This report shows written answers and statements provided on 10 December 2021 and the information is correct at the time of publication (03:38 P.M., 10 December 2021). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/

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

**Carbon Emissions: Health**

**Geraint Davies:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with the Climate Change Committee on its UK Health Expert Advisory Group report entitled Sustainable Health Equity: Achieving a Net Zero UK before publication of the Sixth Carbon Budget in December 2020.

**Greg Hands:**

We are grateful to the Climate Change Committee for the wide range of advice it provides government, which is discussed on an ongoing basis. The published impact assessment for the sixth carbon budget considered a range of relevant evidence to provide a solid basis for the government’s decision on the budget level, including the advice of the Climate Change Committee.

**Directors: Fraud**

**Hilary Benn:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many company directors have been struck off for (a) wrongful trading, (b) fraudulent trading and (c) unfit conduct in (i) England and (ii) Yorkshire in each of the last five years.

**Paul Scully:**

Companies House publishes information annually on the number of disqualification orders notified to the Secretary of State in the United Kingdom under the Insolvency Act 2000 and the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986. The information includes disqualifications for wrongful trading, fraud in a winding up and unfit conduct. This information covers the UK as a whole and Companies House is unable to provide separate figures for England and Yorkshire.


**Electricity: Tidal Power**

**Ian Blackford:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the announcement to include £20 million of ring-fenced in the fourth allocation round of the Contracts for Difference Scheme, what target is in place for electricity gigawatt output generated through tidal marine energy.
Greg Hands:  
The £20 million ring-fence of UK government funding for Tidal Stream was announced on 24th November. The Government has no specific target for gigawatts of capacity from tidal sources.

Fuels: Prices

Stuart Anderson:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to promote awareness on how to gain competitive fuel prices from providers.

Greg Hands:  
The Government’s analysis shows that changes to retail prices of petroleum products such as petrol and diesel are primarily driven by the changes in global market prices for crude oil and in exchange rates.

There are both free and subscription-based mobile phone applications available which allow drivers to compare fuel prices at forecourts.

Heating: Hydrogen

Liz Saville Roberts:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of conducting a hydrogen village trial by 2025 in Wales to better inform a policy decision on the use of hydrogen for heating buildings by 2026.

Greg Hands:  
As set out in my Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister’s Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution, the Government is supporting industry to deliver community trials of 100% hydrogen heating. BEIS and Ofgem have invited the Gas Distribution Network Operators to submit outline proposals for village trials by December 2021. The Government expect that one or more of these will then be selected to be developed into detailed proposals. Final decisions on where the trials will take place are expected to be taken in 2023.

Alexander Stafford:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of conducting multiple hydrogen village trials by 2025 to inform a policy decision on hydrogen for heating buildings by 2026.

Greg Hands:  
As set out in the Prime Minister’s Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution, the Government is supporting industry to deliver community trials of 100% hydrogen heating. The Government and Ofgem have invited the Gas Distribution Network Operators to submit proposals for village trials by December 2021. The Government expect that at least one of these will be selected to develop more detailed proposals. Final decisions on where the trials will take place are expected to be taken in 2023.
Home Shopping: Internet

Andrew Rosindell:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department has made an assessment of the likelihood that shoppers will undertake their Christmas shopping online rather than on the high street as a result of the requirement to wear face coverings introduced on 30 November 2021.

Paul Scully:  
We’ve put in place a measured and proportionate set of restrictions and we believe we have struck the right balance in introducing measures to wear face coverings in certain settings.

The retail sector remains a key part of the high street and physical retail remains an important route to consumers. The excellent Small Business Saturday, which I was pleased to support, took place on 4 December, and provides a great way to celebrate small and micro business across the UK, highlighting their importance to our local communities and helping them get back on their feet as we look ahead to the economic recovery.

Housing: Energy

Mr Steve Baker:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Government’s consultation on improving the energy performance of privately rented homes in England and Wales published in November 2021, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect on the rental sector of the proposals to require landlords to increase the energy efficiency of their properties.

Greg Hands:  
[Holding answer 9 December 2021]: My department recently consulted on improving the energy performance of private rented homes in England and Wales to EPC Band C by 2028. As part of the consultation, we sought stakeholder feedback on the impact of these proposals on the housing market, including around the introduction of an affordability exemption for landlords, and I am grateful for the responses received. My Department will publish a Government Response in due course.

Housing: Insulation

Ed Davey:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what programmes are available to support homeowners to insulate their homes; and if he will make a statement.

Greg Hands:  
The Government’s Heat and Buildings Strategy sets out the programmes available to support homeowners to insulate their homes, including £3.9 billion of new funding to reduce emissions from buildings in the near term. Part of this will fund the next 3
years of investment through the Home Upgrade Grant scheme, which helps to deliver energy efficiency improvement measures, such as insulation, to low-income households in energy inefficient homes off the gas grid.

Alongside this, the £500 million Local Authority Delivery Scheme focuses on low-income households that are most in need of energy efficiency upgrades. Energy efficiency measures under this scheme may include, but are not limited to, solid wall insulation, cavity wall insulation, loft insulation and underfloor insulation.

In the summer of 2021, the Government announced the launch of the Sustainable Warmth competition. This is worth over £400m and comprises both the Local Authority Delivery scheme phase 3 and the Home Upgrade Grant phase 1.

In addition, under the Energy Company Obligation scheme, larger energy suppliers can deliver energy efficiency and heating measures to low income and vulnerable households across Great Britain. We recently consulted on a 4-year, £4 billion successor scheme to 2026.

### Hydrogen

**Alexander Stafford:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to finalise hydrogen business models; and when those models will be published.

**Greg Hands:**

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 higher carbon counterfactual 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.

### Hydrogen: Carbon Emissions

**Ben Lake:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what his timetable is for publishing the Low Carbon Hydrogen Standard.

**Greg Hands:**


**Alexander Stafford:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he expects the Low Carbon Hydrogen Standard to be published.
**Greg Hands:**

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**Hydrogen: Regulation**

**Ben Lake:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans he has to finalise the development of comprehensive regulatory frameworks for hydrogen; and what his timetable is for developing those frameworks.

**Greg Hands:**
In line with the commitments made in the Hydrogen Strategy, Government is working with industry and regulators to consider the regulatory frameworks required to support the development of the hydrogen value chain, including where change may be necessary. This engagement will be formalised through the Hydrogen Regulators Forum, which will meet for the first time in January 2022. The Forum will have representation across the relevant regulatory areas (environmental, safety, markets, competition and planning).

Initial conclusions, proposals and next steps on regulation will be published as part of the Hydrogen Strategy progress update in early 2022.

**Alexander Stafford:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans he has to finalise the development of comprehensive regulatory frameworks for hydrogen; and when those will be published.

**Greg Hands:**
In line with the commitments made in the Hydrogen Strategy, Government is working with industry and regulators to consider the regulatory frameworks required to support the development of the hydrogen value chain, including where change may be necessary. This engagement will be formalised through the Hydrogen Regulators Forum, which will meet for the first time in January 2022. The Forum will have representation across the relevant regulatory areas (environmental, safety, markets, competition and planning).

Initial conclusions, proposals and next steps on regulation will be published as part of the Hydrogen Strategy progress update in early 2022.

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**Iron and Steel: Hydrogen**

**Alexander Stafford:**
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to support trials of manufacturing steel with hydrogen.
Lee Rowley:
The Department is working with the steel sector, via the Steel Council, on creating a competitive, sustainable, and low carbon future for the sector. Hydrogen-based steelmaking is one of the technological approaches being examined as part of this process.

The UK steel sector can bid into industrial fuel switching innovation programmes under the Net Zero Innovation Portfolio (NZIP), which is intended to promote switching away from more carbon-intensive fuel sources.

The Government has also set up the Industrial Decarbonisation and Hydrogen Revenue Support scheme to fund new hydrogen and industrial carbon capture business models. The scheme will be open to business across industry, including steel companies.

Natural Gas: Hydrogen

Ben Lake:
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to help ensure that a decision on blending 20 per cent hydrogen into the gas grid is delivered in 2023.

Greg Hands:
BEIS is working closely with the Health and Safety Executive, Ofgem and industry to understand the safety case, operability and value for money case for blending hydrogen into the grid. We are following emerging evidence from industry trials such as HyDeploy. We will be able to make a decision once there is sufficient evidence on both technical safety and financial viability. Although we will be prioritising the economic assessment of hydrogen blending, we envisage the end of 2023 being the earliest point a decision could be made.

Alexander Stafford:
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to ensure that a decision on blending 20 per cent hydrogen into the gas grid is delivered in 2023 at the latest.

Greg Hands:
BEIS is working closely with the Health and Safety Executive, Ofgem and industry to understand the safety case, operability and value for money case for blending hydrogen into the grid. We are following emerging evidence from industry trials such as HyDeploy. We will be able to make a decision once there is sufficient evidence on both technical safety and financial viability. Although we will be prioritising the economic assessment of hydrogen blending, we envisage the end of 2023 being the earliest point a decision could be made.
Alexander Stafford: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment has he made of the potential merits of blending 20 per cent hydrogen into the grid by 2023.

Greg Hands: The Government is working with the Health and Safety Executive, Ofgem and industry to understand safety, operability and value for money for blending hydrogen into the grid, including following emerging evidence from industry trials such as HyDeploy. The Government will make a decision once there is sufficient evidence on both technical safety and financial viability. The Government will be prioritising the economic assessment of hydrogen blending and will make a decision at the end of 2023 at the earliest.

Ofgem: Hydrogen

Liz Saville Roberts: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of creating a dedicated hydrogen department within Ofgem.

Greg Hands: The organisation design of Ofgem is a matter for Ofgem. BEIS will continue to work closely with Ofgem on delivering the government’s ambitions for a hydrogen economy as set out in the Hydrogen Strategy.

Alexander Stafford: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of creating a dedicated hydrogen department within Ofgem.

Greg Hands: The organisation design of Ofgem is a matter for Ofgem. BEIS will continue to work closely with Ofgem on delivering the government’s ambitions for a hydrogen economy as set out in the Hydrogen Strategy.

Postal Services: Coronavirus

Mike Amesbury: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment has he made of the level of disruption to postal services as a result of covid-19 related absences.

Paul Scully: Royal Mail’s contingency plans to mitigate disruption to postal services are overseen by Ofcom, the independent regulator responsible for monitoring the delivery of the universal postal service.
Ofcom carefully monitors Royal Mail’s performance to ensure it is providing the best service possible to customers and has powers to investigate and take enforcement action if Royal Mail fails to achieve its performance targets.

Ofcom will continue to take a pragmatic and proportionate approach to compliance monitoring.

Postal Services: Weaver Vale

Mike Amesbury: [88824]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure that people in the Weaver Vale constituency are receiving their post delivered by Royal Mail on time; and if his Department will make an assessment on the potential merits of further Government steps on this matter.

Paul Scully:
The Government sets the minimum requirements and service standards for the UK postal service in the Postal Services Act 2011 and designates the Office of Communications (Ofcom) as the independent regulator for the sector.

Ofcom has a duty to ensure the provision of a financially sustainable and efficient universal postal service. It monitors Royal Mail’s provision of the universal service and has powers to investigate and take enforcement action if Royal Mail fails to achieve its performance targets as appropriate, taking account of all relevant factors.

Ofcom is carrying out a review of the future regulatory framework for post which it aims to complete in 2022. As part of this, Ofcom is considering whether its approach to regulating the quality of service for key universal postal services remains appropriate. Ofcom published a consultation document on proposals for the future regulation of postal services on 9 December 2021.

Tidal Power: Finance

Ian Blackford: [86112]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the adequacy of the £20 million of ring-fenced funding for tidal marine energy as part of the Contracts for Difference Scheme; and if the Government will provide increased ring-fenced funding should that assessment find those funds to be insufficient.

Greg Hands:

[Holding answer 7 December 2021]: The next Contracts for Difference round will be the biggest yet, affirming this Government’s commitment to fully decarbonise the electricity system by 2035. The £20m ringfenced support for Tidal Stream is sufficient to kick-start innovation across the UK and balances our objectives of decarbonisation, fairness and value for electricity billpayers.
Coronavirus: Public Inquiries

Kirsten Oswald:
To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will ensure that disabled people are referenced in the Terms of Reference of the inquiry into the Government's handling of the covid-19 pandemic.

Kirsten Oswald:
To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will ensure that the inquiry into the Government's handling of the covid-19 pandemic is accessible to allow disabled people to participate.

Kirsten Oswald:
To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will ensure that the panel leading the inquiry into the Government's handling of the covid-19 pandemic (a) includes and (b) hears from disabled people.

Michael Ellis:
On 12 May, the Prime Minister confirmed that a public inquiry into COVID-19 will be established on a statutory basis, with full formal powers and that it will begin its work in spring 2022. A chair will be appointed by the end of the year. More details, including the terms of reference for the inquiry, will be set out in due course.

Import Duties: Whisky

Colum Eastwood:
To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what effect the continuation of the imposition of the 25 per cent tariff on US imported whiskies has had on the Government's negotiating position on proposals by the EU to resolve issues in respect of the Northern Ireland Protocol.

Nigel Adams:
We and the US have made clear the paramount need to protect the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement in all its dimensions. The UK has been consistently clear that significant changes are needed to the Protocol in order to protect the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement and Northern Ireland’s place in the UK internal market. The tariff on imported US whisky is a completely separate issue.

Knives: Crime

Colleen Fletcher:
To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what recent assessment he has made of trends in the level of knife crime in (a) Coventry North East constituency, (b) Coventry, (c) the West Midlands and (d) England in each of the last three years.
Nigel Adams:
The information requested falls under the remit of the UK Statistics Authority. I have, therefore, asked the Authority to respond.

Attachments:
1. UKSA response letter [UKSA response to PQ88735.pdf]

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, when he will advise applicants for places on the (a) Domestic Advisory Group and (b) Civil Society Forum of the outcome of their applications.

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.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan: Refugees

Dan Jarvis:
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many personnel were assigned to the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy team as of 7 December 2021.

James Heappey:
As at 7 December 2021, 84 personnel were assigned to the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) team. Staff are split across numerous sub-teams including: Eligibility, Casework, Operations and Policy. The ARAP scheme has received over 90,000 applications and the team continues to receive more every day. Activity to process these applications to a decision; and to inform applicants of those decisions is being conducted seven days a week.
Agnes Wanjiru

John Healey: [88627]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many interviews have been conducted by Kenyan authorities with (a) current and (b) former UK armed forces personnel in relation to the death of Agnes Wanjiru.

James Heappey:

It would be inappropriate to comment on the details of an ongoing police investigation in another jurisdiction. The Ministry of Defence continues to support the Kenyan authorities in respect of their inquiries into the death of Ms Wanjiru.

Arctic: Climate Change

John Healey: [88628]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 7 December 2021 to Question 83247, on what date did he last have discussions with counterparts in the countries that make up the Joint Expeditionary Force on the security implications of climate change in the Arctic region.

James Heappey:

The Defence Secretary's collective discussion on the security implications of climate change in the Arctic with his counterparts in the countries that make up the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) was on 20 October at a meeting of Northern Group Defence Ministers (all members of the JEF are also members of the Northern Group).

Armed Forces: HIV Infection

Luke Pollard: [86186]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many armed forces personnel from each service have been discharged because of their HIV status in each of the last ten years.

Leo Docherty:

Between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2021, 30 UK Regular Armed Forces personnel were medically discharged with an ICD-10 code for HIV cited as the principal or contributory cause. The following table provides a breakdown by service and year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year (1 April to 31 March)</th>
<th>Royal Navy</th>
<th>Army</th>
<th>RAF</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>~</td>
<td>~</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012/13</td>
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<td>~</td>
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<td>~</td>
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<td>~</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>~</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>~</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Both principal and contributory causes have been included as it is possible for personnel to be medically discharged for multiple medical reasons.

The figures provided include Regular service personnel (trained and untrained). Army Regular personnel include Gurkha and Military Provost Guard Service (MPGS). Reserve personnel were not included. Royal Navy personnel include both Royal Navy and Royal Marines. Figures fewer than five have been suppressed and are represented by a ~.

### Armoured Fighting Vehicles: Contracts

**Chris Evans:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with which company he has placed the contract for headsets used by army personnel on the (a) Ajax, (b) Warrior and (c) CVRT family of armoured fighting vehicles.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The headsets in use with Warrior, CVR(T) fleets, and intended for use in AJAX (once fielded), are provided by Racal Acoustics Ltd. Additionally, a small number of headsets, from various manufacturers, have been trialled in small numbers for research and niche users across the platforms.

**Chris Evans:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether there is still a time restriction placed on personnel using the (a) Ajax, (b) Warrior and (c) CVRT family of armoured vehicles in response to concerns over the headsets.

**Jeremy Quin:**

Armoured vehicles are inherently noisy so statutory restrictions are mandated across the Armoured Fighting Vehicle fleet. The department was made aware of some concerns regarding AFV headsets so have imposed tighter restrictions on the use of some vehicles, including Ajax, Warrior and CVRT fleet whilst further investigation work is conducted.
Army: Hearing Impairment

Chris Evans:

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many army personnel have been medically downgraded as a result of hearing loss in each year for the last 10 years.

Leo Docherty:

The below table presents the number of UK Army personnel who were medically downgraded with an ICD-10 code for Hearing Loss cited as the principal or contributory cause from 1 April 2015 to 1 April 2021. Both principal and contributory causes have been included as it is possible for personnel to be medically downgraded for multiple medical reasons.

The information provided is for Army personnel who have had restrictions (both short term or longer term) as a result of hearing loss which will require a limitation in their military duties. It is a snapshot in time of each year therefore someone who is downgraded at one timepoint can also be included in the count at a later timepoint. The personnel represented in this response may have since had their limitations lifted and returned to their previous levels of medical fitness. Reasons for medical downgrading are only presented from 2015 due to data availability.

Table 1: UK Army 1 personnel medically downgraded with Hearing Loss cited as the principal or contributory cause, by year 2, from 1 April 2015 to 1 April 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Apr 15</td>
<td>767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Apr 16</td>
<td>896</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Apr 17</td>
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<td>1 Apr 20</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Apr 21</td>
<td>1,068</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Figures includes full time trade trained and serving against requirement.

2 Numbers downgraded for hearing loss as at 1 April in each year.

Canada: Arctic

Mr Kevan Jones:

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, under what legal framework the Government will offer military assistance to Canada in the Arctic.
James Heappey:
The legal framework under which the UK might provide military assistance to Canada in the Arctic would be dependent on the circumstances and the nature of any Canadian request for military assistance, bilaterally or through NATO.

Germany: Army

Mr Kevan Jones:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much it has cost to remove the British Army footprint from Germany since 2010 to date.

James Heappey:  
From 2010 to date, it has cost in the region of £2.1 billion to remove the British Army footprint from Germany.

Lockheed Martin: Contracts

Mr Mark Francois:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will list the total number of contracts his Department holds with Lockheed Martin by (a) programme, (b) date of contract award and (c) individual contract value in pounds sterling as of 2 December 2021.

Jeremy Quin:  
The information needed to answer my Rt Hon. Friend's question is taking time to collate and check. I will write to him with an answer, and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Marines

Mr Kevan Jones:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the number of Royal Marines will drop below 6,200 by 2023.

James Heappey:  
On current plans, the Royal Marines will have a slightly reduced workforce requirement by 2023.

This change to the workforce structure is necessary to enable the Royal Marines to meet the growing threat with improved skills and equipment. Amendments to workforce numbers allow us to introduce transformative technologies, such as autonomous systems, that will maintain the Royal Marines' ability to operate successfully in any environment.

Merlin Helicopters: Early Warning Systems

Mr Mark Francois:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Crowsnest AEW systems are on order from Lockheed Martin; and what the total value is of those contracts.
Jeremy Quin:
CROWSNEST provides long range air, maritime and land surveillance, detection and tracking capabilities. It is intended to be delivered as role-fit to Merlin Mk2 helicopters, with all 30 Merlin Mk2s being modified to accept the role kit. Ten sets of the role kit are being procured.

In December 2016, the Ministry of Defence awarded a firm price contract worth £269 million (excluding VAT) to Lockheed Martin, which included demonstration and manufacture, and initial provisioning of spares. Thales UK are sub-contracted to provide the CROWSNEST Mission System and Leonardo Helicopters (UK) to provide integration to the Merlin helicopter. As a result of change requests and contract amendments the contract value now stands at £294 million (excluding VAT) which remains within the scope and budget of the Main Gate Business Case approval.

Ministry of Defence: Staff

John Healey:
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 22 November 2021 to Question 79285 on Ministry of Defence: Staff, what the average cost to his Department is of employing a civilian personnel including (a) basic pay, (b) employer National Insurance and (c) pension.

Leo Docherty:
The Department reports a median of the total remuneration of civilian staff as part of the Accountability Report - Pay Multiples analysis included in our Annual Report and Accounts (ARAc). Figures reflect the median remuneration values for civilians included in our response to Question 79285 with the addition of employer National Insurance and Pension contributions. The 2020-21 median civilian remuneration will be disclosed in the 2020-21 ARAc which is subject to final review and approval and will be published shortly.

Somalia: Piracy

Mr Kevan Jones:
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the Government plans for the UK to remain engaged with Operation Atlanta.

James Heappey:
The UK ceased to participate in Operation Atalanta in March 2019. The UK no longer has the necessary legal basis to participate in EU Common Security and Defence Policy operations and is not planning to re-join Atalanta. We remain engaged in the Horn of Africa through bilateral and small group partnerships to promote the rule of law and support upstream conflict prevention, stabilisation and security reform.
Type 45 Destroyers
Mr Kevan Jones: [87617]
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department plans to add an offensive ballistic missile capability to the Type 45 destroyer.

Jeremy Quin: We continue to scope options for the Royal Navy's future offensive capabilities, alongside wider lethality requirements. We are committed to delivering a new surface to surface guided weapon that will allow us to deliver on the commitments outlined in the Integrated Review. No final decisions have yet been made.

USA: Military Alliances
Mr Kevan Jones: [87612]
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether any legal framework exists to support interchangeability within maritime operations with the US.

James Heappey: The Royal Navy (RN) and the Ministry of Defence have negotiated multiple frameworks over the past few decades to better ensure greater interoperability between the United Kingdom and the United States of America on Maritime Operations across all Defence Lines of Development.

Common operating procedures have been embedded through bilateral arrangements (such as Treaties, Statement of Intent and Memorandum of Understanding) covering issues such as personnel, tactics, training and procedures, concepts and doctrine, equipment, logistics, information, weapons and infrastructure.

The RN has a long tradition of working closely with NATO, Five Eyes allies, Joint Expeditionary Force partners and other key maritime nations and opportunities for interchangeability are regularly explored to maintain these close working relationships.

Warships
Mr Kevan Jones: [88659]
To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department plans to continue to use the terminology in the water as a milestone in capability for naval vessels.

Jeremy Quin: The point in time at which a vessel under construction is first afloat has traditionally been regarded as a significant milestone and remains so.
Weapons: Artificial Intelligence

Jonathan Edwards: [88688]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the level of need for international agreement on the limits on the development of AI weapons systems, including AI decision-making over the use of nuclear weapons.

Jeremy Quin:

The UK’s focus is on setting clear international norms for the safe and responsible development and use of AI, to ensure compliance with International Humanitarian Law through meaningful and context-appropriate levels of human control. We engage extensively with the international community and NGOs on this issue including through discussions at the UN Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.

More broadly, the UK is at the forefront of work internationally to champion strategic risk reduction, reduce the risk of nuclear conflict and enhance mutual trust and security. We will continue to promote and engage with international dialogue aimed at identifying and addressing strategic risks, including any risks that might arise from the incorporation of AI in strategic systems. In terms of UK strategic systems, we will ensure that human political control of nuclear weapons is maintained at all times.

Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

Holiday Accommodation: Licensing

Rachael Maskell: [88786]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what plans he has to bring forward proposals for the licensing of Airbnb and other short term holiday let providers.

Nigel Huddleston:

The Government’s Tourism Recovery Plan sets out our intention to consult on the introduction of a statutory registration scheme for tourism accommodation providers.

We intend to begin this process with a call for evidence in the new year. This will assist in developing proportionate, evidence-based policy options for a subsequent consultation.

Live Events Reinsurance Scheme

Jamie Stone: [87800]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what the total value was of the cover provided to theatre events insured under the UK Live Events Reinsurance Scheme.

Julia Lopez:

As set out in its response of 8 December, the Government is unable to share commercially sensitive data related to the Live Events Reinsurance Scheme.
Voluntary Organisations: Young People

Rachael Maskell:

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking to ensure that voluntary sector organisations working with young people are adequately funded.

Rachael Maskell:

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment she has made of the (a) adequacy of funding for and (b) effectiveness of youth services.

Nigel Huddleston:

Earlier this year, DCMS conducted a Youth Review to ensure that our spending, policy and programmes meet the needs of young people. The review heard from over 6,000 young people and 120 youth organisations. The findings will be published shortly. DCMS is also committed to completing the review of the Local Authority Statutory Duty for Youth Services, previously paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

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

Youth Work

Rachael Maskell:

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether she has established a ratio for youth worker to young people to deliver safe services.

Nigel Huddleston:

There are no statutorily defined supervision ratios for youth work. Youth work is varied, with many factors regarding the group and programme influencing appropriate provision in any area.

DCMS funds the National Youth Agency to support the youth workforce to deliver safe services, through setting professional standards, qualifications and a curriculum for youth work. The funding has supported a national safeguarding hub, which provides bespoke safeguarding training, resources, tools and advice and increased the number of qualified youth workers, boosting the number of professionals able to support and safeguard young people.
The Department for Education also published guidance in October 2020 aimed at enhancing safeguarding for children attending out-of-school settings, which includes youth clubs.

**EDUCATION**

### Adoption: Young People

**Charlotte Nichols:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will make it his policy to allow (a) adoption above the age of 18 and (b) people to change who their parents are in law above the age of 18.

**Will Quince:**

The legal framework for adoption only applies to the adoption of children up to 18 years of age. While an adoption order can be granted up to a person’s 19th birthday, an application to court to adopt must be made before a person’s 18th birthday.

Adoption is about ensuring a child has a permanent family, with the adopter taking legal and parental responsibility for them. Once a child becomes an adult at 18, they become legally responsible for themselves. Furthermore, legal processes, such as the making of a will, already enable individuals to pass on inheritance or financial rights without adoption being necessary. Similarly, the ability to legally change names through deed poll means that adoption is not the only way to share a family name. The government has no plans to change the law in this area.

### Children: Refugees

**Gill Furniss:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment he has made of the impact of No Recourse to Public Funds on children's ability to access (a) the internet and (b) a computer to complete school work.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The department is investing over £520 million to support access to remote education and online social care through the Get Help with Technology programme. This programme has already provided over 1.35 million devices to enable disadvantaged children and young people to access education stay in touch with their school and peers and improve their digital skills. On 22 October, the department announced a further rollout of an additional 500,000 devices. Schools and colleges decide how to best use the devices to make sure all pupils, no matter their background, can access education.

In addition, the programme also provided support for over 110,000 families to get online through uplifts in mobile data and 4G wireless routers. This included partnering with the UK’s leading mobile operators to provide free data to help over 33,000 disadvantaged children get online and delivering over 77,000 4G wireless routers for
pupils without connection at home. The department has announced new funding to support schools and colleges in providing internet access for disadvantaged pupils whose face-to-face education is disrupted during the autumn term and enabled ordering of 4G routers for schools and colleges.

The department supports the role of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport in leading digital inclusion across government and welcomes the efforts of organisations such as the Digital Poverty Alliance in improving understanding of digital inclusion impacts, co-ordinating the wide range of existing local and national initiatives and highlighting gaps in support.

■ Educational Psychology: Higher Education

Thangam Debbonaire:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps the Government is taking with universities to increase the number of places on training courses for educational psychologists.

Thangam Debbonaire:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of introducing a centralised system that pays for bursaries for trainee educational psychologists.

Will Quince:  
Since 2020, we have increased the number of educational psychologists whose training we fund, from 160, to over 200 per academic year. This is delivered through contracts with two consortia, led by the University of Manchester, and University College London.

The department funds trainees’ bursary payments for the first year of their training course, while bursaries for the second and third years are funded by the local authorities where the trainees are deployed. We do not have plans to introduce a centralised system for this.

■ Family Hubs

Mr Barry Sheerman:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans he has to ensure that new Family Hubs are located in areas of the country affected by closures of Sure Start Centres.

Will Quince:  
At Budget, the government announced £82 million to create a network of family hubs. This is part of a wider £300 million package to transform services for parents, carers, babies and children in half of council areas across England.

It is critical that this investment benefits families most in need. We will set out more detail in due course.
Rachael Maskell:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the number of people who works for family hubs.

Will Quince:  
At Budget, the government announced £82 million to create a network of family hubs. This is part of a wider £300 million package to transform services for parents, carers, babies and children in half of council areas across England. This builds on the £39 million the government had already committed to Family Hubs to champion the model.

The department does not hold data on the total number of practitioners working in family hubs, this data is held locally.

Rachael Maskell:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to help ensure that family hubs are explained to professional groups working around the interests of the child, including on professional training courses.

Will Quince:  
At the Budget, the government announced £82 million to create a network of family hubs. This is part of a wider £300 million package to transform services for parents, carers, and children of all ages in half of council areas across England. This builds on the £39 million the government had already committed to family hubs to champion the model.

Family hubs are a way of joining up locally to improve access to services, the connections between families, professionals, services, and providers, and putting relationships at the heart of family help. Family hubs can include both physical locations and virtual offers, with a range of services for families with children of all ages, with a great Start for Life offer at their core.

The training of professionals working in family hubs is determined locally. However, engaging a range of professional groups working around the interests of the child is integral in bringing together services for children of all ages.

On 2 November 2021, the government published the family hub model framework, alongside the application guide for the £12 million family hubs transformation fund. The framework includes local authorities showing a commitment to, and an initial version of, a multi-agency workforce development plan which helps all partners in the family hub network understand and identify need early, work in a whole family way, and a plan to develop this further. Further details are available here: [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/family-hubs-transformation-fund](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/family-hubs-transformation-fund)

The National Centre for Family Hubs provides expert advice and guidance, working with local authorities to champion the family hub approach. This includes a comprehensive resource library and an implementation toolkit for family hubs providers and professional groups with an interest in family hubs. This work is supported by disseminating a regular newsletter, a series of learning events, and a community of practice, which are accessible to professional groups working around
the interests of the child who would like to find out more about family hubs. The National Centre for Family Hubs has already hosted a national launch event in October 2021 on implementing family hubs, which was open to and attended by professionals working with children and families.

More information about the National Centre for Family Hubs and their resources and events is available here: https://www.nationalcentreforfamilyhubs.org.uk/.

Languages: Education

Liz Saville Roberts:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to increase awareness in schools of (a) British Sign Language, (b) Welsh, (c) Ulster Scots, (d) Irish, (e) Shelta, (f) Cornish, (g) Polish, (h) Punjabi, (i) Urdu, (k) Arabic and (l) other languages used in the UK.

Mr Robin Walker:

Education is a devolved matter, and the response will outline the information for England only. The government is committed to increasing the number of pupils studying languages at GCSE, including languages that are reflected in modern Britain. That is why the teaching of languages is in the national curriculum for pupils from age 7 to 14, and why GCSE languages were included as part of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) suite of subjects in 2010. There are eighteen GCSEs in modern languages that are recognised in the EBacc, including Arabic, Polish, Punjabi, and Urdu.

The department also remains committed to reforming the subject content for French, German and Spanish GCSEs in order to make them more well-rounded for both teachers and pupils, focusing on the foundational building blocks of language education, namely vocabulary, phonics and grammar. We will publish this new content shortly.

In addition, the department continues to work on developing a GCSE in British Sign Language and aim to consult publicly on draft subject content next year.

It is ultimately for schools to decide which languages they wish to teach, and the department does not specify which languages should be taught or how to teach them.

Medicine: Students

Mike Amesbury:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to support medical students during the covid-19 outbreak.

Michelle Donelan:

The government wants to make sure all students, including medical students, receive the right amount of student support to complete their studies.

First time students on standard 5 or 6 year undergraduate medical and dental courses are eligible to apply for support on the same terms as other full-time students
for the first 4 years of their course (subject to previous study). This gives them access to tuition fee loan, living cost loan and targeted grants. For the fifth and subsequent years of their course they apply to the NHS for tuition support and an income assessed NHS Bursary. In addition, they can apply to Student Finance England for the non-income assessed reduced rate living cost loan for these years. Graduate entry accelerated medical programmes, as defined in the Student Support Regulations, are up to a maximum 4 years in length and attract financial support from the Department of Health and Social Care and Student Finance England.

Maximum grants and loans for living costs for undergraduate courses and grants and loans for postgraduate courses have been increased by 3.1% for the current 2021/22 academic year with a further 2.3% increase announced for 2022/23, taking the support available for the lowest income students to record levels in cash terms.

Many providers have hardship funds that students can apply to for assistance should the COVID-19 outbreak affect individuals’ finances in academic year 2021/22.

Regarding the mental health and wellbeing of students, the government is investing £2.3 billion extra funding into mental health services by the 2023/24 financial year through the NHS Long Term Plan. This is in addition to £500 million this year to address NHS waiting times for mental health services. £13 million has been allocated to support young adults (18-25 years), including university students, to help bridge gaps between children’s and adult mental health services.

Student mental health continues to be a strategic priority for the Office for Students (OfS). We have worked closely with the OfS as they have invested £9 million in projects to develop innovative practice, and we have asked them to allocate an additional £15 million in the 2021/22 academic year to help address the challenges posed by transitions into university, given demand for mental health services. Students can access support via Student Space which has been funded by up to £3 million by OfS as a response to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 outbreak.

*Schools: Sports*

**Justin Madders:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with relevant stakeholders on extending funding for the School Games Organiser network beyond March 2022.

**Justin Madders:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent discussions he has had with stakeholders on long-term funding for physical education and sport in schools.

**Justin Madders:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what his timetable is for the publication of guidance to schools on the future of the primary PE and Sport Premium funding.
Will Quince:
The department is considering arrangements for the primary PE and sport premium for the 2022/23 academic year and beyond. We are aware of the importance of providing schools with sufficient notice of future funding and will confirm the position as early as possible in the new year.

Similarly, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) are considering arrangements for the School Games Organisers programme and will confirm the position on future funding as soon as possible.

We are also working to deliver on the nearly £30 million announced in October 2021 towards improving and opening school sport facilities in England, as well as to improve the teaching of PE at primary school. We will continue to work closely with DCMS and DHSC to deliver on the aims of the School Sport and Activity Action Plan which we will be updating next year.

Special Educational Needs

Thangam Debbonaire:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of returning to a 26 weeks from the request for assessment for local authorities to finalise Education and Health Care Plans, as was the case for the previous statementing process.

Will Quince:
The education, health and care plan (EHCP) needs assessment system was introduced as part of the new special educational needs and disability (SEND) Regulations in 2014 and is different from the assessment for a statement of special educational needs that had previously been in place.

The time limit of 20 weeks was set to reflect the changed process of assessment as well as responding to the need to ensure a smoother and swifter system for determining special educational provision for children and young people.

The department is currently looking at the EHCP process as a whole as part of the SEND Review.

Thangam Debbonaire:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has plans to make non-local authority maintained schools accountable for providing support for children with Education and Health Care Plans additional to the support set out in those plans.

Will Quince:
Local authorities are statutorily responsible for securing the provision specified in the education, health and care (EHC) plans they maintain, working with their relevant health partners. Where an EHC plan names a local authority maintained school, an academy, a non-maintained special school, a maintained nursery school, a general further education college or an independent special school or specialist post-16
institution on my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education's approved list, it is statutorily required to admit the child or young person. The local authority remains responsible for securing the provision and monitoring its effectiveness, for example through the annual review process.

An EHC plan must identify the special educational needs of the child or young person, with any relevant health and social care needs, must set long-term outcomes and must specify provision to deliver them. A child or young persons EHC plan should therefore identify all the additional special educational provision which they require over and above that ordinarily available in the school.

### Special Educational Needs: Academies

**Thangam Debbonaire:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what support the Government provides for parents who wish to pursue complaints with academy schools about their provision of support for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

**Will Quince:**

Local authorities must make disagreement resolution services available to parents and young people for matters relating to special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). These services can be used for disagreements between parents or young people and schools, including academies, about the SEND provision made for a child or young person, whether they have education, health and care plans or not. Further information about these services can be found on the local authority's local offer website.

All academies must have a complaints procedure, which complies with Part 7 of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. If a complainant has completed the school's complaints procedure, or if they feel they have been prevented from doing so, they can complain to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The ESFA will consider whether an academy has followed the correct process in handling a complaint, but the ESFA cannot change an academy's decision about a complaint. Further information on the ESFA's remit in considering complaints more fully is available here: [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complain-about-an-academy/complain-about-an-academy](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complain-about-an-academy/complain-about-an-academy). Guidance on taking forward complaints about SEND support is available here: [https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school/sen-complaints](https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school/sen-complaints).

### Special Educational Needs: Buckingham

**Greg Smith:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many requests for education, health and care plans were (a) requested by parents and (b) signed off by Buckinghamshire Council for students in the Buckingham constituency in each of the last five years.
Greg Smith:
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many exclusions from school (a) in total and (b) of pupils with SEN occurred in Buckingham constituency in each of the last five years.

Will Quince:
The data on requests and issuing of education, health and care plans (EHCPs) are not collected by parliamentary constituency, or by who the requestor is for the plan. The answer provided is based on all requests made to the Buckinghamshire local authority. The number of requests received, and plans issued by Buckinghamshire local authority, are detailed below.

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<th>YEAR</th>
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<td>888</td>
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<td>940</td>
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<tr>
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<td>300</td>
<td>628</td>
<td>674</td>
<td>592</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The tables below show the number of permanent exclusions and suspensions for pupils with and without special educational needs (SEN) in Buckingham constituency between the 2015/16 and 2019/20 academic years.

**Permanent Exclusions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACADEMIC YEAR</th>
<th>ALL PUPILS</th>
<th>PUPILS WITHOUT SEN</th>
<th>SEN WITH EHCP OR STATEMENT</th>
<th>SEN WITHOUT EHCP OR STATEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019/20</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018/19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Suspensions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACADEMIC YEAR</th>
<th>ALL PUPILS</th>
<th>PUPILS WITHOUT SEN</th>
<th>SEN WITH EHCP OR STATEMENT</th>
<th>SEN WITHOUT EHCP OR STATEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019/20</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACADEMIC YEAR</td>
<td>ALL PUPILS</td>
<td>PUPILS WITHOUT SEN</td>
<td>SEN WITH EHCP OR STATEMENT</td>
<td>SEN WITHOUT EHCP OR STATEMENT</td>
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<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018/19</td>
<td>696</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Special Educational Needs: Young People**

**Thangam Debbonaire:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what additional support he has made available to local authorities following the increased age range eligible for support from 19 to 25 brought in under the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice.

**Will Quince:**

When the high needs funding block of the dedicated schools grant (DSG) was created in financial year 2013-14, it included the extension to age 25. The expected additional cost to local authorities was considered by:

- Moving all funds previously allocated to supporting young people aged 16-25 with high needs through the previous funding system, into the high needs block of the DSG; and
- Increasing the high needs block further to reflect the likely increase in numbers of young people requiring high needs funding.

£272 million was added to the DSG in the financial year 2013-14, and £390 million in the financial year 2014-15, to take account of the extended age range to 25 covered by the DSG. The difference between the two years is mainly because some of the changes post-16 started in August 2013 rather than at the start of the financial year in April 2013.

These increases in the 2013-14 and 2014-15 financial years were consolidated into the funding baseline that informed the 2015 Spending Review settlement reached between the department and HM Treasury. Local authorities’ increased spending, including on 16-25-year-olds, was also considered in subsequent baselines used for allocations of high needs funding through the DSG, and for informing overall Spending Review settlements.

The autumn 2021 Spending Review delivers an additional £4.7 billion for the core schools’ budget by financial year 2024-25. This settlement includes an additional £1.6 billion for schools and high needs in the financial year 2022-23, on top of the funding we announced in the summer of 2021, following the previous Spending Review. We
will confirm in due course how this additional funding for the financial year 2022-23, and the two subsequent years, will be allocated for schools and high needs.

In 2017 the department produced guidance for local authorities about education, health and care (EHC) plans for 19 to 25-year-olds with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). This non-statutory guidance is primarily for local authorities. It aims to support them in making fair and consistent decisions about when they should maintain an EHC plan beyond the age of 19 or issue an EHC plan to a young person aged 19 or over, in line with their duties under the Children and Families Act 2014, and as described in the SEND Code of Practice.

Students: Loans

Matt Western: [R] [87801]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, by how many percentage points undergraduate and postgraduate loans for maintenance increased in the 2020-21 academic year compared to the 2019-20 academic year.

Michelle Donelan:

Maximum grants and loans for living and other costs for undergraduate students and maximum postgraduate disabled students’ allowances were increased for the 2020/21 academic year by the Office for Budget Responsibility forecast of inflation (RPI-X) for the first quarter of the 2021 calendar year, which was 2.9%.

The same increase was applied to maximum postgraduate master’s degree loans and postgraduate doctoral degree loans for students starting courses in the 2020/21 academic year.

T-levels: Advertising

Mr Toby Perkins: [86556]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many further education colleges were advertising (a) T Levels and (b) an entry requirement for T Levels that included a need for GCSE Maths and English on their websites as of 2 December 2021.

Alex Burghart:

The information requested is not held centrally. Providers are best placed to set entry requirements for the courses they deliver, including T Levels. T Levels have been designed to support a range of attainments. We have made changes to ensure that English and mathematics attainment do not present a barrier to students successfully completing T Levels. In future, we expect that providers will take an approach to T Level entry requirements that is in line with their current approach for other level 3 provision.
Climate Change: Health

Geraint Davies: [88604]
To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions he has had with the Climate Change Committee on its UK Health Expert Advisory Group report entitled Sustainable Health Equity: Achieving a Net Zero UK before publication of the Sixth Carbon Budget in December 2020.

Jo Churchill:
We are grateful to the Climate Change Committee for the wide range of advice it provides the Government, which is discussed on an ongoing basis. The published impact assessment for the sixth carbon budget considered a wide range of relevant evidence including the advice of the Climate Change Committee, providing a solid basis for the Government’s decision on what level to set carbon budget 6 at.

Community Orchards

Hilary Benn: [86044]
To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to help support community orchards.

Rebecca Pow:
As set out in the England Trees Action Plan, the Government intends to support community orchards through proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework, making clear the expectation that trees, such as community orchards, should be incorporated into new developments. We are committed to ensuring towns and cities are greener and more climate resilient, with trees on streets, in parks and urban orchards, supported through the Urban Tree Challenge and Local Authority Treescape Funds.

Horses: Animal Welfare

Robert Halfon: [86558]
To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans he has to bring forward legislative proposals to ban the practice of horse tethering.

Robert Halfon: [86560]
To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if his Department will introduce measures to ensure that a person is not permitted to keep an animal where the only method of doing so is through the use of a tether.

Jo Churchill:
This Government is committed to upholding our high standards of animal welfare, including in relation to tethering. The welfare of all animals is protected by comprehensive and robust animal health and welfare legislation. Defra has a series of statutory animal welfare codes, which encourage high standards of husbandry.
The Animal Welfare Act 2006 (the Act) makes it an offence either to cause any captive animal unnecessary suffering or to fail to provide for the welfare needs of the animal. The Act is backed up by farmed animal welfare legislation which includes a prohibition on tethers for certain farmed species. All owners and keepers of animals must provide for the welfare needs of their animals.

Tethering can be a useful temporary management tool when it is used appropriately. The statutory Code of Practice for the Welfare of Horses, Ponies, Donkeys and Their Hybrids (the Code) provides owners and keepers with general welfare information, including a specific section on the tethering of a horse and other animals. The Code states that tethering is not a suitable method of long-term management of an animal, but may be useful as an exceptional short-term method of animal management.

If anyone is concerned about the way a horse or other animal has been tethered, they should report the matter to the relevant local authority, the RSPCA or World Horse Welfare who can investigate. If a horse or other animal is found not to be tethered appropriately, it could lead to a prosecution under the 2006 Act.

Defra considers that the current legislation and guidance provide the right safeguards and powers in respect of animal tethering. However, we will continue to engage with key stakeholders to see if more can be done to promote best practice among horse owners and to optimise partnership working to tackle the issue of inappropriate horse tethering. With the current Animal (Penalty Notice) Bill passing through the parliamentary process we are keen to work with key stakeholders to consider if the use of financial penalty notices will help redirect offenders away from the inappropriate use of tethering.

### Large goods vehicle drivers: Migrant workers

**Darren Jones:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many of the 10,500 temporary visas the Government has offered to hauliers and food poultry workers.

**Victoria Prentis:**

Under an emergency temporary visa scheme agreed with the Home Office this autumn 5500 visas for poultry workers and 4700 visas for HGV drivers delivering food were made available ahead of Christmas 2021. The scheme for poultry workers closed on 15 November 2021 and the scheme for food sector HGV drivers closed on 1 December 2021.

Details of the numbers of temporary work visas granted for poultry workers and 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 also stood up at pace an emergency visa scheme 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. The arrangement closed on 15 October 2021.
The rapid deployment of this arrangement necessitated those applications for leave to enter be considered at the border, and as a result this group is not discretely captured within Home Office data.

These were emergency, temporary visa scheme measures. We are looking at ways to help both the poultry sector and road haulage sectors recruit more domestic labour to support the overall aim of reducing the sector's dependency on seasonal migrant labour.

### Sheep Meat: Exports

**Mr Gregory Campbell:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what support the Government is providing to the UK lamb sector in preparation for January 2022 when exports to the US can resume.

**Victoria Prentis:**

I am sure the whole House will join me in welcoming the great news that the US market is opening its doors to UK lamb again after over two decades of restrictions. We will support the UK lamb sector by working with colleagues in the Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board and the UK Export Certification Partnership to promote the benefits of UK lamb in the USA.

Now that the US doors are open, we will also continue to work with counterparts in the USA to ensure the necessary technical requirements are in place for our lamb exports to happen. Similarly, we will support food business operators here in the UK as they make their preparations for the resumption of UK lamb exports, which I very much look forward to occurring in 2022.

### Solid Fuels

**Geraint Davies:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will publish the latest estimate of the proportion of the UK's primary emissions of fine particulate matter that came from burning wood and coal in domestic open fires and solid fuel stoves in 2019.

**Jo Churchill:**

Emissions of key air pollutants are compiled and reported by Defra on an annual basis through the National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (NAEI). The latest data for 2019 can be found at [https://naei.beis.gov.uk/data/](https://naei.beis.gov.uk/data/).

### Trapping

**Henry Smith:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of snare traps; and if he will make a statement.
Rebecca Pow:
While some people consider snares to be an inhumane and unnecessary means of trapping wild animals, others maintain they are an essential tool in controlling foxes and rabbits.

There is a code of practice for the use of snares to control foxes in England which sets out clear principles for the legal and humane use of snares, using evidence from snare-use research to improve their deployment and design. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 also prohibits the use of self-locking snares and the setting of any type of snare in places where they are likely to catch certain non-target animals such as badgers. It also requires snares to be inspected on a daily basis.

However, when used improperly, snares can cause immense suffering to both target and non-target animals including pet cats and dogs. The use of snares is therefore an issue we are looking at closely as part of our continued drive to maintain the highest animal welfare standards in the world.

Through the Government’s Animal Action for Welfare Plan, published in May of this year, we are looking at whether changes need to be made to reflect concerns raised.

Wood-burning Stoves: Air Pollution
Geraint Davies:
To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what research the Government has commissioned in the last five years to estimate the percentage domestic wood burning contributes to primary emissions of fine particulate matter.

Jo Churchill:
Current estimates of the contribution of domestic burning to PM$_{2.5}$ emissions are documented in the National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory, including the contribution of domestic wood burning.

Within the last five years, the Government has commissioned several research studies to investigate the contribution of wood burning to PM$_{2.5}$ concentrations. We have also commissioned studies to analyse data from our air quality monitoring networks (https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/library/reports?report_id=953).

In 2018, we commissioned a large-scale survey to monitor trends in domestic burning and to better understand the types and quantities of fuels being used (https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/library/reports?report_id=1014). This data has helped inform our estimates of solid fuel use in the UK.

Most recently we have commissioned a £1.6 million research project to investigate the emissions associated with different solids fuels. This will lead to improved estimates of the contribution that domestic burning makes to PM$_{2.5}$ emissions. We also published last week an invitation to tender to assess the impact of the Domestic Solid Fuels Regulations 2020 and investigate trends in domestic burning practices.

All this work provides vital evidence needed to inform policies on domestic burning and to meet the commitments set out in the Clean Air Strategy.
FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

Colombia: Police Brutality

Fabian Hamilton:

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the Colombian government’s progress in investigating alleged police killings during protests in that country in September 2020.

Fabian Hamilton:

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the Colombian government’s progress in investigating alleged police killings of protesters during protests in that country in April and May 2021.

Wendy Morton:

The British Government remains concerned about reports of human rights violations in Colombia during recent protests. We are clear that we support the right of all Colombians to protest peacefully, and that the right to peaceful assembly and association should be guaranteed.

We look to the Colombian authorities to investigate fully any reports on excessive use of force against protestors, and take appropriate action against those responsible. Security services must be held accountable for their actions, and any complaints thoroughly investigated.

Conflict Prevention

Mr David Jones:

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what the timetable is for the publication of the Government’s updated approach to conflict.

Vicky Ford:

In line with the commitments in the Integrated Review, the conflict centre in the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) is working with a range of partners to consider and develop our approach to conflict. We are assessing evidence for what works and how to harness the full range of HMG capabilities to increase our impact in preventing, managing and resolving conflict in priority regions. A core part of the conflict centre’s role will be to draw on expertise from across Her Majesty’s Government (HMG) and beyond to support the UK’s work on conflict, including from civil society, academia, bilateral partners, multilateral organisations and the private sector.

We will set out more detail on the FCDO’s approach to conflict and how we are delivering on the IR commitments in the New Year.
France: Football

Mr Gregory Campbell:  [88652]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will make representations to his French counterpart on reversing the French authorities' decision announced on 6 December 2021 before a Europa League football game in Lyon on 9 December 2021 to overturn permission for UK citizens who had booked to travel to the game.

Wendy Morton:

Officials at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office have been following the arrangements for this event. I am pleased that confusion over the tickets allocated to away fans has now been resolved. Fans travelling to the game should follow local rules, and consult FCDO travel advice for France.

Israel: Palestinians

Sarah Champion:  [86104]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many written parliamentary questions her Department has answered on Israel/Palestine since 1 January 2021; and in how many cases the same pro forma response was applied to two or more questions from the same or different hon. Members.

James Cleverly:

Since 1 January 2021 to date, the FCDO has responded to 635 written Parliamentary Questions (PQs) related to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs). Information on which PQs received similar answers is not readily available and can only be obtained at disproportionate cost. All PQs are answered accurately and truthfully in accordance with Ministers’ obligations to Parliament, as set out in the Ministerial Code.

Kurds: Turkey

Tommy Sheppard:  [88763]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of the implications for UK Government obligations to the people of Kurdistan of the Treaties of Sèvres and Lausanne.

James Cleverly:

We have not made such an assessment. We support the territorial integrity of all countries in the region covered by the two treaties, and encourage the governments concerned to safeguard the rights of all their citizens, regardless of ethnicity. We continue to support a thriving Kurdistan Region of Iraq within a peaceful, prosperous Iraq.
Pakistan: Ahmadiyya

Hilary Benn:
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the human rights situation of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community in Pakistan.

James Cleverly:
The UK Government is monitoring the issue of discrimination and violence against the Ahmadiyya Muslim community and religious minorities in Pakistan closely. Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister for South Asia and the Minister responsible for Human Rights, has spoken out publicly to strongly condemn targeted killings of Ahmadi Muslims in Pakistan, including the murder of Kamran Ahmad in Peshawar on 9 November. Lord Ahmad discussed the need to promote respect for all religions when he met the Governor of Punjab, Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar, on 28 November. During his visit to Pakistan on 22 and 23 June, Lord Ahmad raised the treatment of minorities, including Ahmadi Muslims, with Prime Minister Imran Khan, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, and Federal Minister of Human Rights Shireen Mazari. He also raised the use of cybercrime laws against members of the Ahmadi community with Advisor to the Prime Minister on Accountability and Interior, Shahzad Akbar. In addition to his meetings with the Government of Pakistan, Lord Ahmad met with representatives of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community and took part in an interfaith roundtable to better understand the concerns of Pakistan's minorities. Pakistan is one of the FCDO's human rights priority countries and Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) is an integral part of our engagement on human rights. In July 2022 the UK will host an international Ministerial Conference to Advance FoRB in London.

Poland: Borders

Hywel Williams:
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions she has had with her Polish counterpart on legislation which will enable the Polish Government to limit access to the border zone for journalists and NGOs; and if she will make representations to the Polish Government on the importance of ensuring that aid agencies are able to reach people in need.

Wendy Morton:
The Foreign Secretary spoke with Polish Foreign Minister Zbigniew Rau on 16 November to express the UK's solidarity with Poland regarding the use of desperate migrants by the Lukashenko regime as pawns to undermine regional security. As President, the UK led a G7 statement on 18 November condemning the Belarusian regime for its orchestration of irregular migration and called for immediate and unhindered access for international organisations to provide humanitarian assistance. We have made clear to the Belarusian authorities bilaterally, including through their Ambassador to the UK, that this harmful, aggressive and exploitative behaviour must
The UK will continue supporting humanitarian partners through political advocacy and contributions to the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund.

**Xinjiang: Export Controls**

**Kirsten Oswald:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the oral statement of her predecessor on 12 January 2021 on Xinjiang: Forced Labour, what progress has been made on the urgent review of export controls as they apply, specifically geographically, to the situation in Xinjiang; and whether changes have been introduced as a result of that review.

**Amanda Milling:**

On 8 December the Secretary of State for International Trade informed Parliament of a package of measures to update the UK's export control regime. This included an enhancement to the military end-use control that will allow HM Government to better address threats to national security, international peace and security, and human rights arising from the use of otherwise non-controlled items. The changes will also address a long-standing inconsistency within the UK's export control regime by adding China to the list of destinations subject to military end-use controls. Taken together, these changes will 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.

**HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**

**Cervical Cancer: Screening**

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential benefits of offering smear tests to patients who request them following a GP or nurse's approval.

**Maria Caulfield:**

[Holding answer 20 October 2021]: NHS screening programmes offer tests to people who appear healthy or who are symptom-free in order to assess a person’s risk of developing a certain disease or to detect disease at an earlier, more easily treatable stage. The offer of cervical screening is to determine an individual's risk of developing cancer and is not a test for cancer. Therefore, it is not appropriate for general practitioners (GPs) or nurses to refer individuals with symptoms to the NHS Cervical Screening Programme.

Women with symptoms should consult their GP who can advise on further diagnostic testing. The Department has published guidance for GPs on the management of young women presenting with symptoms, which is available at the following link:

**Chickenpox: Vaccination**

**Dr Philippa Whitford:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Committee on Immunisation and Vaccinations (JCVI) on 22 June 2021, what the expected timeframe is for the JCVI to have the available modelling capacity to consider varicella.

**Dr Philippa Whitford:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Committee on Immunisation and Vaccinations (JCVI) on 22 June 2021, when the modelling QALY meeting to discuss varicella is scheduled to take place.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) relies on modelling work from a variety of sources to support its advice, including the UK Health Security Agency and academic groups.

Varicella is a ‘business as usual’ item that the JCVI will consider in the short to medium term. However, as modelling capacity is finite and resources are supporting the COVID-19 pandemic response, the JCVI are unable to provide an expected timeframe. The modelling Quality-Adjusted Life Year meeting to discuss varicella will be scheduled once evidence becomes available.

**Hepatitis: Vaccination**

**Jim Shannon:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people were vaccinated against the hepatitis D virus in the last three years.

**Maria Caulfield:**

There is no licensed vaccine for hepatitis D and therefore the United Kingdom does not have a hepatitis D vaccination programme. Hepatitis D virus can only infect people who have hepatitis B, for which there is an immunisation programme which will prevent hepatitis D infection.

**Long Covid: Clinics**

**Ellie Reeves:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what further steps he will take to ensure long covid clinics can deal effectively with caseloads.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The Department has invested over £50 million in dedicated research to improve the understanding, diagnosis and treatment of the long term effects of COVID-19. The research includes projects focused on service evaluation, such as the LOCOMOTION
project which aims to establish a ‘gold standard’ of care which can be shared in England and the rest of the United Kingdom drawing from the experiences of current patients and National Health Service professionals.

Post-COVID-19 assessment services are operated by NHS England and NHS Improvement. In July 2021, NHS England and NHS Improvement confirmed an additional £100 million investment in these services with the total NHS funding in England of £134 million. NHS England and NHS Improvement have developed an assurance process to address the regional variation in access to services in a streamlined process, identifying and providing bespoke support to systems.

### MMR Vaccine

**Dr Philippa Whitford:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the minutes of the Joint Committee on Immunisation and Vaccinations meeting on 22 June 2021, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of delivering the second dose of the MMR vaccine at 18 months; and if he will make a statement.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation is currently considering whether there is sufficient evidence to recommend delivering the second dose of the MMR vaccine at 18 months. We will be guided by their advice.

**Justin Madders:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the minutes of the Joint Committee on Immunisation and Vaccinations meeting on 22 June 2021, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of delivering the second dose of the MMR vaccine at 18 months.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation is currently considering whether there is sufficient evidence to recommend delivering the second dose of the MMR vaccine at 18 months. The Government will be guided by their advice.

### NHS England: Correspondence

**Rosie Cooper:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will ask the Chief Executive of NHS England to respond to the letter dated 1 October 2021 from the hon. Member for West Lancashire, regarding bowel cancer screening, ref ZA56476.

**Edward Argar:**

NHS England and NHS Improvement have advised that they will respond to the hon. Member’s letter as soon as possible.
Nurses

Mike Amesbury: To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of (a) trends in the level of the workload facing NHS nursing staff and (b) the adequacy of the size of the workforce to meet that workload.

Edward Argar: National Health Service employers keep staff workload under continual review and the Care Quality Commission assess staffing levels as part of their regulation and oversight responsibilities. NHS England and NHS Improvement conduct regular surveys and monitor workload related data sources on staff experience. The Department also discusses workload with trade unions and employers in the National Social Partnership Forum. NHS England and NHS Improvement have used the NHS People Plan to put in place a wide range of measures to support staff throughout this demanding period. We continue to invest in the NHS workforce and we have commissioned Health Education England to develop the long term strategic framework to ensure that the NHS has the staff it needs.

Ophthalmic Services: National Clinical Directors

Jim Shannon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when a clinical director for eye care will be appointed by the NHS.

Peter Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress he has made on appointing a national clinical director for eye services in England.

Maria Caulfield: NHS England and NHS Improvement are currently developing a role description for a National Clinical Director for Eye Care. The appointment will be subject to the recruitment process, planned to commence in the new year.

Strokes: Health Services

Sir Robert Neill: To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, for what reason there is no policy lead for stroke within his Department; and if he will appoint that role.

Maria Caulfield: The Department's NHS Quality, Safety and Investigations Directorate is responsible for the oversight of policy related to strokes.
Vaccination: Children

Justin Madders:
To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the minutes of the Joint Committee on Immunisation and Vaccinations (JCVI) meeting on 22 June 2021, what assessment his Department has made of the resource implications for the NHS of an additional childhood immunisation visit at 18 months.

Maria Caulfield:
No assessment has been made. Should the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation make a recommendation to add a childhood immunisation visit at 18 months, the Department and the UK Health Security Agency will work with NHS England and NHS Improvement to understand the operational and resource implications.

Vaccine Damage Payment Scheme

Sir Christopher Chope:
To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to his oral contribution of 6 December 2021, Official Report, column 70, when the review of the Vaccine Damage Payment Scheme began; when that review is planned to conclude; and what assessment he has made of the role of that scheme in promoting confidence in vaccines.

Maria Caulfield:
The NHS Business Services Authority began operating the Vaccine Damage Payment Scheme (VDPS) from 1 November 2021. The NHS Business Services Authority have since focussed on the safe transfer of the scheme and recruiting and training additional staff to undertake the administration of VDPS claims. It will review the Scheme’s processes to improve claimants’ experiences through increasing personalised engagement, reducing response times and providing general support. The NHS Business Services Authority will also work with the Department on service improvements and further digitalisation, including an online claim form to increase accessibility. This will allow the modernisation of the VDPS and continue to promote confidence in vaccines.

HOME OFFICE

Asylum: Deportation

Catherine West:
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many notices of intent have been issued to asylum claimants informing them that their cases are being considered for inadmissibility action and how many asylum claimants in receipt of such notices have been returned to safe third countries in the past year.
Kevin Foster:
The Home Office publishes data on asylum in the 'Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release'. Data on inadmissibility are published in tables Asy_09a and Asy_09b of the 'summary tables'. The latest data covers up to the end of September 2021.
Information on how to use the dataset can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook.

Asylum: Interpreters and Translation Services

Catherine West:
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if all refugees who seek asylum in England have access to (a) interpreters and (b) translators.

Kevin Foster:
The Home Office aims to provide interpreter and translation services for refugees and asylum seekers at public expense whenever and wherever necessary.
Interpreters/translators engaged are required to operate to a high standard on a range of protection-based and human rights topics including (though not limited to) religious conversion, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), sexuality and gender-based claims, all types and forms of persecution, medical (physical and mental health) and political activity.
The Home Office has a proud, consistent, and sustained history of supplying interpreters and translators on demand to meet customer needs. Operational delivery over the last five years has been consistently above weekly service level agreements.
The Home Office Interpreter Language Services Unit (ILSU) holds overall responsibility for the delivery of interpreting and translation services on behalf of the Home Office. ILSU recruits and maintains a database of, up to date, 1,759 independent freelance interpreters as well as having oversight of commercially procured language services to supplement the overall services. ILSU arranges appointments, manages invoices and payments and has a quality assurance role to ensure reliability and the consistently high level of interpretation and translation.
ILSU also works with other commercial providers and public sector bodies which provide interpreters and linguists (as well as the National Register of Public Service Interpreters) to ensure the best sector-wide standards are applied.

Asylum: Standards

Catherine West:
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to reintroduce a service standard for processing asylum claims, following the Department's response to the Independent Inspector's recommendation in November 2021.

Kevin Foster:
As noted in the formal response, ‘an inspection of asylum casework’ (August 2020 to May 2021), published 18 November 2021, The Home Office have accepted the recommendation to re-introduce a published service standard.
There are changes being brought about by the New Plan for Immigration which impact on the way asylum claims are handled and these will be addressed as part of the process to develop a service standard.

Drugs: Misuse

Jim Shannon:

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to reduce the use of GHB drugs in the UK.

Kit Malthouse:

GHB (gamma-Hydroxybutyric acid) is controlled under Class C of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and scheduled under Schedule 2 of the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001 (the 2001 Regulations). Two related substances, gamma-butyrolactone (GBL) and 1,4-butanediol (1,4-BD) are also controlled under Class C of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

In March 2021, following recommendations by the independent Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD), the Home Secretary announced the tightening of restrictions around the drugs GHB, GBL and 1,4-BD. In line with the ACMD’s advice, these drugs will, subject to Parliamentary approval, be moved from Class C to Class B under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

The maximum penalty for the possession of a Class C drug is up to 2 years in prison, an unlimited fine, or both. The maximum penalty for the possession of a Class B drug is 5 years in prison, an unlimited fine, or both. In addition, the Home Secretary agreed to the ACMD’s recommendation to place GBL and 1,4-BD in Schedule 1 to the 2001 Regulations and remove the exemption that makes it lawful to import, export, produce, supply, offer to supply or possess GBL and 1,4-BD in certain circumstances, so that those who possess them for legitimate industrial purposes will require a licence to do so. The Government intends to bring forward legislation shortly.

Human Trafficking: English Channel

Feryal Clark:

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 22 November 2021 to Question 76797 on Human Trafficking: English Channel, what recent assessment she has made of the contribution of safe routes for people seeking asylum in tackling crossings facilitated by criminal gangs.

Kevin Foster:

The UK has a long history of supporting those in need of protection. Our resettlement schemes have provided safe and legal routes for tens of thousands of people to start new lives in the UK.

So far this year, we have resettled over 9,700 people at risk through the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy, UK Resettlement Scheme, Community
Sponsorship and Mandate Resettlement Schemes in addition to more than 25,000 people since 2015.

The Hong Kong British National (Overseas) route has also provided a route to British Citizenship for over 76,000 people since it opened on 31 January. When the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme opens, it will see up to 20,000 people at risk resettled to the UK, with 5,000 arriving in the first year.

Those seeking asylum should claim in the first safe country – this is the fastest route to safety. There is no need to make the dangerous journey across the English Channel from European nations which are safe and democratic, with fully functioning asylum systems.

Members: Correspondence

Mr Nicholas Brown: [88646]
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to correspondence dated 8 September 2021 from the Rt Hon. Member for Newcastle upon Tyne East.

Kevin Foster:  
The correspondence from the Rt Hon. Member of 8 September was not received by the Home Secretary or the Home Office, which has led to a delay in response. A copy of the Rt Hon. Member’s correspondence has now been retrieved from his office, prioritised for response and I will respond shortly.

Migrants: Key Workers

Gill Furniss: [88812]
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent estimate she has made of the number of key workers with no recourse to public funds.

Kevin Foster:  
The Home Office’s Chief Statistician wrote to the Office for Statistics Regulation last July to explain why the Home Office does not provide a breakdown or overall figure for the total number of people currently in the UK to whom the NRPF condition applies. His letter can be found at: https://osr.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/correspondence/response-from-daniel-shaw-to-ed-humpherson-parliamentary-question-response/.

Prime Minister: Merseyside Police

Allan Dorans: [88828]
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to Section 90 Police Act 1996, who authorised the Prime Minister’s possession and wearing of articles of police uniform when appearing in a televised interview on 6 December 2021.
Kit Malthouse:
The Prime Minister accompanied Merseyside Police on 6 December to watch their County Lines enforcement work in action.

His attendance and participation was agreed with Merseyside Police, who ensured that clothing and protective equipment, to reflect the operational conditions, was provided.

Refugees: Afghanistan

Dan Jarvis:
[88730]
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Afghan nationals who were evacuated under Operation Pitting will form part of the 5,000 target set for the first year of the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme.

Dan Jarvis:
[88731]
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many places remain on the first round of the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme as of 7 December 2021.

Victoria Atkins:
We are working across Government and with partners such as UNHCR to design and open the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme amidst a complex and changing picture.

The first to be resettled through this scheme will be some of those who arrived in the UK under the evacuation programme, which included individuals who were considered to be at particular risk.

We are committed to working in step with the international community to get this right, and we will set out more details soon.

Alex Sobel:
[88822]
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 2 December 2021 to Question 81016 on Refugees: Afghanistan, what criteria her Department will use to identify eligible people to be prioritised and referred for resettlement to the UK.

Alex Sobel:
[88823]
To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the proposed number of 20,000 people for the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme will include those already evacuated to the UK.

Victoria Atkins:
The first to be resettled through the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) will be some of those who arrived in the UK under the evacuation programme, which included individuals who were considered to be at particular risk.

We are working across Government and with partners such as UNHCR to design and open the ACRS amidst a complex and changing picture. We are committed to
working in step with the international community to get this right, and we will set out more details soon.

Information on the eligibility, prioritisation and referral of people for the ACRS is set out in the policy statement published on gov.uk on 13 September, available at


### Refugees: Housing

**Catherine West:**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department has taken to ensure that all women and children refugees are placed in appropriate accommodation; and whether female refugees are offered female-only accommodation.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Home Office provides accommodation and other support to asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute.

Women with children who are in receipt of support are not required to share sleeping quarters with unrelated individuals of the opposite sex, but may depending on the circumstances be placed in accommodation facilities used to house such individuals.

Women and children who are granted refugee status in UK become eligible for mainstream welfare services, including housing assistance from the relevant local authority.

### Undocumented Migrants: Falkland Islands

**Andrew Rosindell:**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of sending migrants that have entered the UK illegally to the Falklands for processing of their asylum claims.

**Andrew Rosindell:**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has made an assessment of the potential effect of sending illegal migrants from the UK to the Falkland Islands on the local population of that island.

**Tom Pursglove:**

We have been clear we are committed to working closely with international partners as we work to fix our broken asylum system. The Government will not give a running commentary on the progress of talks or who we are in talks with.

Changes in the Nationality and Borders Bill support our future intention to process asylum claims overseas. This, alongside the suite of measures within the Bill, seeks to disincentivise people from making dangerous journeys across Europe to the UK and encourage people to claim asylum in the first safe country they reach. That is the fastest route to safety.
We will, of course, ensure that all removals are compliant with our international obligations. 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.

West Midlands Police: Staff

Colleen Fletcher: [88739]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many (a) police officers and (b) PCSOs West Midland Police Force had in each year since 2010.

Kit Malthouse:


Information on the number of police officers and PCSOs by Police Force Area as at the 31st March each year can be found in the Police Workforce open data table published at: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-open-data-tables

While the ‘Police workforce, England and Wales’ statistical bulletin remains the key measure of the size of the police workforce, as part of the Police Officer Uplift Programme, the Home Office also publishes a quarterly update on the number of officers (headcount terms only) in England and Wales, also broken down by Police Force Area, available here: Police Officer uplift statistics - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Agricultural Products: Trade Agreements

Jim Shannon: [83378]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps she is taking to ensure that UK farmers’ produce is protected in trade deals negotiated with other countries around the world.

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.
Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership: Dorset

Chris Loder: 84480

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of the UK's membership of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership on (a) the local economy and (b) job creation in Dorset.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:
Accession could see 99.9% of British exports being eligible for tariff-free trade with members of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP/TPP-11). £1.8bn worth of goods were exported to CPTPP countries by over 1,300 businesses in the South West of England last year.

HM Government published a scoping assessment in June 2021 that showed accession could result in a gross value added benefit to the South West of England of £106m, and increase real wages across the United Kingdom by £800m in the long run, compared to 2019 levels.

Coronavirus: Vaccination

Dan Carden: 87815

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether the Government’s contract for covid-19 vaccines with Pfizer includes an Investor State Dispute Settlement clause.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:
The Department for International Trade is not responsible for the United Kingdom’s COVID-19 vaccination programme.

Iron and Steel: USA

Stephen Kinnock: 86106

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether the Northern Ireland protocol has been referenced in discussions between UK and US Government ministers and officials on the prospect of the exemption of UK steel companies from section 232 tariffs.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:
The Northern Ireland Protocol and Section 232 tariffs are two entirely separate issues. We do not see any connection between these particular issues and will not perpetuate such false narratives.

Trade Agreements: Australia and New Zealand

Tim Farron: 83295

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether the Government has carried out an impact assessment on the potential effect of free trade agreements with (a) Australia and (b) New Zealand on the UK farming sector, by region.
Tim Farron:  
To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many Ministers in her Department have visited Shropshire in the last 12 months to discuss the impact of trade agreements, including on local farming communities.

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 West Midlands is expected to be £56 million higher in the long run (in 2017 terms).

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. 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.

Ministers regularly visit farmers across Britain to discuss the opportunities presented by free trade agreements and the export support that the Department for International Trade can provide. For instance, the then Secretary of State for International Trade visited Shropshire in July. We continue to support farming and food businesses to seize global export opportunities through our Export Support Service, our online digital platform at GREAT.GOV.UK, and through our people dedicated to agriculture, food and drink across the United Kingdom and our global network.

JUSTICE

Magistrates: Recruitment

Alex Cunningham:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, in the context of magistrate recruitment for 2022, whether the (a) recruitment application form, (b) assessment framework, (c) situational judgment test and (d) interview format have been assessed to ensure that they do not adversely impact groups under-represented in the magistracy.

Alex Cunningham:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, in the context of magistrate recruitment for 2022, whether his Department has recruitment targets for groups under-represented in the magistracy, including from (a) black and ethnic minority communities and (b) younger people.

Alex Cunningham:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, in the context of magistrate recruitment in 2022, what plans his Department has to evaluate the new approach to recruitment.
Alex Cunningham:
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will publish (a) his Department's recruitment strategy for the planned magistrates' recruitment drive in 2022 and (b) any independent assessments of or research on the recruitment tools and materials in that strategy.

James Cartlidge:
The recruitment of new and diverse magistrates is the Government's top priority for the magistracy. A new recruitment process has been designed with professional occupational psychologists to make applying to the magistracy more accessible by modernising, streamlining and digitalising the process. Due diligence has been paid to the Public Sector Equality Duty and careful consideration has been given to how to prevent and mitigate any adverse impacts on underrepresented groups at each stage of the recruitment process. We will be announcing the plans, process and materials that will be used in due course.

The new recruitment process will be supported by an inclusive marketing campaign to raise the profile of the magistracy and encourage applications, particularly from underrepresented groups. At present, we do not have specific recruitment targets developed for under-represented groups in the magistracy. However, the new Applicant Tracking System (ATS), which will host all applications, will allow the MoJ to monitor the number and diversity of applicants and how they fare in the process. This data will be used alongside feedback from candidates, Advisory Committees and support staff to evaluate the new recruitment process.

Prisoners' Release: Temporary Accommodation

Sarah Olney:
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to support prison leavers into permanent safe and secure housing beyond the twelve weeks of accommodation provided by his Department's temporary accommodation service.

Sarah Olney:
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many women have used his Department's temporary accommodation service for prison leavers since its implementation in summer 2021; and what specific measures his Department has put in place to reflect the accommodation needs of women.

Sarah Olney:
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when he plans to roll out the temporary accommodation service for prison leavers to all probation regions in England and Wales.

Kit Malthouse:
As part of our commitment to eliminate rough sleeping, we are working across Government, with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), the Welsh Government and other Government Departments, to address the barriers offenders face in securing suitable accommodation.
Our Prisons White Paper sets out our vision that no-one subject to probation supervision is released from prison homeless. By 2024-25 we will spend £200 million a year to reduce reoffending, including improving prison leavers’ access to accommodation. This includes expanding our new Community Accommodation Service (CAS), which currently provides up to twelve weeks temporary housing in five regions, to support the thousands of people in England and Wales who leave prison each year without accommodation. The provision will also support those transitioning down from Approved Premises or Bail Accommodation and Support Services.

The CAS service takes account of the needs of women, including those with complex needs, with accommodation provision dedicated to single gender usage as required. Community Probation Practitioners, working together with local partners, are responsible for ensuring that vulnerable female prison leavers receive appropriate support and are provided with housing beyond the 12 weeks emergency accommodation.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) announced their Accommodation for Ex-Offenders (AfEO) scheme on 28 July 2021. The scheme has been developed, together with CAS, to provide a pathway for prison leavers from prison into their own private rented sector accommodation. No public targets have been set for the AfEO scheme, but local authorities will be providing monitoring information to DLUHC alongside wider monitoring information on homelessness and rough sleeping. Overall, £13 million has been allocated to 87 schemes across 145 local authorities.

Accommodation circumstances for offenders are reported annually as official statistics. Data for the period 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 will be published in July 2022 in the Community Performance Annual report. In line with the Code of Practice for Statistics, access to these statistics before their public release is limited to those involved in the production of the statistics and the preparation of the release, and for quality assurance and operational purposes.

LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

- Building Safety Fund

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps his Department is taking to ensure decisions on Building Safety Fund applications are communicated in a timely manner to (a) building owners and (b) occupants.

Christopher Pincher:

The Department is progressing registrations to the Building Safety Fund as quickly as possible. Progress is communicated to registrants who we expect will ensure that their leaseholders and residents are kept fully informed. It remains the responsibility of the building owner or managing agent to keep leaseholders and residents updated about the progress of the building’s application to the Building Safety Fund.
Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what the average response time is for Building Safety Fund applications; and whether his Department has a target response time for applications to that fund.

Christopher Pincher:  
The Government acknowledges that remediation of unsafe cladding is complex and each individual project will vary in their journey through the funding application process. Information on the Building Safety Fund application process can be found in the guidance available at: www.gov.uk/guidance/remediation-of-non-acm-buildings. The latest Building Safety Fund statistics, showing registration and application progress, are available at: www.gov.uk/guidance/remediation-of-non-acm-buildings#building-safety-fund-registration-statistics

It is the responsibility of the applicant to submit correctly completed applications as soon as possible. The quicker an applicant submits their application, the quicker their application will be processed. A poorly completed full application will result in delays.

Buildings: Insulation

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:
To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether his Department has made or commissioned an assessment of the mental health impact on leaseholders of remediation costs for non-compliant cladding.

Christopher Pincher:  
The Department has regular engagement with leaseholder groups and recognises the impact on residents living in high-rise buildings with unsafe cladding. That is why the Government is investing over £5 billion to remediate high rise residential buildings with unsafe cladding.

Mental health is one of the Government’s top priorities and we are working across Government to ensure that all people, regardless of their residential situation, get the help and support they need. Where residents of buildings fitted with unsafe cladding need mental health support, they should make contact with their GP to discuss these issues so they may be referred to mental health services as appropriate.

Community Ownership Fund

Sir Charles Walker:
To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, when the December 2021 round of the Community Ownership Fund will open for bids; and if he will make a statement.

Neil O’Brien:  
[Holding answer 8 December 2021]: 21 successful projects have been announced in the first round of the Community Ownership Fund, supporting communities across the United Kingdom to take ownership of assets and amenities at risk of closure.
We are currently conducting a review of the outcomes of the first round of the Fund. Information on the opening of the next round will be published in the prospectus on GOV.UK shortly.

**First Time Buyers: Stamp Duty Land Tax**

*Sam Tarry: [86193]*

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps the Government will take to help first time buyers following the end of the stamp duty holiday.

*Christopher Pincher:*

The Government is committed to helping make homeownership a reality, and operates a range of relevant schemes which make home ownership more affordable. For example, our new First Homes programme offers discounts of at least 30% to first time buyers and our Help to Buy scheme and Shared Ownership also offer routes into home ownership.

In 2017, the Government permanently increased the price at which a property becomes liable to Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT) to £300,000 for first time buyers. Over 90% of first-time buyers who pay SDLT will benefit and over 70% of first-time buyers will pay no SDLT.

**Housing: Coventry**

*Colleen Fletcher: [88736]*

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how many new home builds have been (a) started and (b) completed in (i) Coventry North East constituency and (ii) Coventry in each of the last five years; and what recent assessment his Department has made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on the rate of home building in those areas.

*Christopher Pincher:*

Statistics on new build housing starts and completions in each local authority area, including Coventry, are published every quarter by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities at the following link [https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-house-building](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-house-building).

We supported the industry throughout the pandemic by enabling construction sites to remain open and operate safely in line with public guidance. This meant house builders were able to deliver over 216,000 homes in England in 2020/21, well above the 186,500 forecasted for the UK as a whole by the OBR in November last year. This shows great resilience despite the huge challenges faced.

West Midlands Combined Authority were awarded £108 million from the £400 million Brownfield Housing Fund, empowering and supporting the Mayor to bring forward the redevelopment of brownfield sites across the region.
Property Development: York

Rachael Maskell:

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what involvement the York community will have in the selection of a developer for the York Central development.

Christopher Pincher:

York Central is being brought forward by Homes England and Network Rail as the major landowners, building on their Strategic Partnership with the City of York Council and the National Railway Museum.

The Partnership has jointly secured outline planning permission and the landowners now aim to deliver the first phase of substantial infrastructure works, including new roads, pedestrian links, a bridge and a new public park. The first phase of housing delivery is expected to commence in 2023/2024 and a developer partner will be procured in due course. Further information will be shared with stakeholders by Spring 2022.

Social Rented Housing: Overcrowding

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his policies on social housing of the finding by Shelter on increases in the number of people living in overcrowded conditions in social housing in the last five years, published on 28 July 2021.

Eddie Hughes:

By law, local authorities must ensure that overcrowded households in social housing who are seeking a transfer are given 'reasonable preference' (overall priority). Statutory guidance encourages local authorities to consider giving 'additional preference' (high priority') to families in severe overcrowding which poses a serious health hazard. The social housing waiting list in England has decreased by 37 per cent since 2012.

Our £11.5 billion Affordable Homes Programme will deliver up to 180,000 affordable homes, should economic conditions allow. The provision of affordable housing is a key element of the Government's plan to end the housing crisis and tackle overcrowding.

Supported Housing: Older People

Barbara Keeley:

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps his Department plans to take to increase the supply of specialist housing for older people, including integrated retirement communities, following the commitments made by the Government in the Adult Social Care Reform white paper.
Barbara Keeley:
To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps his Department plans to take to introduce sector-specific regulation and legislation for housing-with-care.

Barbara Keeley:
To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether he plans to implement a cross-Government task force on housing for older people following the commitments made by the Government on specialist housing in the Adult Social Care Reform white paper.

Christopher Pincher:
This Government is committed to further improving the diversity of housing options available to older people. We believe that offering older and more vulnerable people a better choice of accommodation to suit their changing needs can help them to live independently and feel more connected to their communities.

Boosting the supply of a range of specialist housing for older people, including housing with care, will be key to achieving this aim. Both the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the Department of Health and Social Care continue to provide capital funding to incentivise their supply.

As set out in the Department of Health and Social Care’s recent white paper, People at the Heart of Care, a new £300 million investment will embed the strategic commitment to connect housing with health and care in all local places and drive the stock of new supported housing.

We remain committed to working closely with a range of stakeholders to look at how we can further support the growth of a thriving older people’s housing sector. This includes considering the merits of different engagement and delivery models, including proposals from the sector for a cross-Government taskforce.

SCOTLAND

Scotland Office: Advertising
Mhairi Black:
To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, how much his Department spent on advertising in 2020-21.

Mr Alister Jack:
In 2020-21, the Office spent a total of £75,681 on advertising.

Scotland Office: Communication
Mhairi Black:
To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, how much his Department spent on communications in 2020-21.
Mhairi Black:

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, (a) how much his Department spent on communications staff and (b) how many communications staff were employed by his Department in 2020-21.

Mr Alister Jack:
The number of staff working at the Office to deliver the communications functions in 2020-21 was 13.

Expenditure on communications staffing was £906,177 in 2020-21.

TRANSPORT

- A31: Ringwood

Sir Christopher Chope:

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will take steps to ensure that there is a safe, alternative pedestrian access provided between St Leonards and St Ives Parish and Ringwood during the bridge works to the A31; and if he will make a statement.

Trudy Harrison:

National Highways will be maintaining the pedestrian access between the Verwood Junction and West Street during construction works. The footway and the site area will be separated by fencing and boarding to ensure pedestrian safety. Any construction activities that require closure of the footway will be for short durations and, where possible, will be completed overnight and well publicised in advance.

- Aviation: Coronavirus

Mike Amesbury:

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the impact of the latest covid-19 travel restrictions on the aviation industry.

Robert Courts:

Temporary border measures have been introduced to prevent further Omicron cases from entering the UK and slow the rise of cases within the UK, whilst our scientists work at pace to better understand this new variant. These measures will be reviewed next week to ensure they remain necessary and proportionate.

The Government recognises the challenging times facing the international travel sectors due to COVID-19. Since the start of the pandemic, we estimate that the air transport sector (airlines, airport and related services) will have benefitted from around £8bn of government support. The Department for Transport is working closely with HM Treasury to monitor the situation and we continue to take a flexible approach and keep all impacts and policies under review.
**Bus Services: Finance**

*Sam Tarry:* To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans he has to support local bus networks to maintain service levels beyond April 2022 in the event that a Bus Service Improvement Plan has not secured funding.

*Trudy Harrison:* The Bus Recovery Grant (BRG) will provide £226.5 million in funding to bus operators and Local Transport Authorities between August 2021 and April 2022. This funding succeeds over £1.5 billion in support provided to the sector during the pandemic through the Coronavirus Bus Service Support Grant (CBSSG).

The Government is committed to seeing the bus sector return to financial sustainability. However, we recognise the ongoing challenges faced by operators and Local Transport Authorities to maintain services and are currently working with the sector to understand how these might impact services after BRG ends and what further action might be needed.

**Buses: Driving**

*Sam Tarry:* To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has had discussions with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on promoting careers in the bus and coach industry via (a) job centres and (b) materials provided to people in receipt of jobseekers allowance.

*Trudy Harrison:* To date, there have not been any meetings with the SoS for Work and Pensions on this topic.

Individual bus operators are required to ensure they have sufficient staff in order to run their scheduled services. To this end, we expect the bus sector to pursue all opportunities to encourage job seekers into the industry, including working with local job centres.

*Sam Tarry:* To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the impact of the shortfall of bus and coach drivers in Britain on that industry.

*Trudy Harrison:* My Department is working closely with the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport (ADEPT) and the Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT) to gather information to gain an understanding of the current staffing levels and recruitment pipeline in the bus sector.

The Government remains committed to maintaining high service levels for bus users to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 and has announced £226.5 million in Bus Recovery Funding to support this.
**Buses: Driving Licences**

**Sam Tarry:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will remove the requirement for a PSV-specific provisional license for trainee bus drivers to tackle the shortfall of bus drivers in Britain.

**Trudy Harrison:**

There are no current plans to change the provisional licensing requirements for Passenger Carrying Vehicle (PCV) operators.

**Sam Tarry:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of processing times for PSV-specific provisional licenses at the Driver and Vehicle Licencing Agency.

**Trudy Harrison:**

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency has focused extra resource on vocational driving licence applications and routine applications for vocational driving licences, including for passenger carrying vehicles, are being processed within normal turnaround times of five working days. Applications where medical investigations are needed will take longer.

**Buses: Procurement**

**Sam Tarry:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he plans to prioritise funding bids that propose to purchase buses from UK-based manufacturers under the Zero Emission Buses Regional Areas scheme.

**Trudy Harrison:**

As set out in the Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021 £355 million of new funding has been made available for zero emission buses. £150 million of this funding has been made available for 2021-22. The Department intends to allocate this funding to support to the Zero Emission Bus Region Areas (ZEBRA) scheme, taking the total funding available for the scheme to up to £270 million in the financial year 2021 to 2022. UK bus manufacturers are well placed to benefit from funding from the ZEBRA scheme.

**Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency: Testing**

**Sir Christopher Chope:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he expects the DVLA laboratory for urine samples to reopen; how many cases are currently outstanding at that laboratory; when he expects that backlog to be cleared; and if he will make a statement.
Trudy Harrison:
The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency has appointed a new laboratory to carry out these tests. There are currently 2,245 urine samples awaiting testing and arrangements have been made for these samples to be transferred to the newly appointed laboratory. The DVLA has put measures in place to prioritise the most urgent cases and expects that all the samples awaiting testing will be cleared in January 2022.

Electric Vehicles: Buses and Large Goods Vehicles

Rachael Maskell: [86134]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the proportion of heavy goods vehicles that are electric (a) lorries and (b) buses.

Trudy Harrison:
The proportions of battery electric vehicles as a percentage of all licensed vehicles for selected body types, for the United Kingdom as at 31 December 2020, are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BODY TYPE</th>
<th>UK SHARE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heavy Goods Vehicles</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buses and Coaches</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: VEH0503 and VEH0603, DVLA/DfT


Parking: Pedestrian Areas

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [86177]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many full-time equivalent staff are employed by his Department to work on the Managing pavement parking consultation that closed in November 2020.

Trudy Harrison:
The Department has employed the equivalent of around 2 full time policy officials on managing the pavement parking consultation, plus the additional support of a DfT economist in preparation of an impact assessment. External consultants were also employed to assist with the analysis of over 15,000 consultation responses.
Travel: Coronavirus

Munira Wilson:
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what (a) assessment his Department has made of the potential impact that the reintroduction of compulsory PCR covid-19 testing for overseas arrivals will have on the travel industry and (b) support he will make available to support small businesses in the sector which may lose revenue as a result.

Robert Courts:
The government has worked closely with the travel sector throughout the pandemic to help find ways to enable people to travel safely, while protecting public health. The re-introduction of pre-departure tests and PCR post-arrival tests are temporary, precautionary measures to prevent further Omicron cases from entering the UK and will be examined at the three-week review point in the week commencing 13 December.

Throughout the pandemic, over £2 billion of discretionary business grant funding was provided to local authorities via the Additional Restrictions Grant to support businesses in their local area and travel agents can continue to apply for the scheme through their local authority until March 2022.

Corporation Tax

Andrew Rosindell:
To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 27 October 2021 to question 58753 on Corporation Tax, if he will make available on a private basis to hon. Members and Members of the House of Lords the most recent draft of the political agreement being negotiated as part of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s Base Erosion and Profit Shifting framework.

Andrew Rosindell:
To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make it his policy to hold a formal public consultation before holding a vote in Parliament to implement the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s base Erosion and Profit Shifting framework.

Lucy Frazer:
The government is delighted that a final political agreement has been reached on the framework for a two-pillar solution.

The final political agreement was published online by the OECD following the agreement reached at the OECD Inclusive Framework meeting on the tax challenges arising from the digitalisation of the economy, on 8 October 2021: https://www.oecd.org/tax/beps/statement-on-a-two-pillar-solution-to-address-the-tax-challenges-arising-from-the-digitalisation-of-the-economy-october-2021.pdf.
The government intends to consult with stakeholders as part of the process of implementing the agreement in UK law.

### Culture Recovery Fund: Scotland

**John Nicolson:**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what his planned timetable is for passing on the remaining £31 million allocated to the Scottish Government as a consequential of the £300 million Culture Recovery Fund uplift in the Budget of March 2021.

**Patrick Grady:**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will issue a response to Early Day Motion 734, Barnett Consequential from the Culture Recovery Fund.

**Mr Simon Clarke:**

The Barnett formula applies to changes in departmental DEL budgets, not when departments make spending or policy announcements.

The UK government has provided the Scottish Government with an additional £6.5 billion of Barnett-based funding this year. It is for the Scottish Government to decide how to allocate this funding across its devolved responsibilities, including how to provide support to the culture sector.

If the Treasury provides additional funding to departments in areas that are devolved in Scotland then the Scottish Government will receive additional funding through the Barnett formula. Final funding allocations will be confirmed at Supplementary Estimates.

### Utilities: Biofuels and Red Diesel

**Drew Hendry:**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of including water and power companies and other utility providers in the list of organisations entitled to use red diesel and rebated biofuels.

**Helen Whately:**

Following consultation in 2020, the Chancellor confirmed at Spring Budget 2021 that the Government will remove the entitlement to use red diesel from most sectors from April 2022. This will more fairly reflect the negative environmental impact of the emissions they produce and help to ensure that the tax system incentivises the development and adoption of greener alternatives.

The Government did not believe that the cases made by sectors that will not retain their red diesel entitlement outweighed its environmental objectives.

Regarding certain utility providers, the Government will be amending the qualifying fuel definition accordingly to ensure that businesses currently using red diesel to generate electricity for supply through a licensed supplier can continue to reclaim the
fuel duty, less any carbon price support payment due, once they have to use fully duty-paid diesel from 1 April 2022.

**WOMEN AND EQUALITIES**

**Conversion Therapy**

Ben Bradley:  
To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what information her Department holds on the number of incidents of LGBT conversion therapy in each of the last three years; and if she will publish a summary of examples of incidents of that therapy.

Mike Freer:  
To better understand the nature and impact of conversion therapy practices in the UK, the Government commissioned research on conversion therapy, including around the prevalence and nature of such practices in the UK. This was published on 29 October, alongside our public consultation on how to ban conversion therapy, and is available at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/conversion-therapy-an-evidence-assessment-and-qualitative-study](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/conversion-therapy-an-evidence-assessment-and-qualitative-study).

This report summarises the review undertaken of research published from January 2000 to June 2020 as well as the findings from qualitative interviews with 30 people who have had experience of conversion therapy in the UK since 2000.

The report also draws on the findings from the National LGBT Survey of over 108,000 people in 2017, including that 5% of respondents had been offered so called ‘conversion’ or ‘reparative’ therapy and a further 2% had undergone it. The survey also found that transgender respondents were more likely to have reported having undergone or been offered conversion therapy (13%) than non-transgender respondents (7%). The full results of the survey were published in 2018 and are available at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-lgbt-survey-summary-report](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-lgbt-survey-summary-report).

In addition, we actively engage with a wide range of civil society stakeholders on the subject of LGBT conversion therapy and monitor the international approaches being taken.

**WORK AND PENSIONS**

**Carers Allowance**

Caroline Lucas:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what communications strategy she has in place to try to ensure that unpaid carers, who are eligible for but not in receipt of Carer’s Allowance because it overlaps with the state pension, are aware that applying for
Carer’s Allowance could entitle them to other top-up payments to other benefits; and if she will make a statement.

**Caroline Lucas:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will make it her policy to allow unpaid carers who meet all the conditions for Carer’s Allowance but don’t receive it because it overlaps with the state pension to receive a payment in recognition of their continued caring responsibilities; and if she will make a statement.

**Chloe Smith:**

It has been a long-held feature of the UK’s benefit system, under successive Governments, that where someone is entitled to two benefits in broadly the same circumstance then only one will be paid in full. Although entitlement to State Pension and Carer’s Allowance arise in different circumstances they would be paid for the same reason – as an income replacement. Carer’s Allowance replaces income where the carer has given up the opportunity of full-time employment in order to care for a severely disabled person, while State Pension replaces income in retirement. A social security rule, called the “overlapping benefit” rule, operates to prevent them being paid together. There are no plans to change this policy.

If a carer’s State Pension is less than Carer's Allowance, State Pension is paid and topped up with Carer's Allowance to the basic weekly rate of Carer’s Allowance. Where Carer’s Allowance cannot be paid, the person will keep underlying entitlement to the benefit. This gives access to the additional amount for carers in Pension Credit of £37.70 a week, and even if a pensioner's income is above the limit for Pension Credit, he or she may still be able to receive Housing Benefit. Full details about Carer’s Allowance are available on Gov.UK which includes a specific reference to additional payments in Pension Credit and links to organisations able to provide advice, such as Carers UK and Carers Trust. [Carer's Allowance - GOV.UK](www.gov.uk)

Where Carer’s Allowance cannot be paid, the person will keep underlying entitlement to the benefit, and thousands of pensioners are given this status each month. As of May 2021, there were 370,000 Carer’s Allowance claimants with underlying entitlement awards in Great Britain.

As of May 2021, there were 101 carers in the Brighton Pavilion constituency that were receiving a carer premium with their Pension Credit.

### Child Maintenance Service: Complaints

**Conor McGinn:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps she is taking to (a) tackle the backlog and (b) reduce resolution times in outstanding Child Maintenance Service complaints.
Guy Opperman:
The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on DWP meant that in July 2020, changes were made to our complaint model to allow staff to be deployed to support vital claim and payment processing work. This has meant that responses have not always been delivered within our target timescales.

We recognise the impact that delayed responses to complaints can have on our customers, and we have put a number of measures in place to address this issue, including allocating additional resource to our complaint resolution teams. As a result of this action, we have made strong progress in addressing the backlog of cases and improving resolution times for child maintenance complaints.

There are a number of more complex cases that will naturally take longer to allow for comprehensive investigation prior to being in a position to reach full resolution, for example those cases that are referred to our Financial Investigation Unit.

In these cases, we will contact the customer to let them know that their case is likely to take longer to resolve.

Cold Weather Payments: Inverclyde

Ronnie Cowan:

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many Cold Weather Payments have been issued by her Department to households in Inverclyde in each of the last five years.

Guy Opperman:

The Cold Weather Payment scheme is administered at weather station level rather than at a constituency or regional level. The coverage area for each weather station is determined by the Met Office, which assesses the most appropriate weather station for each postcode area. Cold weather payments are triggered when the average temperature recorded at the weather station has been recorded as, or is forecast to be, 0°C or below over seven consecutive days, during the Cold Weather season (November to March).

The constituency of Inverclyde covers all or part of the following postcode areas: PA11, PA13, PA14, PA15, PA16, PA17, PA18 and PA19.

These postcode areas are covered by the weather station Bishopton, which also include constituencies other than Inverclyde.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weather station</th>
<th>Postcode Districts Covered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Table 2 summarises the number of triggers in the Bishopton weather station over the last 5 complete Cold Weather Payment seasons and the estimated number of payments in the Bishopton weather station area.

**TABLE 2 ESTIMATED NUMBER OF COLD WEATHER RECIPIENTS LINKED TO THE BISHOPTON WEATHER STATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Triggers for Bishopton weather station</th>
<th>Estimated number of payments for Bishopton weather station</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20/21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>139,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19/20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18/19</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>137,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>276,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/17</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Where there have been no cold weather triggers in the Bishopton weather station area, no payments were made to eligible recipients.

Notes

1. The number of eligible claimants given here is an estimate as information on the exact number is not readily available. These figures are produced by determining the volume of eligible recipients in each weather station area at the start of the winter season. These figures are then used throughout the winter to estimate payments and expenditure based on the actual triggers recorded.

1. The number of payments made is not necessarily the total number of individuals benefitting from a Cold Weather Payment. Any individuals making a joint claim for one of the qualifying benefits, such as a couple living together, will receive one payment between them rather than one payment each. Furthermore, if a weather station triggers more than once throughout a cold weather season then the recipients will receive more than one payment.

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**Employment: Disability**

**Dr Matthew Offord:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps she has taken to progress the Departmental target of increasing employment of disabled people by a further million people in the next 6 years.

**Chloe Smith:**

Figures for January to March 2021 showed that, in the first four years (between 2017 and 2021) of the goal to see one million more disabled people in employment, the number of disabled people in employment increased by 850,000.
A range of DWP initiatives are supporting disabled people and people with health conditions to start, stay and succeed in employment. These include the Work and Health Programme, Intensive Personalised Employment Support programme, Access to Work, Disability Confident and support in partnership with the health system, including Employment Advice in NHS Improving Access to Psychological Therapy services.

In July this year we published three major documents: Shaping future support: the health and disability Green Paper; the response to the Health is Everyone’s Business consultation on minimising the risk of ill-health related job loss; and the National Disability Strategy. These together form our holistic approach and vision for supporting disabled people and people with health conditions to live independent lives.

Kickstart Scheme

Mr Gregory Campbell:

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Answer of 21 July 2021 to Question 34458 on Kickstart Scheme, when he expects the evaluation process of Kickstart participants to conclude.

Mims Davies:

The fieldwork for the commissioned evaluation will continue until at least 2023. This evaluation will continue to assess the longer term outcomes for Kickstart participants after they have completed their six-month jobs. We plan to publish the findings once complete.

Poverty

Gill Furniss:

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps she is taking to prevent families falling into poverty as a result of rising inflation above wage growth.

Gill Furniss:

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps she is taking to help prevent people in insecure work experiencing poverty during winter 2021-22.

David Rutley:

This Government is wholly committed to supporting people on low incomes and we continue to do so through many measures, including through spending over £110 billion in 2021/22 on welfare support for people of working age in 2021/22 who meet the relevant eligibility conditions.

With the success of the vaccine rollout and record job vacancies, our long-term focus remains on continuing to support people into work and to help those in work to progress out of low pay. 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. We have doubled the number of work coaches to 27,000 to provide people with the tailored support they need to move into work.

Through the National Minimum Wage (NMW) and the National Living Wage (NLW) the Government protects the lowest paid within our society. The National Living Wage increased by 2.2% to £8.91 from April 2021 - the equivalent of more than £345 extra per year for someone working full-time. At Autumn Budget 2021, we announced a further increase of 6.6% to £9.50 for over 23s from April 2022, as well as reinforcing our commitment for the National Living Wage to reach two-thirds of median earnings by 2024, provided economic conditions allow.

Universal Credit supports people in and out of work and working claimants will now benefit from a reduction in the Universal Credit taper rate from 63% to 55%; and the increase in 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 will benefit almost two million of the lowest paid workers by £1000 a year on average.

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 are able to access a new £500 million support fund to help them with essentials. The Household Support Fund provides £421 million to help vulnerable people in England with the cost of food, utilities and wider essentials. The Barnett Formula applies 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.

To support low income families further we have increased the value of Healthy Start Food Vouchers from £3.10 to £4.25, helping eligible low income households buy basic foods like milk, fruit and vitamins, and we are also investing over £200m a year from 2022 to continue our Holiday Activities and Food programme which is already providing enriching activities and healthy meals to children in all English LAs.

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**Social Security Benefits: Fraud**

**Dr Matthew Offord:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps her Department is taking to (a) identify and (b) reduce fraud within the benefits system.

**David Rutley:**

The Department takes benefit fraud very seriously. We have taken further steps to reduce and minimise fraud and error during the past 18 months at a time where the Department processed an additional 3 million new Universal Credit claims.

We are continuing to expand our Integrated Risk and Intelligence Service that coordinates the detection of, and response to, fraud risks from organised crime.
groups seeking to exploit the benefit system. This included preventing a large attack in May 2020, stopping substantial sums being paid out to scammers and led to a number of arrests.

This has been further expanded, following investment at the Spring Budget and Spending Review, to further develop pre-payment ‘risking’ techniques and maintain our new Enhanced Checking Service for high risk claims.

We have also revisited more than 900,000 high risk claims paid during the early period of COVID-19, which has generated over £400m in potential savings. Where fraud is established, we are committed to the use of appropriate penalties and to recovering monies from the perpetrators.

We also continue to work with other Government departments and law enforcement agencies nationally and across borders to ensure appropriate intelligence and resources are shared, enabling the totality of any criminality to be identified and investigated

### Universal Credit

**Dr Matthew Offord:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment her Department has made of the impact of the universal credit taper rate reduction on household budgets.

**David Rutley:**

The reduction in the taper rate, together with an increase in the work allowances, means 1.9m households will keep, on average, around an extra £1,000 a year. These changes represent an effective tax cut for low income working households in receipt of Universal Credit, worth £2.2 billion a year in 2022-23, and will allow working households to keep more of what they earn and strengthen incentives to move into, and progress, in work.
Animal Products: Imports

Luke Pollard: [22018]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many imports of hunting trophies from species listed under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species were recorded in the UK in 2020.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 2 July 2021. The correct answer should have been:

Rebecca Pow:

1226 imports of hunting trophies from species listed under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species were recorded in the UK in 2020.

Luke Pollard: [22019]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many imports of hunting trophies from (a) African Lion, Panthera leo, (b) Tiger, Panthera tigris, (c) African elephant, Loxodonta africana, (d) Cheetah, Acinonyx jubatus, and (e) Polar bear, Ursus maritimus were recorded under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, in the UK in (a) 2016, (b) 2017, (c) 2018, (d) 2019, and (d) 2020.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 2 July 2021. The correct answer should have been:

Rebecca Pow:


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African Lion, Panthera leo</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiger, Panthera tigris</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African elephant, Loxodonta africana</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The table below shows how many imports of hunting trophies from African lion (Panthera leo), Tiger (Panthera tigris), African elephant (Loxodonta africana), Cheetah (Acinonyx jubatus), and Polar bear (Ursus maritimus) were recorded under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, in the UK in 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African lion,</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panthera leo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiger, Panthera</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tigris</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African elephant,</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loxodonta africana</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheetah,</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acinonyx jubatus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polar bear,</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ursus maritimus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Luke Pollard:

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many (a) R (ranched animal), (b) D (Captive-bred animal), (c) C (Bred in captivity) and (d) F (Born in captivity) hunting trophies were recorded under the Convention on International Trade in
Endangered Species (CITES) entering the UK in (a) 2016, (b) 2017, (c) 2018, (d) 2019, and (e) 2020.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 2 July 2021. The correct answer should have been:

Rebecca Pow:
The table below illustrates how many R (ranch animal), D (Captive-bred animal), C (Bred in captivity) and F (Born in captivity) hunting trophies were recorded under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) entering the UK in 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R (ranch animal)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D (Captive-bred animal)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C (Bred in captivity)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F (Born in captivity)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gaza: Demonstrations

Andy Slaughter:

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the answer of 9 June 2020 to Question 57198 on Gaza: Demonstrations, what recent assessment her Department has made of (a) investigating and (b) holding wrongdoers accountable for potentially unlawful killings by its forces in the context of the 2018-19 Gaza protests.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 9 December 2021. The correct answer should have been:

James Cleverly:

The UK has repeatedly made clear to Israel our longstanding concerns about the manner in which the Israel Defence Forces police non-violent protests and the border areas, including use of live ammunition. We will continue to do so. The UK supports an investigation which establishes the facts about the violence that occurred during the Great March of Return in Gaza. Given the importance of accountability, we urge that any investigation be independent and transparent, that its findings be made public, and, if wrongdoing is found, that those responsible be held to account. The UK continues to monitor progress of ongoing investigations by the Israeli authorities.

The UK supports an independent and transparent investigation which establishes the facts about the violence that occurred during the Great March of Return in Gaza. The UK continues to monitor progress of ongoing investigations by the Israeli authorities.
Government Response to the DCMS Select Committee Report on Concussion in Sport

Minister for Sport, Tourism, Heritage and Civil Society (Nigel Huddleston):

I wish to inform the House that the Government has today published its response to the report by the House of Commons Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee into concussion in sport.

Sport is a central part of our national identity and culture. The welfare and safety of everybody taking part in sport is of paramount importance, and the Government is committed to taking action to reduce the risks involved. The actions set out in this report do not represent the final word on the subject and we recognise there is more work to do to continue to make sport as safe as possible for all those who participate in it.

The Government is grateful to the DCMS Select Committee for undertaking their extensive inquiry into concussion in sport. The committee’s report has reinforced the importance of the topic and provided valuable insights that have helped inform the Government’s thinking.

Our response outlines the Government’s approach to reducing the risks associated with concussion and head injuries in sport. This will involve working with partners from across the sport, health, education, academic and technology sectors.

A full response to each of the Committee’s recommendations is also provided in a separate annex to the report.

Within the report, the Government has committed to:

- Commission a set of shared high-level protocols around concussion in sport across the UK.
- Write to UK Sport and Sport England to explore ensuring funded bodies make use of these shared protocols.
- Work across Departments to improve the protocols and pathways for use in treating concussion in sport injuries in NHS A&E settings.
- Direct sports to work with Player Associations on training protocols for players’ long-term welfare.
- Convene a sports concussion research forum of experts to identify the priority research questions and improve the coordination with research funding bodies.
- Write to National Governing Bodies to emphasise the importance of player welfare (including concussion) when formulating their governance procedures.
A copy of the Government response to the DCMS Select Committee report will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Update on fisheries

Minister of State (Victoria Prentis): [HCWS466]

At the time of writing, annual negotiations on fisheries are ongoing between: the UK, EU and Norway (the Trilateral); the UK and the EU; the UK and Norway; and the UK and the Faroes Islands.

As regards the Trilateral, which will determine catch limits for six jointly managed stocks in the North Sea (cod, haddock, saithe, whiting, plaice, herring), discussions have been fruitful and we expect agreement between the three parties to be reached later this afternoon (Friday 10th December).

Bilateral negotiations between the UK and the EU on 2022 fishing opportunities on jointly managed stocks are ongoing. Discussions have been constructive so far and there is opportunity to intensify talks before 20 December if necessary.

We are continuing to discuss possible exchanges of fishing opportunities with Norway and the Faroes. If there are agreements to be reached, of which we remain optimistic, we hope to conclude them in the next few weeks.

We have also concluded a number of other negotiations this year, including in Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) and on catch limits for three straddling species (mackerel, Atlanto-scandian herring, and blue whiting) with coastal State partners in the North East Atlantic.

LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

Update on supply chains

Minister of State for Housing (Christopher Pincher): [HCWS467]

I wish to update the House on the measures the Government is taking to facilitate flexibility within the delivery supply chain and mitigate challenges faced by construction sites.

Due to the covid pandemic, the logistics sector is facing an exceptional challenge resulting from the acute shortage of HGV drivers across the distribution network. This has resulted in missed deliveries which have the potential to lead to significant shortages and hinder economic growth.

Through a previous Written Ministerial Statement made by the former Secretary of State, dated 15 July 2021, the Government responded to these pressures proactively by ensuring the industry had the tools available to adapt effectively and minimise any disruption to the public. The statement made clear that local planning authorities should
take a positive approach to their engagement with food retailers and distributors, as well as the freight industry, to ensure planning controls are not a barrier to deliveries of food, sanitary and other essential goods.

I am now expanding the scope of these measures. The purpose of this Written Ministerial Statement, which comes into effect immediately, is to make it clear that local planning authorities should take a positive approach to their engagement with all supply chain stakeholders to ensure planning controls are not a barrier to the supply of all goods and services.

Many commercial activities in England are subject to controls which restrict the time and number of deliveries from lorries and other delivery vehicles, particularly during evenings and at night. These restrictions may be imposed by planning conditions, which are necessary to make the development acceptable to local residents who might otherwise suffer from traffic, noise and other local amenity issues. However, this needs to be balanced with the public interest, for all residents, to have access to shops which are well stocked.

The National Planning Policy Framework already emphasises that planning enforcement is a discretionary activity, and local planning authorities should act proportionately in responding to suspected breaches of planning control.

Local planning authorities should not seek to undertake planning enforcement action which would result in unnecessarily restricting deliveries, having regard to their legal obligations.

Construction output has also been inconsistent in recent months and not returned to pre-February 2020 levels. Construction sites in England may also be subject to controls which restrict the hours within which they can operate. Wherever possible, local planning authorities should respond positively to requests for flexibility for operation of construction sites to support the sector’s recovery.

The Government recognises that it may be necessary for action to be taken in relation to the impacts on neighbours of sustained disturbance due to deliveries and construction outside of conditioned hours, particularly where this affects sleep. In this case a local planning authority should consider any efforts made to manage and mitigate such disturbance, taking into account the degree and longevity of amenity impacts.

This statement will replace all the previous statements on these matters.

This Written Ministerial Statement only covers England and will expire on 30 September 2022, giving direction to the industry and local planning authorities over the next ten months. We will keep the need for this statement under review.
Publication of the Intelligence and Security Committee’s 2019-21 Annual Report

Prime Minister (Boris Johnson): [HCWS464]

The Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament has today laid before Parliament a report covering the work of the Committee between July 2019 to July 2021. The Government welcomes the independent and robust oversight of the Security and Intelligence Agencies and the wider Intelligence Community that the Committee provides. As this report demonstrates, the work of the Committee is wide-ranging, on topics vital to ensuring the public can have confidence that our world-class Intelligence Agencies continue to operate effectively and proportionately in light of the threats we face.

The period covered in this report has been a particularly challenging one, and it is a testament to the Committee that they have been able to provide oversight despite disruption to their work plan from the pandemic. This Government looks forward to seeing the conclusions of a number of ongoing Committee Inquiries.

The Agencies and wider Intelligence Community value the oversight the Committee provides and have ensured Committee requests in this period have been given high importance. However, it is proper and right that Agency and Intelligence Community resources continue to be appropriately prioritised to ensure the safety and security of our nation; the Agencies have shown both resilience and ingenuity in continuing to deliver despite the challenges this period has brought. The Intelligence Community and Government were in touch with the Committee during the drafting of this report, and would remind the Committee of the importance of mutually agreeing timelines for returns to ensure these are reasonable and achievable.

During the period covered by the Committee’s report, Government has published three formal responses to ISC reports, which address the recommendations and conclusions the Committee have made: Russia, published on 21 July 2020; Northern Ireland-related Terrorism, published 11 February 2021; and GCHQ Procurement: A Case Study, published 22 July 2021.

The Government remains confident that the current Memorandum of Understanding with the Committee is sufficient to allow for robust oversight of the Agencies and wider Intelligence Community. The National Security Adviser has written to the ISC Chair to restate this position.

I would like to again thank the Committee for their work, and I look forward to working with them as they continue their vital oversight duties.