  
Since August 2017, training pathways and places for pre-registration nursing, midwifery and allied health professions are not commissioned centrally. Subject to the course being approved by the Nursing and Midwifery Council, universities provide training courses based on student demand, local need and available capacity.

Since September 2020, the NHS Learning Support Fund has included a £1,000 annual grant to support those studying learning disability nursing courses. This is in addition to an annual training grant of £5,000 and parental allowance of £2,000. The number of acceptances to learning disability nursing courses in England has increased by 20% in 2020, compared with 2019.

Ophthalmic Services: Finance  
Dame Angela Eagle:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to incentivise NHS organisations to provide innovative treatments in ophthalmology.

Maria Caulfield:  
Surgical hubs are being used to deliver high volume, low complexity operations resulting in increased number of cataract operations being performed. Trusts are increasing the use of technology to improve ophthalmic diagnostics, including the use of virtual eye hubs in which technicians administer a series of tests and consultants review results via cloud software. In some cases, hubs have halved patient journey times and reduced costs and unnecessary referrals.

NHS England and NHS Improvement are also redesigning eye-care cardiac pathways to reduce variation and improve performance across surgery, diagnostics and outpatients. The Department has provided the National Health Service with £160 million to implement and evaluate innovative ways to increase the number of elective operations they deliver through the accelerator programme. Initiatives include a high-volume cataract service and 3D eye scanners.

Primary Health Care  
Stuart Anderson:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to improve primary care networks and deliver care closer to home.

Maria Caulfield:  
As members of Primary Care Networks (PCNs), general practices work with community, mental health, social care, pharmacy, hospital and voluntary services in their local area to deliver integrated services. Sustainability and transformation
partnerships and integrated care systems are responsible for putting in place high quality support for PCN development.

We are introducing new service requirements and income-protecting the Investment and Impact Fund, an incentive scheme focused on supporting PCNs. Additional financial support has also been given to PCNs for COVID-19 vaccinations, with extra funding for Clinical Directors and management leadership of vaccination sites. PCNs are entitled to significant funding for additional staff, in order to support delivery of better services for patients closer to home.

### Rare Diseases: Coronavirus

**Jim Shannon:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to support people with rare diseases during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Maria Caulfield:**

NHS England continues to consider the impact of COVID-19 on people with rare diseases, including which services can continue to be delivered through virtual communication technology. Where face-to-face services are needed, NHS England is working with providers to ensure patients' safe journeys through hospitals. Advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation for severely immunosuppressed individuals is being followed, including offering third primary doses and booster doses of COVID-19 vaccinations. Efforts are also continuing to identify and procure therapeutics and antivirals for those with rare diseases who cannot be vaccinated or do not have a good immune response.

### Social Prescribing

**Rachael Maskell:**

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

**Maria Caulfield:**

As of September 2021, there were over 1,400 new social prescribing link workers in place, and we are making progress toward the target of at least 900,000 people referred to social prescribing by 2023/24. Link workers play a vital role in connecting health with the local voluntary and community sector. Primary Care Networks (PCN) and local systems are encouraged to work with local stakeholders to develop social prescribing provision and community assets in their area.

The PCN Direct Enhance Service contract specification requires all PCNs to provide access to a social prescribing service. PCNs are being supported to recruit social prescribing link workers through the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme, with 100% reimbursement up to Agenda for Change Band 5. Link workers can be employed by PCNs or sub-contracted to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations as part of the contract.
NHS England and NHS Improvement have asked local integrated care systems and sustainability and transformation partnership areas to work across health, care and voluntary sectors, to develop place-based plans to ensure sustainability of social prescribing in their area. The Department has continued to support the National Academy for Social Prescribing with a recent commitment of £6 million in grant funding for the next two years.

**HOME OFFICE**

### Agnes Wanjiru

**John Healey:**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on what date her Department received the request from the Kenyan Government for mutual legal assistance in relation to the killing of Agnes Wanjiru; and when she plans to respond to that request.

**Damian Hinds:**

*Holding answer 8 December 2021*: As a matter of longstanding policy, the Home Office neither confirms nor denies the existence of mutual legal assistance requests.

### Antisemitism

**Andrew Percy:**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of making Holocaust denial a criminal offence.

**Rachel Maclean:**

There are no plans to make Holocaust denial a criminal offence.

The Government believes that Holocaust denial is both immoral and factually wrong. However, legislation reflects the enormous value this country rightly places upon free speech. It enables people to engage in debate freely, while protecting people from criminal activity including threatening and abusive behaviour or behaviour which is intended to, or is likely to, stir up hatred.

I am clear that antisemitism in any form is inexcusable and this Government has taken a number of steps to help eliminate it over the last five years. In 2016 we became the first country in the world to adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism. We’ve since had organisations such as the Premier League and over three-quarters of councils adopt the definition.

In July 2019 we also appointed Lord John Mann as an independent antisemitism advisor, to provide advice to the Government on the best ways to tackle antisemitism. Finally, we have provided £14m in funding this financial year (2021/22) for protection of Jewish institutions through the Jewish Community Protective Security (JCPS) Grant, administered through the Community Security Trust (CST).
Asylum: Embassies

Ruth Jones: [87836]
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of giving asylum seekers the ability to claim asylum at British embassies across the globe.

Kevin Foster:
The UK has a proud record of providing protection for people who need it, in accordance with our obligations under the Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights.

However, there is no provision within our Immigration Rules for someone to be allowed to travel to the UK to seek asylum or temporary refuge. Whilst we sympathise with people in many difficult situations around the world, we are not bound to consider asylum claims in British Embassies or High Commissions from the very large numbers of people overseas who might like to come here. Opening an opportunity to claim asylum would also make the operation of these locations impractical if large numbers sought to do so.

Those who need international protection should claim asylum in the first safe country they reach – that is the fastest route to safety.

We already welcome vulnerable people in need of protection to the UK through our resettlement schemes. These schemes have provided safe and legal routes for tens of thousands of people to start new lives in the UK. Through these routes we have resettled more refugees than any EU country since 2015. They include the UK Resettlement Scheme, the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy, the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme, and the Nationality and Borders Bill will establish in law safe and legal routes.

Asylum: Mental Health

Mr Barry Sheerman: [87582]
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has made an assessment of the potential effect of offshore asylum processing on the mental health of people claiming asylum.

Kevin Foster:
The Nationality and Borders Bill, which is part of our New Plan for Immigration, seeks to build a fair, but firm asylum and illegal migration system.

On 16 September, we published an Equality Impact Assessment for the policies being taken forward through the Bill, which includes assessment of those who may have mental health needs. This can be found here: The Nationality and Borders Bill: equality impact assessment (accessible version) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

The Home Office will continue to ensure the welfare and dignity of all claimants forms a central platform of our decision-making processes.
Any vulnerabilities will be taken into consideration and every single person who is eligible for removal under this policy will be able to make representations where they are concerned the country in question would not be safe for them.

### Home Office: Meetings

**Owen Thompson:**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her Department’s process is for (a) recording and (b) keeping minutes of all meetings relating to Government business.

**Damian Hinds:**

All meetings are conducted in full accordance with Section 8.14 of the Ministerial Code, which stipulates that all meetings on official business are arranged through Minister’s departments, with an official present for all discussions related to Government policy.

**Owen Thompson:**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department takes to ensure that at least one official from her Department is present during all (a) meetings and (b) phone calls relating to Government business between Ministers and third parties.

**Damian Hinds:**

All meetings are conducted in full accordance with Section 8.14 of the Ministerial Code, which stipulates that all meetings on official business are arranged through Minister’s departments, with an official present for all discussions related to Government policy.

### Immigration: Risk Assessment

**Stephen Farry:**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department carries out national risk assessments for immigration applications associated with applicants from specific (a) countries or (b) entry routes to the UK.

**Tom Pursglove:**

The Home Office no longer produces a National Risk Assessment in relation to any immigration applications.

### Migrant Workers: Large Goods Vehicle Drivers

**Kerry McCarthy:**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many of the 5,000 temporary visas for overseas heavy goods vehicle drivers made available in September 2021 have been issued to date.
**Kevin Foster:**
I refer the Honourable Member to the response given in the other place to Lord Berkeley on 30 November 2021, UIN HL3979.

**Refugees: Afghanistan**

**Catherine West:**
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to ensure Afghan nationals resettled under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy are housed as close as possible to family or friends already living in the UK.

**Victoria Atkins:**
We are working at pace across government and with local authorities to source appropriate accommodation for Afghan families who were evacuated to the UK. The emergency circumstances of Operation Pitting meant that we were not able to secure long term accommodation for people as we would have liked before they flew to the UK.

Once properties are identified and referred to the Home Office, a matching exercise is undertaken which allows us to offer the property to a suitable family. Where possible, we will match families from local bridging hotels allowing them to remain in the area where they may have started to form connections and settle.

We know there are many Afghans who are ready and willing to work and to start their integration into UK society. Those who qualify for refugee status have access to mainstream benefits and services to enable their integration and immediate and unrestricted access to the labour market.

This includes the ability to seek out employment opportunities.

**Catherine West:**
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average length of time is evacuated Afghan families are staying in bridging hotels before being moved to suitable housing.

**Victoria Atkins:**
We are working at pace with local authorities to source appropriate accommodation for Afghan families who were evacuated to the UK. Data on relocation will be published as part of our quarterly release which can be found at this link: Asylum and resettlement datasets - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

Over 4,000 individuals have either moved into a settled home or are in the process of being moved or matched to a suitable home.

Over 300 Local Authorities have pledged housing. The length of time that a family will remain in bridging hotels is dependent on a number of factors including the offer of appropriate housing from Local Authorities. We are working at pace to encourage more offers, including matching employment offers with homes.
Catherine West: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of Afghan nationals who have been evacuated to the UK under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (a) are in bridging hotels and (b) have moved into suitable permanent housing.

Victoria Atkins: Between 15th and 29th August, the UK evacuated over 15,000 people from Afghanistan. Under ‘Operation Warm Welcome’, we are taking a cross-government approach to support Afghans to rebuild their lives, find work, pursue education and integrate with their local communities.

Over 4,000 individuals have either moved into a settled home or are in the process of being moved or matched to a suitable home.

Data on relocation will be published as part of our quarterly release which can be found at this link: Asylum and resettlement datasets - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Visas: Musicians

Jim Shannon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of specialised visa renewals for touring groups to streamline the (a) time and (b) cost of visa applications for working musicians.

Kevin Foster: Overseas musicians and performers make an important contribution to the UK’s creative sector and are very welcome in the United Kingdom. We therefore offer a range of immigration routes for creative workers.

Visiting artists, entertainers and musicians can come to the UK and perform at events, take part in competitions and auditions, make personal appearances and take part in promotional activities for up to six months without the need for formal sponsorship or a work visa if they are not receiving payment beyond expenses or prize money.

Those from non-visa national countries can come to perform in the UK and be paid without the need to obtain a visa in advance for up to one month under the Permitted Paid Engagement route, up to three months if they have been assigned a Certificate of Sponsorship by a licenced sponsor or for up to six months if performing at a Permit Free Festival. With no requirement to obtain a visa prior to travel, these options provide a flexible system which enables performance slots to be filled at short notice and reduces the administrative burden for performers.

For longer-term work, the Temporary Work – Creative Worker visa allows creative workers to come to the UK to undertake paid engagements for up to twelve months, which can be extended for a further twelve months in certain cases. We also offer priority and super priority services for those who wish to receive a quicker decision on their visa application (https://www.gov.uk/faster-decision-visa-settlement).
Fees are kept under review and are set taking account of the charging powers provided by Section 68(9) of the Immigration Act 2014, which include the ability to set fees based on: the cost of processing the application, the benefits and entitlements provided by a successful application and the wider cost of the Migration and Borders system. Full details of which can be reviewed via the following link: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/22/section/68

Income from fees charged for immigration and nationality applications plays a vital role in our ability to run a sustainable immigration and nationality system. Application fees have increased in recent years to reduce the funding that comes from general taxation.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Agriculture: Trade Agreements

Chris Loder: [84483]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps she has taken to ensure that free trade agreements protect and support British (a) agriculture and (b) agricultural exports.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

HM Government will always consider the opportunities and other impacts on the agricultural industry of any trade agreement we negotiate. In addition, the independent Trade and Agriculture Commission will scrutinise new free trade agreements once they are signed, providing an additional layer of independent scrutiny.

Our trade agreements unlock new opportunities for our agriculture, food and drink sector and we will continue to work with producers and suppliers to make sure the sector is represented in future free trade agreements.

Exports

Dr Kieran Mullan: [85410]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps her Department is taking to boost British exports.

Mike Freer:

The Department for International Trade announced a refreshed Export Strategy, Made in UK, Sold to the World on 17 November at the UK’s first International Trade Week. This business-centred 12-Point Plan is designed to transform our support for exporters, encourage them to ‘sell to the world’ and accelerate our race to £1 trillion exports per year.

The Made in the UK, Sold to the World campaign will boost demand for UK exports internationally. Supported by the Export Support Service (ESS), the UK Export
Academy, UK Export Finance, our International Trade Advisers and global networks, UK businesses will be supported at every stage in their export journey.

**Overseas Trade: Middle Class**

**Emily Thornberry:**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what income thresholds were used to define the global middle class in her departmental paper UK Accession to CPTPP: The UK’s Strategic Approach, published on 22 June 2021.

**Emily Thornberry:**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what income thresholds were used to define the global middle class in her departmental report Global Trade Outlook, published on 13 September 2021.

**Emily Thornberry:**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what income thresholds were used to define the (a) global and (b) Indian middle class in her departmental information note on a Free Trade Agreement between the United Kingdom and India, published on 25 May 2021.

**Emily Thornberry:**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what income thresholds were used to define the global middle class in the Board of Trade's report Global Britain, Local Jobs, published on 10 March 2021.

**Emily Thornberry:**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, which of the income thresholds referred to in Footnote 5 of her departmental strategy paper, Made in Britain, Sold to the World, published on 17 November 2021, were used to define the global middle class in Chart 2.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

Each assessment references the sources used.

**Trade Agreements**

**Yasmin Qureshi:**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps she is taking to ensure the participation of (a) women and (b) marginalised groups in the development of trade agreements.

**Mr Ranil Jayawardena:**

The Department for International Trade works for people across the country. We speak to businesses, trades unions, think tanks and other organisations on a regular basis, and our public consultations have provided the opportunity for everyone to share their views.
Trade Agreements: Dorset

Chris Loder:

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment she has made of the effect on Dorset of free trade agreements signed by the UK since leaving the EU.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

We have secured trade agreements with 70 countries, plus the EU, covering trade worth £766 billion last year, delivering benefits for communities across the country.

An impact assessment is published when the text of a new free trade agreement is laid in Parliament, which presents the economic benefits of the deal. For example, compared to the United Kingdom not having an agreement with Japan, output in the South West of England is expected to be £90 million higher in the long run (in 2017 terms).

JUSTICE

Aiding and Abetting: Curriculum

Mr Barry Sheerman:

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether he has had recent discussions with the Secretary of State for Education on introducing teaching about joint enterprise law into the national curriculum.

James Cartlidge:

There have been no recent discussions with the Secretary of State for Education on the doctrine of joint enterprise and its inclusion on the national curriculum.

Drugs: Organised Crime

Ms Lyn Brown:

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Orders in connection with county lines child criminal exploitation have been (a) applied for and (b) granted (i) in each of the last three years and (ii) in total since 31 July 2015.

James Cartlidge:

Information on the number of Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Orders in connection with county lines child criminal exploitation cannot be separately identified from the overall number of Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Orders. Information on county lines involvement may be held on court records but to identify this would require access to individual court records which would be of disproportionate costs.

Prisoners: Downs Syndrome

Mr Barry Sheerman: [86042]
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many people with down syndrome are imprisoned in (a) England, (b) Wales and (c) Scotland as of 2 December 2021.

Victoria Atkins:
The Ministry of Justice does not hold this type of data as robust information on diagnoses would form part of a prisoner’s medical records rather than being held in prison administrative systems. Further, prison policy in Scotland is a devolved matter and so all data for those held in Scottish prisons, does not sit with the Ministry of Justice or HMPPS.

Prisons: Industrial Health and Safety

Liz Saville Roberts: [86607]
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 1 November 2021 to Question 64697, Prisons: Industrial Health and Safety, whether he has made a recent assessment of the potential merits of HMPPS adopting the Safe Inside Prisons Charter published by the Joint Unions in Prisons Alliance and updated in 2021; and if he will make a statement.

Victoria Atkins:
The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) will continue to progress this and to work collaboratively with the Joint Unions in Prisons Alliance (JUPA) who now meet quarterly with to engage on safety matters.

JUPA are aware that it is through our recognised trade unions that we must progress matters of safety which impact on staff. In this respect, the proposed Charter could only be considered if it was to be inclusive of all our recognised trade unions and, also, of the third-party employers who provide contract employees to work in prisons. Currently, this isn’t the case with this proposal. I understand that this aspect has been discussed previously with JUPA.

Probation: Racial Discrimination

Liz Saville Roberts: [86611]
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the HM Inspectorate of Probation report of 16 March 2021, Race equality in probation: the experiences of black, Asian and minority ethnic probation service users and staff, what steps he is taking to (a) implement the recommendations of the Lammy Review, (b) improve training for probation staff to better address workplace race issues identified in the report and (c) improve the diversity of the probation workforce.

Kit Malthouse:
A detailed response and action plan for the HMI Probation report was completed in May 2021, and subsequently updated in October 2021. The Action Plan includes
steps to improve training for probation staff to better address workplace race issues and is available on-line.

Actions yet to be complete on the Lammy Review relate to recommendations 28 and 29, which focus on developing a more representative workforce and leadership and will need to remain open for some time as they involve long term targets. A detailed update on progress against all the recommendations of the Lammy Review was published in 2018, and again in 2020.

The HMPPS Race Action Programme is improving training to address race issues and will be piloted in probation, prison, and youth custody settings by March 2022 with a fuller rollout planned for later in the year.

A target has been set for the diversity in the HMPPS workforce, covering those in probation, at 14%. Good progress has been made within the Probation service against this target with current statistics showing representation at 16%, though there is a geographical variation to this which must be addressed. To achieve these targets, and attract candidates from ethnic minority backgrounds, efforts include targeted marketing and engagement, and the monitoring of applications from those with protected characteristics to learn where processes can be adapted.

### Remand in Custody

**Sarah Champion:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 25 November 2021 to Question 76700 on Remand in Custody, when the Government plans to reach a conclusion on its review of the use of the power in the Bail Act 1976 to remand an individual for their own protection.

**Victoria Atkins:**

Following a commitment from the Government earlier this year, MoJ is reviewing the use of the power in the Bail Act 1976 which allows a court to remand a defendant for their own protection. This work is ongoing, and we are on track to complete our review into uses of the power by the end of the year.

### Reoffenders: Criminal Investigation

**Liz Saville Roberts:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the effect of the Serious Further Offence process on the mental health of (a) victims and (b) probation staff.

**Liz Saville Roberts:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether staff involved in Serious Further Offence investigations are provided with legal representation at inquests.
Liz Saville Roberts: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to reduce the time taken for Serious Further Offence (a) staff investigations to be resolved and (b) cases to reach a Coroner’s Court.

Tom Pursglove: We continually review how we improve services for victims. That is why we have made the Serious Further Offence (SFO) Review Procedures more transparent, so that victims are provided with a clear account of how the Probation Service managed the offender and, where there were failings, how they are being addressed. Trained Victim Liaison Officers contact victims after the offender has been sentenced to offer them information and a redacted copy of the review report at a time of their choice, as well as to provide them with details about local services which can offer emotional support.

HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) has a duty of care to all employees and expects Regional Probation Directors to ensure that staff whose practice is being examined in an SFO review receive appropriate support. Employees have confidential access to a range of well-being services.

Civil servants are provided legal representation at Inquests at public expense in accordance with the Civil Service Management Code.

Where the work to produce an SFO review identifies significant concerns and a decision to commence a disciplinary investigation, that investigation will be conducted under a separate process, in accordance with the relevant policies and to a timescale proportionate to the matters being investigated.

Coroner services are local services funded by individual local authorities; the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) has responsibility for coroner law and policy. The Coroner’s (Inquests) Rules provide that the Coroner must complete an inquest within six months of the date on which the Coroner is made aware of the death or “as soon as is reasonably practicable after that date”. The MoJ publishes annual statistics on GOV.UK, including inquest conclusions, but these do not breakdown the cases further to matters such as whether the death was related to a Serious Further Offence. Statistics for 2020 were published on 13 May 2021 at: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/coroners-statistics-2020

LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

Bridges: Northwich

Mike Amesbury: To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of the application to the Levelling Up Fund for a new swing bridge at Winnington, Northwich; and what the timeframe is for consideration of that application.
Neil O’Brien:
The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) did not receive a Levelling Up Fund application from Winnington, Northwich for the first round of the Fund.

There will be further opportunities to access funding with the second round of the Levelling Up Fund opening in spring 2022. More information on the second round will be set out in due course.

Building Safety Fund: Leeds

Hilary Benn:
To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, pursuant to the Answer of 15 October 2021 to Question 56646 on Building Safety Fund: Leeds, what estimate he has made of when his Department and its delivery partner Homes England will make a decision on the application by the building owner of Cartier House to the Building Safety Fund.

Christopher Pincher:
The Department and its delivery partner Homes England are working with the representatives of the building owner of Cartier House to progress its application for the Building Safety Fund as quickly as possible. Progress is communicated to applicants who we expect will ensure that their residents are kept fully informed.

Buildings: Insulation

Mike Kane:
To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps his Department is taking to support leaseholders affected by high costs associated with remedial fire-safety works and unsafe cladding who do not qualify for the Building Safety Fund or the loan scheme.

Christopher Pincher:
This Government has committed £5.1 billion of grant funding through the Building Safety Fund for the removal and replacement of unsafe cladding on residential buildings over 18 metres. Building owners and industry should make buildings safe without passing on costs to leaseholders and we are introducing new measures that will legally require building owners to prove they have tried all routes to cover costs.

The Secretary of State is looking very closely at this issue to make sure that everything possible is being done to support leaseholders.

The Government remains committed to protecting leaseholders from unaffordable costs, who bought their flats in good faith and are innocent parties. Further detail on the support offer for leaseholders in residential buildings of 11-18 metres will be released when all options have been fully considered.
James Murray:

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what timeframe his Department has set for withdrawal of its Consolidated Advice Note on external wall systems and cladding to lenders, regarding flats under 18m tall, in line with his Department’s press release published 21 July 2021.

Christopher Pincher:

We are developing more risk-proportionate guidelines for fire risk assessors, including PAS 9980 and new statutory fire safety guidance. The Consolidated Advice Note will shortly be retired.

Holocaust Commission

Sir Peter Bottomley:

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, pursuant to the Answer of 4 November 2021 to Question 65356 on the proposed endowment fund for Holocaust education, for what reason no information has been published on progress in setting up the endowment fund.

Kemi Badenoch:

Information will be published at the appropriate time.

Sir Peter Bottomley:

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, pursuant to the Answer of 4 November 2021 to Question 65356 on the proposed endowment fund for Holocaust education, what plans the Government has for public consultation on the size and operation of the proposed fund.

Kemi Badenoch:

The recommendations in Britain’s Promise to Remember rested on extensive consultation.

Homelessness: Enfield North

Feryal Clark:

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what recent steps he has taken to reduce (a) homelessness and (b) rough sleeping in Enfield North constituency ahead of winter.

Eddie Hughes:

In October we announced an additional £65 million one-off top up to the Homelessness Prevention Grant, for local authorities to help vulnerable households with rent arrears to reduce the risk of them being evicted and becoming homeless, bringing total spend this year from the Homelessness Prevention Grant to £375 million. Enfield received a winter top up allocation for £1,871,957, in addition to the £8,927,794 support already received for 21/22.
Enfield had a Rough Sleeping Initiative allocation of £1,400,750 this year. Furthermore, we have made a £10 million Winter Pressures Fund available to local authorities who present the greatest need, including Enfield Council, to help them to bring forward self-contained accommodation and to support rough sleepers off the streets this winter. We are expecting an application from Enfield to the Winter Pressures Fund in due course.

Overall, the Government has committed over £800 million to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping this year, further demonstrating the Government’s commitment to end rough sleeping this Parliament and to fully enforce the Homelessness Reduction Act.

### Housing: Standards

**Feryal Clark:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what recent assessment his Department has made of the impact of changes to permitted development rights over the last ten years on the quality of new residential homes in (a) Enfield North, (b) London, and (c) England.

**Christopher Pincher:**

We have previously commissioned independent research to assess the quality standard of homes delivered through permitted development rights. The report published in 2020, considered Enfield as a case study area. We have recently introduced requirements that all homes delivered through permitted development rights meet, as a minimum, the nationally described space standards and provide adequate natural light in all habitable rooms.

### National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

**Sir Peter Bottomley:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, pursuant to the Answer of 15 October 2021 to Question 56724 on the National Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre, on what date the estimate of the total cost of the proposed Memorial and Learning Centre was last reviewed; and what the estimate was following that review.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

Costs are regularly reviewed and updated figures will be published in due course in line with the Government Major Projects Portfolio reporting process.

**Sir Peter Bottomley:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, pursuant to the Answer of 4 November 2021 to Question 65352 on the cost of the National Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre, who is conducting the independent verification of the planned mitigation relating to optimism bias.
Kemi Badenoch:
The programme management arrangements include independent scrutiny by officials outside the project team, with periodic assurance reviews.

Sir Peter Bottomley:
To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, pursuant to the Answer of 4 November 2021 to Question 65355 on the estimated running costs of the National Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre, whether the total annual running cost remains the same whichever operating model is chosen.

Kemi Badenoch:
Costs may vary depending on the chosen operating model.

Sir Peter Bottomley:
To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what estimate the (a) UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation and (b) Government made of the cost of building the Holocaust Memorial in Victoria Tower Gardens (i) before the Foundation’s recommendation about the location on 13 January 2016 and (ii) before the announcement of the location on 27 January 2016.

Kemi Badenoch:
In January 2015, the Government committed £50 million as its contribution to kick-starting a society-wide fundraising effort to deliver the National Memorial and Learning Centre and its wider educational objectives.

Sir Peter Bottomley:
To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what new information the Government obtained on the proposal to locate the Holocaust Memorial in Victoria Tower Gardens between the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation’s recommendation in principle on 13 January 2016 and the announcement of the decision on 27 January 2016.

Kemi Badenoch:
The UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation conducted a very extensive comparison of possible sites before recommending that Victoria Tower Gardens as the most fitting site for the Holocaust Memorial in terms of its historical, emotional and political significance and its ability to offer the greatest potential impact and visibility for the project. The Government accepted the Foundation’s advice and announced on 27 January 2016 that Victoria Tower Gardens was the chosen location.

Sir Peter Bottomley:
To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, on what date the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation decided that the criteria for the site of the proposed Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre set out in September 2015, including relating to number of square metres, should no longer apply; and how were those decisions recorded.
Kemi Badenoch:
The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities leads for Government on delivering the longstanding commitment to build the Holocaust Memorial, as did his predecessors in the post.

Sir Peter Bottomley:
To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will provide the chronology of (a) Government departments, (b) ministers and (c) agencies holding responsibilities for the proposed national holocaust memorial and associated campus and learning centre.

Kemi Badenoch:
The objective throughout has been to build a striking new national memorial co-located with a world class learning centre.

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service: Costs

Sir Peter Bottomley:
To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, pursuant to the Answer of 4 November 2021 to Question 65351 on the cost of the National Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre, for what reasons the information requested on the (a) category of project, (b) mitigation factor and (c) optimism bias factor used would risk being misleading.

Kemi Badenoch:
Financial information will be published in due course in line with the Government Major Projects Portfolio reporting process.

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service: Finance

Sir Peter Bottomley:
To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what budget allocation has been made by his Department for the (a) capital cost of building and (b) total cost of planning, managing, building and operating the National Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre in each of the financial years 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26.

Kemi Badenoch:
Expected costs will be published in due course in line with the Government Major Projects Portfolio reporting process.

Sir Peter Bottomley:
To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how much of the £102 million estimated in 2018 as the cost of the National Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre was accounted for by contingencies for (a) construction cost inflation and (b) other contingencies; and which contingencies other than construction cost inflation were covered.
Kemi Badenoch:
The 2018 cost estimate reflected a range of possible contingencies. Publishing a detailed breakdown of cost estimates would require the release of commercially sensitive information.

### Parking (Code of Practice) Act 2019

**Ben Bradley:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will publish the conclusions of the economic impact assessment of his Department's proposals to amend the Parking (Code of Practice) Act 2019.

**Ben Bradley:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will publish the conclusions of the legislative impact assessment of his Department's proposals for the Parking (Code of Practice) Act.

**Ben Bradley:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will publish the conclusions of his Department's technical consultation for the Parking (Code of Practice) Act.

**Neil O'Brien:**
My department is currently implementing the Parking (Code of Practice) Act 2019. This includes preparing a Code of Practice containing guidance about the operation and management of private parking facilities. As part of the process to implement the Code, we recently published a consultation on private parking charges, discount rates, debt collection fees and an appeals charter, which closed on 27 August 2021.

We are considering all impacts of the new Code and will publish the Code together with the Government's response to the recent consultation in due course.

### Parking: Codes of Practice

**Andrew Lewer:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the oral evidence taken by the Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee on 18 November 2021 on Parking Code of Practice Enforcement Framework, HC 794, what assessment he made of the evidence given by representatives of the parking industry in that session on the impact of the Parking Code of Practice enforcement framework on that industry.

**Neil O'Brien:**
The Government is aware of the concerns raised by representatives of the parking industry in relation to the Code Enforcement Framework, including the proposed levels of private parking charges. My department has been engaging closely with the parking industry as part of the process to develop the Code. The parking industry also had the opportunity to comment on the proposals in the Private Parking

We take the industry’s concerns seriously and are carefully considering all consultation responses and additional documentation provided, including the industry’s impact assessment, before making a final decision.

Wholesale Trade: Government Assistance

Caroline Lucas:

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that wholesalers can access the forthcoming Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund; if he will make reference to the eligibility of wholesalers in the forthcoming Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund guidance; what discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on ensuring the wholesale sector’s access to that relief; and if he will make a statement.

Kemi Badenoch:

The £1.5 billion COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund will be allocated to local authorities based on the stock of properties in the area whose sectors have been affected by COVID-19 and are ineligible for existing support linked to business rates. 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. This will include the eligibility criteria for the scheme and individual local authority allocations. Decisions on the award of relief will ultimately be for local authorities, having regard to the guidance.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Anniversaries: Northern Ireland

Alexander Stafford:

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what assessment his Department has made of the success of the Northern Ireland centenary programme.

Conor Burns:

The Government’s programme to mark the Centenary of Northern Ireland this year has been an enormous success, with the delivery of major cultural, sporting, business, community and academic events that have engaged people from all communities across Northern Ireland, the UK and internationally.

The programme has strengthened national recognition and international awareness of Northern Ireland’s unique and enduring contribution to the UK’s culture and economy, and promoted Northern Ireland as an increasingly great place to live, work, study and do business.
Northern Ireland Office: Apprentices

Robert Halfon: [904556]

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what steps he is taking to increase the number of apprentices in the Northern Ireland Office.

Conor Burns:

I am pleased to say that my Department is meeting the target of having 2.3% of new starts as apprentices this financial year. One is working in my Private Office and the other in our Communications team; both roles offer excellent opportunities to work at the heart of the department, developing a range of skills.

Northern Ireland Protocol: UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement

Nick Smith: [904558]

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what recent assessment the Government has made of the potential effect on the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement in the event of a failure to reach agreement with the EU on the Northern Ireland Protocol.

Conor Burns:

There is shared recognition of the serious problems experienced under the Protocol and the need for solutions.

Our preference is to settle this consensually and reach a positive, negotiated outcome. We have no interest in a fractious and difficult relationship with the EU but the UK Government is clear that all options remain on the table, including the invocation of Article 16.

TRANSPORT

Cycling: Training

Sarah Olney: [85337]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much money his Department has made available to each London Borough for cycle training in 2021-22.

Sarah Olney: [85338]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what proportion of the £18 million Bikeability Cycling Proficiency Training scheme funding has been allocated to London.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The funding of cycle training in the capital is a matter for the Mayor of London. Since the start of the pandemic the Department has made over £200 million of funding available to Transport for London (TfL) and the London boroughs to support the delivery of active travel measures in the capital, including a one-off £2 million payment to enable more adult cycle training in the summer of 2020. Decisions on
how to use the funding including how much to allocate to individual boroughs are a matter for the Mayor of London and TfL.

Driving Tests: Waiting Lists

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [85355]
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of current driving test waiting times.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [85356]
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the availability of driving tests in (a) Slough and (b) the South East.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [85357]
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to reduce driving test waiting times.

Trudy Harrison:
The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) recognises there is a high demand for learners wanting to take their practical driving test following the suspension of routine driver training and testing during the pandemic.

The DVSA is working hard to provide as many practical driving test appointments as possible and has a number of measures in place to do this. These include offering a national recovery allowance and annual leave buy back to examiners, asking all those qualified to conduct tests, but who do not do so as part of their current day job, to return to conducting tests, and conducting out of hours testing (such as on public holidays and weekends).

The DVSA is also continuing with its recruitment campaign which has reached its next phase to recruit more driving examiners across Great Britain to meet the overall aim of recruiting more than 300 additional examiners.

The average waiting time for a practical driving test in London and the South East is currently 13 weeks. Waiting times will vary at each driving test centre as new tests are made available. To help reduce waiting times in this region the DVSA has specifically advertised for six additional driving examiners in Slough, an increase of 60% and for 89 examiners across London and the South East. The agency is working to increase examiner resource in this region by approximately 23%.

Electric Vehicles: Charging Points

Rachael Maskell: [86125]
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will set targets for implementation of electric charging points and infrastructure by (a) 2025 and (b) 2030 for each upper tier local authority.
Trudy Harrison:
In the Government’s forthcoming Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy, we will set out our vision for charging infrastructure in this country and define the roles for key stakeholders in delivering this vision. Local authorities will play an important role, particularly in considering the charging needs of residents without off-street parking. Local authority involvement will be fundamental in ensuring that chargepoints are rolled out with due consideration of wider transport plans, constraints on street space, and local energy plans.

Rachael Maskell:
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much his Department (a) has spent as of 2 December 2021 and (b) plans to spend on electric charging points in York.

Trudy Harrison:
York has received £816,000 through government’s Go Ultra Low City Scheme, to support the delivery of two ‘hyperhubs’, each with 8 ultra-rapid electric vehicle (EV) chargers and 8 rapid chargers, accompanied by solar canopy arrays and dedicated battery storage in order to support the energy grid during peak hours.

As of 1 October 2021, the Government has also provided £271,140 for the installation of 597 domestic charging devices through the Electric Vehicle Homecharge Scheme (EVHS) in York. A further £25,650 has been provided for 62 workplace charging sockets under the Workplace Charging Scheme (WCS).

The On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) is available to all UK local authorities, including the City of York Council, to provide public chargepoints for their residents without access to private parking. This year, £20 million is available under the scheme to ensure more local authorities and residents can benefit.

Government also committed at Spending Review to a new Local EV Infrastructure Fund, supporting the roll out of larger, on-street charging schemes in England.

Rachael Maskell:
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will commit to ensuring that all new (a) residential and (b) commercial developments have adequate electric charging infrastructure for (a) cars, (b) bikes, (c) scooters and (d) mobility vehicles.

Trudy Harrison:
The Prime Minister recently announced that new homes and buildings such as supermarkets and workplaces, as well as those undergoing major renovation, will be required to install electric vehicle charge points from next year under new legislation. This will create up to 145,000 new chargepoints every year.

The Department is running trials of rental e-scooters to assess their safety and wider impacts. Privately-owned e-scooters remain illegal to use during trials. The evidence gathered through the trials and wider research will inform whether e-scooters should be legalised in the future and, if so, what charging infrastructure may be appropriate.
More widely, my department is continuing to work with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to explore what further measures can be taken to ensure adequate provision for the charging of all electric vehicles. This will include looking at what role Building Regulations and a reformed planning system can play in delivering vehicle charging across a range of transport modes.

Rachael Maskell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will ensure that all park and ride sites are equipped with electric charging points.

Trudy Harrison: The Government is committed to ensuring that electric vehicle (EV) drivers have access to a comprehensive and reliable vehicle charging network so that recharging their vehicles is easy and convenient wherever they need to travel. We have committed over £1.3 billion to accelerate the roll out of charging infrastructure. Our forthcoming EV Infrastructure Strategy will define our vision for the continued roll-out of a world-leading charging infrastructure network across the UK and focus on how we will unlock the chargepoint rollout needed to enable the transition from early adoption to mass market uptake of EVs. The strategy will clearly establish government’s expectations for the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders in the planning and deployment of charging infrastructure.

Rachael Maskell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he will take to increase the availability of electric charging points for mobility vehicles.

Trudy Harrison: The Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) are working with Motability and manufacturers to ensure that the availability of electric vehicles accessible for people with disabilities increases as we move towards 2030.

We have consulted on using our powers under the Automated Electric Vehicles Act (2018) to mandate minimum standards, such as payment method, to improve the consumer experience of public charging. We are publishing the response to the consultation soon and will lay the consumer experience legislation in the new year.

OZEV are partnering with national disability charity Motability to commission the British Standards Institution (BSI) to develop accessibility standards for public EV chargepoints across the country. These standards, to be finalised by summer 2022, will provide industry with guidance and drivers with a new clear definition of ‘fully accessible’, ‘partially accessible’ and ‘not accessible’ public EV chargepoints.

Guidance will consider aspects such as kerb height, adequate space between bollards and chargepoints being of a height suitable for wheelchair users. By ensuring consistent standards, drivers will be able to more easily identify which chargepoints are suitable for their needs. We have also consulted on introducing accessibility requirements at EV chargepoints via the Future of Transport Regulatory Review consultation. The consultation closed on 22nd November.
The Government will also provide over £1.3 billion over the next four years to support the continued roll-out of chargepoints on motorways and major A roads, in homes and businesses and on-street.

**Rachael Maskell:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to increase the availability of flash or high speed electric vehicle charging.

**Trudy Harrison:**
The Government will be working with the operators of motorway service areas (MSAs) and major A road services to ensure that this charging provision is in place ahead of customer demand. The aim is to help support early adoption of electric vehicles and remove range anxiety concerns for drivers on long journey. By 2023, we aim to have at least six high powered, open access chargepoints at motorway service areas in England, with some larger sites having ten to twelve. By 2035, we expect the number to increase to around 6,000 high powered chargers across the network. To ensure the private sector can continue to expand the charging network at pace in the 2020s, the Government will invest £950 million through the Rapid Charging Fund to future-proof grid capacity along the Strategic Road Network to prepare for 100% uptake of zero emission cars and vans ahead of need.

Government also committed at Spending Review to a new Local EV Infrastructure Fund. This new Fund will facilitate the rollout of larger-scale chargepoint infrastructure projects across England for those without off-street parking, and will support appropriate charging solutions which may include rapid chargepoints as part of a wider rollout.

Details of how local EV charging will be supported will be announced in due course and the fund is due to launch in Spring 2022.

**Rachael Maskell:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to increase the number of electric charging points at service stations.

**Trudy Harrison:**
In May 2020, we published an ambitious vision for rapid charging infrastructure along strategic roads in England over the next decade to meet the future demand from electric vehicles. By 2023 the Government expects to see at least six high-powered chargers at every motorway service area, installed by the private sector. We are working closely with Ofgem, National Highways and the industry to support the delivery of this target.

To ensure the private sector can continue to expand the charging network at pace in the 2020s, the Government will invest £950 million to future proof grid capacity along the Strategic Road Network and major A roads to prepare for 100% uptake of zero emission cars and vans ahead of need. By 2035, we expect around 6,000 high powered chargepoints across England’s motorways and major A roads.
Electric Vehicles: Large Goods Vehicles

Rachael Maskell:
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to support the development of electric heavy goods vehicles.

Trudy Harrison:
The Government recently announced that we will end the sale of new, non-zero emission HGVs less than or equal to 26 tonnes from 2035. From 2040, all new HGVs must be fully zero emission at the tailpipe.

This ambition is being supported by the Zero Emission Road Freight Trials (ZERFT). We will be building on the success of this year’s £20m programme to trial three zero emission HGV technologies at scale on UK roads: hydrogen fuel cell, catenary electric and battery electric. These trials will advance research and development in these technologies and the potential for their commercial roll out before the end of the decade.

Government grants, which have been in place for over a decade, are also in place to help reduce the up-front cost of electric vehicles. In 2020, the Government announced a further £582m for the plug-in car, van, truck, motorcycle and taxi grants to 2022/23, and additional funding for targeted incentives was made available in November 2021. The plug-in truck grant provides grants of up to 20% of the purchase price for zero emission commercial vehicles, with up to £16,000 available for small trucks and up to £25,000 for the largest HGVs.

Electric Vehicles: Recycling

Rachael Maskell:
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to ensure that electric vehicles are recyclable at the end of their use.

Trudy Harrison:
To maximise the opportunities of a transition to zero emission vehicles, the UK Government is keen to create a circular economy for all electric vehicles (EVs). That is why we are supporting the innovation, infrastructure, and regulatory environment for a UK EV recycling industry. The Government recognises that investing in EV research, production and end-of-life facilities could bring local and regional, as well as national, economic benefits.

The Government has committed £318 million to the Faraday Battery Challenge. This funding supports the research, development and scale-up of world-leading battery technology in the UK. One of its eight aims is to increase the recyclability of battery packs from between 10%-50% today, to 95% by 2035.

The 2009 Waste Batteries and Accumulators Regulations obligates battery producers to take back EV batteries free-of-charge and ensure they are treated at permitted facilities. DEFRA are currently reviewing this legislation and considering the changes
needed to provide an appropriate framework for increasing numbers of EV batteries. They plan to publish a consultation in the first half of 2022.

ICF International

Sarah Olney:
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what (a) funding his Department has provided to ICF Consulting Services and (b) assessment he has made of the outcomes of that funding.

Robert Courts:
The total paid to ICF Consulting Services to provide support to General Aviation airfields through the Airfield Development Advisory Fund (ADAF) was £1,297,466.14. The scheme provided vital support to over 90 General Aviation airfields and associated businesses to help improve their operations and future-proof their business. The scheme offered a range of support and advice, including on business planning, operational advice, marketing, and communications. Over 90% of applicants for the scheme were approved.

Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Migrant Workers

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Government announcement of temporary visas for 5,000 HGV drivers on 25 September 2021, how many temporary visas have been granted for HGV drivers who transport (a) fuel and (b) food.

Trudy Harrison:
Details of the numbers of temporary work visas granted for HGV drivers in food distribution will be published in the usual way via the Home Office’s quarterly immigration statistics.

On 1 October, the Home Office stood up at pace an emergency arrangement for HGV drivers in the fuels supply sector. This arrangement permitted fully licenced and qualified drivers, identified by the fuel transport sector and endorsed by the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, to take up employment in the UK on a temporary basis.

This arrangement has formed part of a wider response. The Government has implemented 32 different actions to promote jobs, training, and a range of other initiatives to get more people into HGV driving.

Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Working Hours

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of the (a) mental and (b) physical health impact on HGV drivers whose working hours have been extended.
Trudy Harrison:
The design of the temporary drivers’ hours extensions guard against mental and physical health effects. Drivers’ hours rules have been amended temporarily in two respects. Firstly, compensatory rest must be taken when weekly rest patterns are changed. Secondly, and alternatively, limited additional driving is permitted two days a week, but total permitted hours for the whole week and fortnight remain the same.

Drivers continue to be bound by the sector specific working time rules, which ensure that drivers are not working continually long hours, even when operating under a relaxation to the drivers’ hours rules. The Department’s published guidance states that the practical implementation of the temporary relaxation should be through agreement between employers, employees, and driver representatives.

Large Goods Vehicles: Accidents
Andrew Percy:
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to reduce the number of heavy goods vehicles that collide with railway bridges.

Trudy Harrison:
The Department for Transport has previously invested £3 million to help create a digital road map developed by Ordnance Survey, for SatNavs, which includes information on height and weight restrictions.

In addition, the Department works with bridge owners, including Network Rail, to raise driver awareness and offer advice on avoiding low bridges. It has published a suite of documents under ‘Prevention of bridge strikes: a good practice guide’ on GOV.UK.

Motor Vehicles: Hydrogen
Alexander Stafford:
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has plans to offer incentives to support (a) people and (b) organisations to purchase hydrogen vehicles.

Trudy Harrison:
The Government offers grants to offset the higher upfront cost of zero emission cars, vans, trucks, motorbikes and taxis and is also supporting the development of hydrogen vehicles, particularly larger vehicles like HGVs and buses.

We will be expanding our Zero Emission Road Freight Trials programme to trial three zero emission HGV technologies at scale on UK roads, including hydrogen fuel cells. Furthermore, local areas will be able to apply for funding for both battery electric buses and hydrogen fuel cell buses depending on which technology is best suited to their local areas. Funding schemes include the £120m Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas Scheme – open to bids from local authorities – while at SR21 £355m of new funding was made available for zero emission buses.
Motor Vehicles: Insurance

Justin Madders:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has been made on the reliability of Telematic technology used in black boxes.

Trudy Harrison:  
The Government has not made an assessment of the reliability of telematic technology used in black boxes.

Vehicles are not required by law to be fitted with a black box telematic device. The reliability of such equipment for insurance purposes is a matter for the policy provider.

Justin Madders:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with industry experts and stakeholders on the potential merits of telematic technology being regulated and independently verified.

Trudy Harrison:  
No discussions have taken place on the possibility of telematic technology being regulated and independently verified. Vehicles are not required by law to be fitted with a telematic technology.

Motorways

Sarah Olney:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the existence of any potential conflicts of interest between subcontractors appointed to Highways England's smart motorways project and Highways England's project manager for that project.

Trudy Harrison:  
National Highways manages its own conflict of interest policy. The Company has a duty to manage public funds responsibly and effectively in a transparent way. Everyone employed by the Company, regardless of employment or contract status, must record any interests with a potential, actual or perceived conflict of interest.

Motorways: Road Signs and Markings

Sarah Olney:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the number of days in each of the past three years on which one or more electrical signs on any motorway in England have failed to work.

Trudy Harrison:  
National Highways operates a large number of electronic signs for purposes including setting speed limits, closing lanes and providing information to road users. National Highways holds data on the percentage of time that roadside technology is operable
rather than the number of days each device has failed to work. For the operating period April 2020 to March 2021, message Sign availability was 99.61%.

### Railways: Fares

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, on what date the 2022 regulated rail fares will be implemented; and when he plans to announce the percentage Retail Price Index increase.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, on what date the Government plan to announce the 2022 regulated rail fares.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

Details of any changes in national rail fares for 2022 will be announced in due course.

### Railways: Tickets

**Sarah Olney:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has carried out a yield analysis of the potential effect on passengers of the proposed introduction of contactless pay-as-you-go ticketing system on trainlines in the (a) North and (b) Midlands.

**Sarah Olney:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on train revenues of the proposed introduction of contactless pay-as-you-go ticketing on trainlines in the (a) North and (b) Midlands.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

This year's spending review set aside £360 million investment to modernise industry ticketing and retailing systems. This includes an expansion of pay-as-you-go travel on rail to more than 200 stations in the wider south east and more than 700 stations in urban areas across the country including more than 400 in the north, exceeding our manifesto commitment. This investment will deliver significant benefits to passengers by making the process of paying for travel convenient and simple, removing the uncertainty from having to select a ticket in advance and freeing up staff to support passengers.

The assessment of the proposal is still in development, but our early, high level view is that it will increase revenue overall by attracting more passengers to rail.

### Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation: Hydrogen

**Ben Lake:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to review the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation to encourage investment in hydrogen production.
Trudy Harrison:
Further to a public consultation earlier this year, we have introduced legislation which would expand support under the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation (RTFO) to renewable hydrogen used in fuel cell rail and non-road transports, and in maritime vessels. To further encourage investment in renewable hydrogen production, we also proposed in the consultation to reward renewable hydrogen more flexibly under the RTFO. A Government Response on proposals to improve flexibility will be published very soon.

Alexander Stafford:
[86221]
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he plans to take steps to reform the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation to stimulate investment in hydrogen production.

Alexander Stafford:
[86222]
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he plans to make a decision on the potential extension of the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation to cover hydrogen produced from nuclear energy.

Trudy Harrison:
Further to a public consultation earlier this year, we have introduced legislation which would expand support under the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation (RTFO) to renewable hydrogen used in fuel cell rail and non-road transports, and in maritime vessels. To further stimulate investment in renewable hydrogen production, we also proposed in the consultation to reward renewable hydrogen more flexibly under the RTFO. A Government Response on proposals to improve flexibility will be published very soon.

Roads: Safety

Mr Barry Sheerman:
[85187]
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps the Government is taking to prepare for the UN High-level Meeting on Road Safety in 2022.

Trudy Harrison:
The Department is looking forward to participating in the UN High Level meeting on Road Safety in July 2022. We are working on a future Road Safety Strategic Framework which will have the potential to complement the UN goal of reducing road collision casualties.

Stuart Anderson:
[85383]
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to support road safety for deaf and blind people.

Trudy Harrison:
The Government takes road safety very seriously. Any death on the road is completely unacceptable, and while the UK has some of the safest roads in the world, we will continue to focus on making them safer through our new integrated strategy to boost safety for all road-users, the Road Safety Strategic Framework.
Those most at risk when using the highway, such as deaf and blind people, are one of our priority groups, and recent proposed updates to The Highway Code specifically consider the needs of those groups to ensure they are safe in their interactions with other road users. We are also currently preparing updates to the Guidance on the use of Tactile Paving Surfaces and Inclusive Mobility. These support local authorities to deliver accessible transport and pedestrian environments.

**Trailers: Driving Licences**

**Drew Hendry:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of providing compensation for B+E Towing training companies for any lost revenues whilst new drivers are unable to gain the ability to undertake B+E Car and Trailer Towing.

**Trudy Harrison:**

The Government has acted decisively to help address the HGV driver shortage and has announced a range of measures to help the industry recover from the pandemic.

The proposal to remove the requirement for car drivers to take a B+E test if they want to tow a trailer, was subject to a public consultation exercise. The consultation received over 9,500 responses and most respondents supported the proposals. The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) is exploring options for an industry-led accreditation that could offer a standardised non-statutory testing approach. It has now met with key stakeholders to discuss this issue and will share the outcome of those discussions in due course, once plans have been confirmed.

The Department and the DVSA will continue to encourage people who want to tow a trailer to get professional training to promote road safety and support those businesses.

Businesses who have been affected by these changes are advised to seek further advice and support from the Business Support Line at www.gov.uk/business-support-helpline

**Transport: East of England**

**Dr Dan Poulter:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department will take to work with Transport East to ensure the timely and effective delivery of the recently launched regional Transport Strategy.

**Trudy Harrison:**

Transport East has worked closely with Department for Transport officials to develop their transport strategy, turning national priorities into actionable plans reflecting the needs of the region. The Department expects the transport strategy to be the evidence base Transport East will draw on to advise the Government on investment priorities in the East and to deliver on Government objectives on decarbonisation and levelling up.
Air Passenger Duty

Sarah Olney:

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of his decision to reduce the air passenger duty rate for domestic travel on (a) levels of air travel in the UK and (b) the amount of carbon emissions produced by air travel within the UK.

Helen Whately:

At Budget, the Government announced that, from April 2023, it will introduce a new reduced domestic band of Air Passenger Duty (APD) set at £6.50 for economy passengers. The new domestic band will cover flights between England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, in order to support connectivity across the UK. As a result, around 9 million passengers will pay less APD in 2023/24.

The Government will also introduce a new ultra long-haul band, which will ensure that those who fly furthest, and have the greatest environmental impact, will pay the most.

Aviation accounts for around 8% of the UK’s total greenhouse gas emissions. International aviation is responsible for the vast majority of this contribution and accounted for 37 MtCO2e in 2019, whereas domestic aviation was responsible for 1.5 MtCO2e – equivalent to less than 1% of the UK’s total emissions in 2019.

Additionally, domestic aviation is included within the scope of the UK Emissions Trading Scheme, which sets a cap on the total amount of greenhouse gases that can be emitted by sectors covered by the scheme.

Carbon Emissions

Sarah Olney:

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the proposals in the Budget on annual levels of carbon emissions in the UK.

Helen Whately:

At fiscal events, including the recent Spending Review 2021 (SR21), all departments are required to prepare their spending proposals in line with the Green Book on Appraisal and Evaluation issued by HM Treasury. The Green Book already mandates the consideration of climate and environmental impacts in spending. It was updated in 2020 to emphasise that policies must be developed and assessed against how well they deliver on the Government’s long-term policy aims such as net zero.

HM Treasury also carefully considers the climate change and environmental implications of relevant tax measures. The Government incorporated a climate assessment in all relevant Tax Information and Impact Notes (TIINs) for measures at Budget and will continue to do so in future TIINs. For example, the TIIN for the new Plastic Packaging Tax incorporates an assessment of anticipated carbon savings. In addition, HMRC is exploring options to further strengthen the analytical approach to
monitoring, evaluating, and quantifying the environmental impacts of tax measures, including their wider impacts.

- **Non-domestic Rates: Wales**

  **Rachel Reeves:**

  To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the (a) total rateable value and (b) number of (i) warehouse, (ii) industrial and factory, (iii) office, (iv) retail, (v) hospitality and (vi) leisure properties was in Wales on 1 April (A) 2015 and (B) 2021.

  **Lucy Frazer:**

  The aggregated breakdowns requested in the question are not available. However, the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) will publish detailed relevant data on the total rateable value and properties in Wales in due course. VOA statistics can be found here: [https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/valuation-office-agency/about/statistics](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/valuation-office-agency/about/statistics)

- **Nurses: Training**

  **Tulip Siddiq:**

  To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the equity of the Government’s tax-free childcare offer to student nurses who do not have job-related income.

  **Mr Simon Clarke:**

  Tax-Free Childcare (TFC) provides financial support for working parents with their childcare costs. To be eligible for TFC, applicants need to expect to be in paid work.

  With regard to student nurses, the government keeps the funding arrangements for all NHS health professionals’ education under close review, to ensure that students are appropriately supported.

  The government has already introduced new maintenance funding for many healthcare courses. In September 2020, the Department for Health and Social Care introduced the new, non-repayable, training grant of at least £5,000 per academic year, for all eligible new and continuing pre-registration nursing, midwifery and most allied health profession students studying at English universities.

  There is a further £2,000 available for parental support, available for eligible students attending a full-time pre-registration healthcare course. More information can be found at [https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/nhs-learning-support-fund/parental-support-formerly-child-dependants-allowance](https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/nhs-learning-support-fund/parental-support-formerly-child-dependants-allowance).

  This grant is in addition to funding provided by the Students Loan Company.

  For further financial support, and as part of the biggest nursing, midwifery and Allied Health Professional recruitment drive in decades, since September 2020 we have made available:
• A new, non-repayable, training grant of at least £5,000 per academic year for eligible students.

• Further funding of up to £3,000 per academic year is also available to eligible students, for example to cover childcare costs or for specialisms struggling to recruit.

• This new grant of at least £5,000 is in addition to maintenance and tuition fee loans provided by the Student Loans Company.

This generous support package enables healthcare students to focus on their studies and placements and contributes to alleviating any financial pressures students might be facing.

Research: Investment

Debbie Abrahams:

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the proposed changes to the research and development tax reliefs on the amount of private investment in research and development in the UK.

Debbie Abrahams:

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021, what discussions he has had with relevant sector stakeholders on the potential effect of the proposed changes to the research and development tax reliefs on (a) the economy, (b) jobs in that sector and (c) levels of research and development investment in the UK.

Lucy Frazer:

The report published at Tax Administration and Maintenance Day sets out further detail on the reforms announced at Autumn Budget 2021 and the next steps for the review. The Government has invited written responses and will be consulting with stakeholders on the final policy details. Any effects on the public finances will be scored once final policy decisions have been reached.

Research: Tax Allowances

Debbie Abrahams:

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to his Departments R&D Tax Reliefs report published in November 2021, how much and what proportion of the £47.5 billion of research and development expenditure that UK companies claimed tax relief on was for activities taking place outside of the UK.

Lucy Frazer:

HMRC previously produced an estimate of £4 billion to £7 billion for overseas expenditure in the year ending March 2018 out of £36.8 billion of the total Research and Development expenditure used to claim tax credits.
WALES

UK Internal Trade: Wales

Ruth Jones:

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what recent assessment he has made of the sustainability of trade between Wales and (a) Ireland and (b) Northern Ireland.

Simon Hart:

There has been a notable recovery in Great Britain (GB) trade with Ireland throughout 2021, with the latest September statistics showing a 118% increase for GB exports and a 48% increase for imports compared to January 2021.

Ministers meet regularly to monitor and assess the critical trade routes between Wales, Northern Ireland, Ireland and the rest of the UK, to ensure effective implementation of the Withdrawal Agreement and support the implementation of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement.

We will continue to help businesses get the support they need to trade effectively with Europe, including running export helplines such as the Export Support Service and webinars with experts, providing financial support to SMEs, and delaying the introduction of full import controls.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Cold Weather Payments

Afzal Khan:

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment her Department has made of the potential merits of providing a £50 one-off payment to those eligible for Cold Weather Payments this winter.

Guy Opperman:

There are currently no plans to change the Cold Weather Payment scheme.

The Cold Weather Payment scheme helps vulnerable people in receipt of certain income-related benefits to meet the additional costs of heating for every week of severe cold weather, between 1 November and 31 March each year. A payment of £25 is made when the average temperature is recorded as, or forecast to be, 0 degrees C or below over seven consecutive days at the weather station linked to an eligible person’s postcode. It is paid automatically within 14 working days of a trigger to ensure claimants receive payments at the time of need. £98.8 million was paid out in Cold Weather Payments between 1 November 2020 and 31 March 2021.

Cost of Living: Manchester Gorton

Afzal Khan:

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what additional support her Department will provide to residents in Manchester Gorton constituency who are
struggling with the rising cost of living and increasing energy bills this winter, and if she will make a statement.

David Rutley:
This Government is wholly committed to supporting those on low incomes, and continue to do so through many measures, including by spending over £110 billion on welfare support for people of working age in 2021/22.

With the success of the vaccine rollout and record job vacancies, our focus now is on continuing to support people into and to progress in work. Our multi-billion-pound Plan for Jobs, which has recently been expanded by £500 million, will help people across the UK to find work and to boost their wages and prospects.

Universal Credit recipients in work will soon benefit from a reduction in the Universal Credit taper rate from 63% to 55%, and increasing the work allowance by £500 per year means that 1.9m working households will be able to keep substantially more of what they earn. These measures effectively represent a tax cut, worth around £2.2bn a year in 2022-23, for the lowest paid in society, and are combined with a rise in the National Living Wage to £9.50 per hour.

We recognise that some people may require extra support over the winter as we enter the final stages of recovery, which is why vulnerable households across the country will now be able to access a new £500 million support fund to help them with essentials. The Household Support Fund will provide £421 million to help vulnerable people in England with the cost of food, utilities and wider essentials. Manchester will receive £6,453,163.20 from the fund.

The Government is committed to the winter fuel payment and we will continue to support pensioners by making payments of £200 to those households with someone of state pension age and under 80 and £300 to those households with someone aged 80 or over. This winter we will make over 11m winter fuel payments at a cost of £2bn a significant contribution to winter fuel bills.

Cold Weather Payments are also available and help vulnerable people in receipt of certain income-related benefits to meet additional heating costs, during periods of unseasonably cold weather between 1 November and 31 March. This includes older people in receipt of Pension Credit. Those eligible will continue to automatically receive £25 when the average temperature has been recorded as, or is forecast to be, 0°C or below over seven consecutive days.

In addition, the Warm Home Discount Scheme operated by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, ensures that those in receipt of Pension Credit Guarantee receive a rebate of £140 on their energy bill. There is also the energy price cap which will continue to protect millions of customers this winter. Despite the rising costs of wholesale energy, the cap still saves 15 million households up to £100 a year.
**Employment Schemes: Young People**

**Dr Matthew Offord:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what initiatives her Department has undertaken to assist jobseekers under the age of 25 to find employment.

**Mims Davies:**

We have announced our Plan for Jobs expansion which will see another £500 million invested in supporting people into jobs, with young people at the heart of this through Kickstart and our DWP Youth Offer.

The Kickstart scheme is dedicated to helping 16-24-year olds at risk of long-term unemployment develop their skills and experience through 6-month jobs. Around 112,000 Kickstart jobs have been started by young people and the scheme will continue until March 2022, offering jobs and experience to many thousands more young people.

We are extending the DWP Youth Offer to 2025 and have expanded eligibility to include 16 and 17-year olds, in addition to 18 to 24-year olds, who are claiming Universal Credit and searching for work. The Youth Offer currently provides intensive work search support through the Youth Employment Programme, specialised Youth Employment Coaches for young people with additional barriers to work, and over 150 Youth Hubs across England, Scotland and Wales.

DWP is working in collaboration with the Department for Education, National Careers Service, devolved administrations, and other partners to deliver a comprehensive package of support for young people.

**Household Support Fund**

**Afzal Khan:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment her Department has made of the potential merits of increasing the Household Support Fund to support vulnerable people this winter.

**David Rutley:**

Vulnerable households across the country will now be able to access a £500 million support fund to help them with essentials. The Household Support Fund will provide £421 million to help vulnerable people in England with the cost of food, utilities and wider essentials. The Barnett Formula will apply in the usual way, with the devolved administrations receiving almost £80 million (£41m for the Scottish Government, £25m for the Welsh Government and £14m for the NI Executive), for a total of £500 million.

Local Authorities in England have discretion to design their own bespoke local schemes, within the overall parameters of the Household Support Fund, with help primarily focused on food and utility bills. Up to 50% of the fund is available for councils to use on households without children. Local Authorities will use their resources to identify vulnerable households who are in most need in their area and
can apply their own discretion to eligibility and the size of the award. This funding covers the period 06 October 2021 to 31 March 2022 inclusive. There are no plans to increase the funding provided.

### Housing Benefit

**Shabana Mahmood:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much the Government has spent on housing benefit for supported exempt accommodation in England in 2020-21.

**David Rutley:**

The information requested is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

**Shabana Mahmood:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate she has been made of the number of people living in exempt accommodation who have incorrectly had their housing benefit stopped after providers have fraudulently claimed that residents were not engaging in the contractual care and support services.

**David Rutley:**

The information requested is not available.

**Shabana Mahmood:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what processes are in place to independently verify claims of exempt accommodation providers that residents have not been engaging with the care and support services they are contractually obliged to provide.

**David Rutley:**

Supported Housing provides a vital service to some of the most vulnerable people in society and the care, support or supervision they are provided with helps them to live as independently as possible in the community.

Local authorities are responsible for the oversight of supported housing in their respective areas. The Government does not oversee the delivery of support services or individual engagement with those services.

### Kickstart Scheme

**Lia Nici:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many Kickstart scheme placements have been (a) approved, (b) advertised and (c) started by young people by (i) nation, (ii) region and (iii) sector as of 30 November 2021.

**Mims Davies:**

As of the 30th November 2021, over 311,000 jobs have been approved for funding and around 110,000 Kickstart jobs have been started by young people. Over 223,000
jobs have been advertised and made available for young people to apply to through the scheme.

Below are tables listing the number of Kickstart jobs which have been made available and started by young people to date by geographical area of Great Britain and work sector. The figures used are correct as of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} December 2021 and these figures have been rounded according to departmental standards.

Jobs made available and starts quoted here include some unfunded Kickstart jobs. Over time, some previously approved jobs have been removed where the employer chose not to follow up the application. Included in the Great Britain total are a small number of jobs made available (less than 100 in total) that have an unrecorded job location. Data on approved jobs is taken from a snapshot of the Kickstart system at a point in time. This figure can be affected by retrospective changes resulting from applications being rescinded.

The number of approved jobs is defined as the number of jobs associated with approved applications recorded on the Kickstart application system on the date above. This total excludes approved jobs that have been withdrawn from the Kickstart Scheme by agreement with employers and gateways.

Although care is taken when processing and analysing Kickstart applications, referrals and starts, the data collected might be subject to the inaccuracies inherent in any large-scale recording system, which has been developed quickly.

The management information presented here has not been subjected to the usual standard of quality assurance associated with official statistics but is provided in the interests of transparency. Work is ongoing to improve the quality of information available for the programme.

**Table 1- Kickstart jobs made available and started by location.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>JOBS MADE AVAILABLE</th>
<th>CUMULATIVE JOBS STARTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Midlands</td>
<td>13,360</td>
<td>6,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East of England</td>
<td>17,410</td>
<td>7,770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>49,090</td>
<td>23,460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>9,370</td>
<td>5,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>28,020</td>
<td>13,920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>16,770</td>
<td>9,570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East</td>
<td>25,200</td>
<td>11,840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>14,990</td>
<td>6,830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>11,390</td>
<td>5,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCATION</td>
<td>JOBS MADE AVAILABLE</td>
<td>CUMULATIVE JOBS STARTED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Midlands</td>
<td>19,760</td>
<td>10,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yorkshire and The Humber</td>
<td>17,870</td>
<td>8,840</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These numbers are rounded and so may not match provided totals.

**Table 2- Kickstart jobs made available and started by sector.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTOR</th>
<th>JOBS MADE AVAILABLE</th>
<th>CUMULATIVE JOBS STARTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>55,040</td>
<td>27,160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Care</td>
<td>1,320</td>
<td>880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beauty &amp; Wellbeing</td>
<td>1,630</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business &amp; Finance</td>
<td>8,300</td>
<td>4,020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computing Technology &amp; Digital</td>
<td>15,570</td>
<td>8,870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction &amp; Trades</td>
<td>6,700</td>
<td>3,390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative &amp; Media</td>
<td>18,940</td>
<td>10,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery &amp; Storage</td>
<td>6,280</td>
<td>3,130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency &amp; Uniform Services</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering &amp; Maintenance</td>
<td>6,780</td>
<td>3,340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment &amp; Land</td>
<td>4,200</td>
<td>2,170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Services</td>
<td>930</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare</td>
<td>5,920</td>
<td>2,330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Services</td>
<td>1,690</td>
<td>590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality &amp; Food</td>
<td>25,330</td>
<td>9,270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law &amp; Legal</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td>1,010</td>
<td>480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>6,190</td>
<td>2,940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail &amp; Sales</td>
<td>33,300</td>
<td>18,460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science &amp; Research</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECTOR</td>
<td>JOBS MADE AVAILABLE</td>
<td>CUMULATIVE JOBS STARTED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Care</td>
<td>4,770</td>
<td>1,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports &amp; Leisure</td>
<td>5,400</td>
<td>2,690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; Education</td>
<td>10,540</td>
<td>4,420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>840</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel &amp; Tourism</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These numbers are rounded and so may not match provided totals.

Jonathan Ashworth:
To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many Kickstart scheme placements have been (a) started and (b) approved in each local authority area.

Mims Davies:
I refer the honourable member to the answer given for PQ 58900.

Sick Pay: Coronavirus

Ruth Jones:
To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of increasing statutory sick pay in response to the resumption of required quarantine and self isolation.

Chloe Smith:
As part of the Government’s response to Covid-19, we have extended Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) to those who are sick or self-isolating due to coronavirus; for example, where they or a member of their household has tested positive. SSP is also payable from the first day of absence, rather than the fourth, where an employee is sick or self-isolating due to coronavirus. Individuals are not eligible for SSP where they are self-isolating or quarantining after entering or returning to the UK after travelling abroad.

SSP is just one part of our welfare safety net and our wider government offer to support people in times of need. Where an individual’s income is reduced while off work sick and they require further financial support they may be able to claim Universal Credit and new style Employment and Support Allowance, depending on their personal circumstances.

Social Security Benefits: Disqualification

Kate Osamor:
To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what her policy is on claimants’ right to appeal when their claims have been suspended by the Risk Review Team.
David Rutley:
In law there is no right of appeal against a decision to suspend payment of benefit.

If it is determined there is entitlement to Universal Credit following review by the Risk Review Team, the suspension will be lifted immediately.

If it is determined there is no entitlement, an outcome decision will be made to that effect. This decision can be appealed.

Kate Osamor:
To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many claims have been suspended under the Risk Review Process.

David Rutley:
Since the Risk Review Team was created in May 2020, there have been 3,761,761 claims made to Universal Credit. Of those, 149,057 have been suspended under the Risk Review Process, a percentage of 3.96%.

Kate Osamor:
To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment her Department has made of the impact of Risk Review Team activities on claimants with specific nationality, ethnic or religious backgrounds.

David Rutley:
The Risk Review Team does not capture demographic data on any claims they review.

Universal Credit: Young People

Stuart Anderson:
To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what long-term steps the Government is taking to help young people on universal credit who are not working into work.

Mims Davies:
We have announced our Plan for Jobs expansion which will see another £500 million invested in supporting people into jobs, with young people at the heart of this through Kickstart and our DWP Youth Offer.

The Kickstart scheme is dedicated to helping 16-24-year olds at risk of long-term unemployment develop their skills and experience through 6-month jobs. Around 112,000 Kickstart jobs have been started and the scheme will continue until March 2022, offering jobs and experience to many thousands more young people.

We are extending the DWP Youth Offer to 2025 and have expanded eligibility to include 16 and 17-year olds, in addition to 18 to 24-year olds, who are claiming Universal Credit and searching for work. The Youth Offer currently provides intensive work search support through the Youth Employment Programme, specialised Youth Employment Coaches for young people with additional barriers to work, and over 150 Youth Hubs across England, Scotland and Wales.
DWP is working in collaboration with the Department for Education, National Careers Service, devolved administrations, and other partners to deliver a comprehensive package of support for young people.
Telecoms Diversification: Update Against Taskforce Recommendations

Minister for Media, Data, and Digital Infrastructure (Julia Lopez): [HCWS450]

I would like to update the House on a package of measures and policy interventions we are announcing today to progress the Government’s 5G Diversification Strategy and the recommendations of the Telecoms Supply Chain Diversification Taskforce.

Following a 5G Diversification Taskforce recommendation, the Government has worked closely with industry to confirm a date by which 2G and 3G networks will be switched off. The Government can now confirm that the mobile network operators do not intend to offer 2G and 3G mobile networks past 2033 at the latest. The Government welcomes that some individual operators will switch off their networks, particularly their 3G networks, earlier than this date, and will announce their own plans about when and how they intend to do this. The Government welcomes the responsible switching off of these networks, and will continue to work with network operators to ensure a smooth transition that meets the needs of business users and consumers, including vulnerable groups.

The Government is also announcing, together with UK mobile network operators, a joint ambition for 35% of the UK’s mobile network traffic to be carried over open and interoperable Radio Access Network (RAN) architectures by 2030. The RAN is the part of the network that communicates directly with our devices, typically visible in the radio masts we see across the UK. Most networks today are characterised by closed ‘black boxes’ in which all of the components are highly integrated and provided by a single, highly-scaled vendor. ‘Opening’ the RAN seeks to disaggregate these components and functions, lowering barriers to entry and promoting innovation. The Government welcomes the steps taken by operators and suppliers to position the UK as a leader in the development of open and interoperable RAN technology and is pleased to commit £250 million of investment to support and accelerate this programme of work.

As part of this work to promote interoperable RAN, the Government will be providing just over £36 million of investment to fund projects that span key technology challenges to Open RAN adoption as part of the Future RAN Competition (FRANC). This investment will also support industry, academia and local authorities across the UK to realise the benefits of high speed networks and create new commercial opportunities. Finally, the Government is investing a further £15 million in the SmartRAN Open Networks Interoperability Centre (SONIC Labs) to expand it into a fully-fledged interoperability testing facility that will break down barriers and support industry in developing interoperable solutions. This investment will enable the Lab to expand its programme of interoperability testing and international engagement. These projects will be subject to final grant funding agreement.

The interventions demonstrate the Government’s commitment to delivering its Diversification Strategy and building lasting and sustainable supply for the infrastructure
that underpins our entire digital economy. The Government will continue to update the House as this work progresses. Full details of the announcement will be published on gov.uk today.

HOME OFFICE

Asylum policy

The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Justice and Tackling Illegal Migration (Tom Pursglove):

Following the October 2018 publication of the Lift the Ban coalition’s report into asylum seeker right to work policy, which concluded that amending the policy could generate £42m per year for the Government, the former Home Secretary – Sajid Javid – committed to a review. Today I would like to announce the findings of that review.

For clarity, current asylum seeker right to work policy allows asylum seekers to apply for permission to work if a decision on their asylum claim has been outstanding for 12 months or more, where the delay is no fault of their own. If granted permission to work, asylum seekers may then apply for jobs on the Shortage Occupation List.

Lift the Ban’s report recommended relaxing policy to allow asylum seekers to work after six months, with no restrictions on access to the labour market such as limiting eligible jobs to the Shortage Occupation List. In July 2020, a follow-up to their 2018 report was published with the same policy recommendation but with updated estimated benefits to the Government of £98m per year. A further update in summer 2021 revised this further upwards to £180.8m per year.

The Home Office has carried out a comprehensive review of the Lift the Ban report; however, our evidence indicates the assumptions underpinning the recommendations are highly optimistic. Having considered a wide range of available evidence the Home Office believes that a more realistic set of assumptions would present a more nuanced picture. In particular, the Home Office believes that a more realistic set of assumptions would consider the following:

- demographic characteristics (such as family groupings and likelihood of care responsibilities impacting access to the labour market)
- how employment rates for migrant groups tend to increase gradually over time
- the propensity for part time employment
- the likelihood that any employment is more likely to be close to the minimum or living wage rather than the UK median wage.

In addition, a significant proportion of the fiscal benefits calculated by Lift the Ban are predicated on an assumption that once asylum seekers are granted access to the workforce they will no longer require financial support. The Home Office believes that given the likelihood for part time and insecure employment this benefit is unlikely to fully materialise. This is because it expects that the administrative cost associated with moving
asylum seekers on and off support as they cycle through periods of employment and support will be substantial.

The Home Office has therefore concluded that the fiscal benefits arising from a relaxation of the right to work policy are likely to be significantly lower than the figures claimed by Lift the Ban. In light of wider priorities to fix the broken asylum system, reduce pull factors to the UK, and ensure our policies do not encourage people to undercut the resident labour force, we are retaining our asylum seeker right to work policy with no further changes.

It is key this policy continues to protect our immigration system from those lodging unfounded asylum claims in an attempt to avoid work visa rules, particularly at a time when dangerous journeys made by small boat are increasing.

Ultimately we must ensure asylum claims are considered without unnecessary delay. Our resources are therefore better deployed to pursuing an ongoing programme of transformation and system improvement initiatives that will speed up decision making, reducing the time individuals spend in the system awaiting an interview or decision.

We recognise there are extraordinary circumstances affecting certain parts of the labour market at present. In response to these, we are offering time-limited visas to 4,700 HGV drivers in the food supply chain, 5,500 poultry workers, and 800 butchers to ease supply chain pressures this year. We will look at how the sectors concerned make use of these routes which were created in response to their requests.

The Government continues to support industries in solving such issues in the long term through making roles more attractive to UK workers, with better pay and working conditions.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Trade Policy Update

Secretary of State for International Trade (Anne-Marie Trevelyan): [HCWS449]

HM Government is committed to a robust and transparent export control regime for military, dual-use and other sensitive goods and technologies. The purpose of these controls is to promote global security and facilitate responsible exports. They help ensure that goods exported from the United Kingdom do not contribute to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) or a destabilising accumulation of conventional weapons. They protect the United Kingdom’s security and our expertise by restricting who has access to sensitive technologies and capabilities. Export controls also help ensure that controlled items are not used for internal repression or in the commission of serious violations of international humanitarian law. They are one of the means by which we implement a range of international legal commitments including the Arms Trade Treaty.

The controls also support the UK’s defence and security industry. The legitimate international trade in military equipment and technology, as well as in dual-use items,
enables governments to protect ordinary citizens, to preserve law and order against terrorists and criminals, and to defend against external threats. The Government therefore remains committed to supporting the UK’s defence and security industry and to promoting the legitimate trade in items controlled for strategic reasons.

We keep our controls under regular review to ensure that they continue to properly address the threats we face, keep pace with new technologies, and adapt to changing circumstances such as our exit from the EU, while providing an efficient service which does not impose an unworkable administrative burden on the defence and security industry.

That is why today I am announcing a package of measures to update the export control regime.

First, I am laying before Parliament a revised version of the licensing criteria for strategic export controls, to be known as the Strategic Export Licensing Criteria, as set out at the end of this statement.

These Criteria will be applied with immediate effect to all licence decisions (including decisions on appeals) for export, transfer, trade (brokering) and transit/transhipment of goods, software and technology subject to control for strategic reasons (referred to collectively as “items”); and to the extent that the following activities are subject to control, the provision of technical assistance or other services related to those items. Certain of the Criteria may also be applied to MOD Form 680 applications alongside other considerations and assessment of proposals to gift controlled equipment to other nations’ governments.

As before, they will not be applied mechanistically but on a case-by-case basis taking into account all relevant information available at the time the licence application is assessed. While the Government recognises that there are situations where transfers must not take place, as set out in the following Criteria, we will not refuse a licence on the grounds of a purely theoretical risk of a breach of one or more of those Criteria. In making licensing decisions I will continue to take into account advice received from FCDO, MOD, and other government departments and agencies as appropriate.

The application of these Criteria will be without prejudice to the application to specific cases of specific measures as may be announced to Parliament from time to time. This statement does not impact upon existing specific measures which remain extant until revoked.

Second, the Government will be taking steps to enhance the Military End-Use Control. Currently, the control can only be applied to the export of otherwise non-controlled items which are intended for use as components in, or production equipment for, military equipment in an embargoed destination. This does not allow us to fully address threats to national security, international peace and security, and human rights arising from the use of non-listed items by the military, police or security forces, or entities acting on their behalf, in an embargoed destination.
We will therefore be amending the definition of “military end-use” to remove this limitation. The control would only be applied where the Government informs the exporter that the proposed export is or may be intended for a military end-use in an embargoed destination. To minimise the impact on legitimate trade, there will be exemptions for medical supplies and equipment, food, clothing and other consumer goods.

The review also concluded that there were anomalies and inconsistencies within the UK’s export control regime. As a result of this review, China will be added to the list of those destinations subject to military end-use controls.

Taken together, these changes will also strengthen our ability to prevent exports that might be used directly or indirectly to facilitate human rights violations in all destinations subject to military end-use controls. It also completes the export control review announced to Parliament on 12 January 2021 by the then Foreign Secretary.

Both of these changes concerning military end-use controls require amendments to the Export Control Order 2008. We intend to lay the secondary legislation to implement these changes in the Spring of 2022.

The Strategic Export Licensing Criteria

This statement of the Criteria is guidance given under section 9 of the Export Control Act 2002. It replaces the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria announced to Parliament on 25 March 2014.

CRITERION ONE

Respect for the UK’s international obligations and relevant commitments, in particular sanctions adopted by the UN Security Council, agreements on non-proliferation and other subjects, as well as other international obligations.

The Government will not grant a licence if to do so would be inconsistent with, inter alia:

a) the UK’s obligations and its commitments to enforce United Nations and Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) sanctions, as well as national sanctions observed by the UK and other relevant commitments regarding the application of strategic export controls;

b) the UK’s obligations under the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty;

c) the UK’s obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention;

d) the UK’s obligations under the United Nations Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, the Convention on Cluster Munitions (the Oslo convention), the Cluster Munitions (Prohibitions) Act 2010, and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction (the Ottawa convention) and the Land Mines Act 1998;

e) the UK’s commitments in the framework of the Australia Group, the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Zangger Committee, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, and the Wassenaar Arrangement;
f) the OSCE principles governing conventional arms transfers.

**CRITERION TWO**

Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in the country of final destination as well as respect by that country for international humanitarian law.

Having assessed the recipient country's attitude towards relevant principles established by international human rights instruments, the Government will:

a) Not grant a licence if it determines there is a clear risk that the items might be used to commit or facilitate internal repression;

Internal repression includes, inter alia, torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment; summary or arbitrary executions; disappearances; arbitrary detentions; and other serious violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms as set out in relevant international human rights instruments, including the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

For these purposes items which might be used for internal repression will include, inter alia, items where there is evidence of the use of these or similar items for internal repression by the proposed end-user, or where there is reason to believe that the items will be diverted from their stated end-use or end-user and used for internal repression.

The nature of the items to be transferred will be considered carefully, particularly if they are intended for internal security purposes.

b) Exercise special caution and vigilance in granting licences, on a case-by-case basis and taking account of the nature of the equipment, to countries where serious violations of human rights have been established by the competent bodies of the UN or the Council of Europe;

Having assessed the recipient country's attitude towards relevant principles established by instruments of international humanitarian law, the Government will:

c) Not grant a licence if it determines there is a clear risk that the items might be used to commit or facilitate a serious violation of international humanitarian law.

In considering the risk that items might be used to commit or facilitate internal repression, or to commit or facilitate a serious violation of international humanitarian law, the Government will also take account of the risk that the items might be used to commit or facilitate gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against women or children.

**CRITERION THREE**

**Preservation of internal peace and security**

The Government will not grant a licence if, having assessed the potential that the items would either contribute to or undermine internal peace and security, it determines there is a clear risk that the items would, overall, undermine internal peace and security.

When assessing the potential that the items would contribute to or undermine internal peace and security, the Government will take into account, inter alia and where relevant:

a) Whether the grant of the licence would provoke or prolong armed conflicts;
b) Whether the items are likely to be used other than for the legitimate national security or defence of the recipient;

c) Whether the items would be likely to cause, avert, increase or decrease conflict or instability in the country of final destination, taking into account (inter alia):

(i) the balance of forces between states or actors concerned;

(ii) the potential for the equipment to have a significant impact on the effectiveness of existing capabilities or force projection;

(iii) humanitarian purposes or impacts;

(iv) the nature of the conflict, including the conduct of all states or actors involved, and any involvement by the UK and allied states;

(v) border stability and legitimate national security interests of the recipient.

d) Whether the items might be used to commit or facilitate gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against women or children.

CRITERION FOUR

Preservation of peace and security

The Government will not grant a licence if, having assessed the potential that the items would either contribute to or undermine peace and security, it determines there is a clear risk that the items would, overall, undermine peace and security.

When assessing the potential that the items would contribute to or undermine peace and security, the Government will take into account, inter alia and where relevant:

a) The existence or likelihood of armed conflict in which the recipient would take part;

b) Whether the recipient has in the past tried or threatened to pursue, by means of force, a claim against the territory of another country;

c) The likelihood that the items would be used in the territory of another country other than for legitimate purposes including national or collective self defence;

d) Whether the items would be likely to cause, avert, increase or decrease conflict or instability in the region, taking into account (inter alia):

(i) the balance of forces between the states or actors in the region concerned;

(ii) their approach to expenditure on defence;

(iii) the potential for the equipment to have a significant impact on the effectiveness of existing capabilities or force projection;

(iv) humanitarian purposes or impacts;

(v) the nature of the conflict, including the conduct of all states or actors involved, and any involvement by the UK and allied states;

(vi) border stability and legitimate national security interests of the recipient.
e) Whether the items might be used to commit or facilitate gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against women or children.

**CRITERION FIVE**

The national security of the UK and territories whose external relations are the UK’s responsibility, as well as that of friendly and allied countries.

The Government will take into account:

a) the risk of the items undermining or damaging the UK’s national security or those of other territories and countries as described above;

b) the risk of the items being used against UK forces or against those of other territories and countries as described above;

c) the need to protect classified information and capabilities.

**CRITERION SIX**

The behaviour of the buyer country with regard to the international community, as regards in particular its attitude to terrorism and transnational organised crime, the nature of its alliances and respect for international law.

a) Having assessed the potential that the items could be used to commit or facilitate an act constituting an offence under international conventions or protocols to which the UK is a Party relating to terrorism or transnational organised crime, the Government will not grant a licence if it determines there is a clear risk that the items could be used to commit or facilitate such an act.

In making this assessment, the Government will also take account of the risk that the items might be used to commit or facilitate gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against women or children.

b) The Government will also take into account, inter alia, the record of the buyer country with regard to:

(i) its compliance with relevant international obligations, in particular on the non-use of force, including under international humanitarian law applicable to international and non-international conflicts;

(ii) its commitment to non-proliferation and other areas of arms control and disarmament, in particular the signature, ratification and implementation of relevant arms control and disarmament instruments referred to in Criterion One.

**CRITERION SEVEN**

The existence of a risk that the items will be diverted to an undesirable end-user or for an undesirable end-use

In assessing the risk that the items might be diverted to an undesirable end-user or for an undesirable end-use, the Government will take into account:
a) the legitimate defence and domestic security interests of the recipient country, including any involvement in United Nations or other humanitarian or peace-keeping activity;

b) the technical capability of the recipient country to use the items;

c) the capability of the recipient country to exert effective export controls;

d) the risk of re-export to undesirable destinations;

e) the risk of diversion to terrorist organisations, individual terrorists or to transnational organised crime;

f) the risk of reverse engineering or unintended technology transfer;

g) the risk of an undesirable end-use either by the stated end-user or another party.

CRITERION EIGHT

The compatibility of the transfer with the technical and economic capacity of the recipient country, taking into account the desirability that states should achieve their legitimate needs of security and defence with the least diversion for armaments of human and economic resources.

The Government will take into account, in the light of information from relevant sources such as United Nations Development Programme, World Bank, IMF and Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development reports, whether the proposed transfer would seriously undermine the economy or seriously hamper the sustainable development of the recipient country.

The Government will consider in this context, amongst other factors, the recipient country’s relative levels of military and social expenditure, taking into account also any bilateral or multilateral aid, and its public finances, balance of payments, external debt, economic and social development and any IMF or World Bank-sponsored economic reform programme.

OTHER FACTORS

In exceptional circumstances the government may decide not to grant a licence for reasons other than those set out in Criteria 1 to 8 where the items may have a significant negative impact on the UK’s international relations.

UKEF Update

Secretary of State for International Trade (Anne-Marie Trevelyan): [HCWS451]

The UK enjoys a strong relationship with Ukraine and is committed to supporting its security and economic prosperity. UK Export Finance (UKEF) has recently committed most of its market risk appetite for Ukraine to support a programme led by UK suppliers to upgrade the country’s naval capability. To ensure that UKEF can continue to support UK exporters assist Ukraine with improvements to its national infrastructure, and in-line with wider HMG objectives, the Government has concluded that it is in the national interest to increase UKEF’s market risk appetite for Ukraine to £3.5 billion and has
instructed UKEF to make appropriate arrangements. This will leave around £1.2bn available for UKEF to support further priority projects, supporting skilled UK jobs and enabling additional UK exports to Ukraine.