



Daily Report

Friday, 14 January 2022

This report shows written answers and statements provided on 14 January 2022 and the information is correct at the time of publication (03:34 P.M., 14 January 2022). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

ATTORNEY GENERAL

■ Attorney General: Consultants

Gareth Thomas:

[100401]

To ask the Attorney General, whether her Department has had any (a) financial contract and (b) meetings with (i) Clifford Chance LLP, (ii) FTI Consulting or (iii) Fenchurch Advisory Partners in the last five years; and if she will make a statement.

Alex Chalk:

The Attorney General's Office has not had any financial contracts or meetings with Clifford Chance LLP, FTI Consulting or Fenchurch Advisory Partners.

Details of Government contracts above £10,000 are published on Contracts Finder: <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Search>.

Details of ministerial meetings are published quarterly and can be found on GOV.UK

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Buildings: Energy

Alexander Stafford:

[98483]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Heat and Buildings Strategy, what assessment he has made of the role of building standards and certifications in improving energy efficiency standards of the built environment.

Greg Hands:

The Heat and Building Strategy sets out how Government is taking a 'fabric first' approach to improving the energy efficiency of buildings; this ensures transition to low-carbon heating is cost effective.

The Strategy sets out measures including:

- Upgrading fuel-poor homes to Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C by 2030 where reasonably practicable to do so.
- Additional funding to the Home Upgrade Grant and the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund – investing a further £950m and £800m respectively over 2022/23 to 2024/25. Both schemes use Trustmark standards to ensure quality installations and both use an improvement in EPC to measure increased energy efficiency.
- Consulting on phasing in higher minimum performance standards to ensure all homes meet EPC Band C by 2035, where cost-effective, practical and affordable.

- Setting long-term regulatory standards to upgrade private-rented homes to EPC C by 2028.
- Requiring mortgage lenders to disclose energy efficiency standards of their portfolios in order to incentivise them to provide attractive finance offers so their customers can retrofit their homes.
- Considering setting a long-term regulatory standard for all homes, subject to consultation.

■ Carbon Capture and Storage

Alan Brown:

[\[98975\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to help support the commercialisation of Direct Air Capture technology in the UK.

Greg Hands:

In the Net Zero Strategy, the government committed to developing markets and incentives for investment in greenhouse gas removal technologies including Direct Air Capture. The Government will consult on business models to incentivise investment in greenhouse gas removal technologies in spring 2022. This is in line with government's ambition to deploy at least 5MtCO₂ per year of engineered removals by 2030. This builds on the commitment to invest £100 million in innovation, research and development for greenhouse gas removal technologies which will support the construction of pilot plants for a range of promising technologies to help them achieve commercial realisation – including BEIS's Direct Air Capture and Greenhouse Gas Removal Programme.

■ Carbon Capture and Storage: Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Alan Brown:

[\[98976\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the potential for Direct Air Capture to contribute to the UK's (a) 2050 net zero target and (b) 2030 5MtCO₂ per year Greenhouse Gas Removals target.

Greg Hands:

The Net Zero Strategy identifies greenhouse gas removal methods, such as Direct Air Capture as essential to meet the UK's 2050 net zero target. These technologies will compliment ambitious decarbonisation across the UK economy, compensating for residual emissions in the most difficult to decarbonise sectors. By 2050, its anticipated that deployment of engineered removals will be between 75 and 81 MtCO₂/year. Governmental analysis in the Net Zero Strategy showed that the potential contribution of Direct Air Carbon Capture and Sequestration could range from 18-29MtCO₂ in 2050.

The Government will consult on preferred support mechanisms to incentivise investment in 'First of a Kind' Greenhouse Gas Removal technologies in spring 2022

to underpin our 2030 ambition. The Government is also investing £100 million of innovation funding for research, development and piloting of promising new Greenhouse Gas Removal techniques.

■ Carbon Emissions: Disclosure of Information

Darren Jones: [\[98384\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department plans to publish information on how much individual policies announced in the Net Zero Strategy are projected to cut emissions by.

Darren Jones: [\[98385\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if his Department will reconsider its decision to refuse the New Scientist's Freedom of Information request to publish a spreadsheet showing by how much individual policies in the Net Zero Strategy will reduce emissions.

Greg Hands:

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

Each year the Department publishes updated energy and emissions projections, analysing and projecting future energy use and greenhouse gas emissions in the UK. The Government will publish an updated set of Energy and Emissions projections in due course. This will set out emissions reductions from those specific Net Zero Strategy measures where decisions on the design of the associated individual policy intervention are sufficiently advanced to meet Energy and Emissions projections publication standards.

■ Construction: Insolvency

Mark Garnier: [\[98926\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the Government maintains a database of firms operating within the repair, maintenance and improvement sector in England that have gone into liquidation in each of the last three years.

Lee Rowley:

The Government does not maintain a specific database of firms operating within the repair, maintenance and improvement sector in England that have gone into liquidation in each of the last three years.

However, the Government does hold data from the Insolvency Service on liquidations of firms in the wider construction sector in England and Wales. The table below sets out Registered Compulsory Liquidations and Registered Creditors' Voluntary

Liquidations to three-digit level Standard Industrial Classification from 2018 to Q3 of 2021.

DESCRIPTION	2018	2019	2020	2021 TO Q3	
2,754	2,881	1,874	1,619		
Construction of buildings		876	975	637	538
Development of building projects	419	420	280	251	
Construction of residential and non-residential buildings	457	555	357	287	
Civil engineering		144	156	117	121
Construction of roads and railways	24	31	35	51	
Construction of utility projects	23	19	11	12	
Construction of other civil engineering projects	97	106	71	58	
Specialised construction activities		1,734	1,750	1,120	960
Demolition and site preparation	57	57	28	24	
Electrical, plumbing and other construction installation activities	624	646	407	361	
Building completion and finishing	564	606	406	309	
Other specialised construction activities	489	441	279	266	

■ Dementia: Research

Chi Onwurah: [\[101715\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 5 January 2022 to Question 94366 on Dementia: Research, if he will publish all available figures for dementia spending in 2020-21.

George Freeman:

Figures for the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and the Medical Research Council (MRC) will be available in the coming months.

GOVERNMENT SPEND ON DEMENTIA RESEARCH 2020-21

Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)	£8,025,232.10
Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC)	£1,500,000
Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)	£11,477,620

Please note that BBSRC provided an estimated figure for dementia research based on their broad portfolio of underpinning relevance (£29m in 2020/21).

■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Buildings

Rachel Hopkins: [\[98510\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the total floor area of his departmental estate was in each year from 2010-11 to 2020-21.

George Freeman:

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy was formed in July 2016.

The table below shows the total floor area of the Department's Estate as published in the State of the Estate reports for 2016-17 and 2017-18.

The Department's estates assets were transferred to the Government Property Agency in August 2018, and the Agency will report on the period beyond this.

DATE	TOTAL FLOOR AREA (M²)
31/03/2016	1,334,299
31/03/2017	1,140,145
31/03/2018	1,052,478

■ Electricity: Infrastructure

Ian Lavery: [\[98952\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much money his Department has spent on electricity infrastructure in each of the last 10 years.

Ian Lavery: [\[98953\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the amount of profit made by private electricity companies compared to investment in electricity infrastructure in each of the last 10 years.

Greg Hands:

Electricity network operators are private companies which build, own, and operate electricity network infrastructure. As regional monopolies, they are regulated by the independent energy regulator, Ofgem. The total value of the electricity transmission price control between 2013 and 2021 was over £15bn, while the forecast total value of the electricity distribution price control between 2015 and 2023 is over £29bn.

■ Energy Supply and Infrastructure: Storms

Ian Lavery: [\[98951\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department made of the resilience of energy networks and infrastructure prior to Storm Arwen in the regions affected by that storm.

Greg Hands:

Great Britain has one of the most reliable energy systems in the world and maintaining a secure electricity supply is a key priority for Government.

Government regularly liaises with industry through the Energy Emergencies Executive Committee to continually improve and maintain the resilience of energy infrastructure, networks and assets, to reduce vulnerabilities, and to ensure an effective response to actual or potentially disruptive incidents.

■ Energy Supply: Medical Equipment

John McNally: [\[98327\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure that energy companies are offering affordable and flexible energy tariffs to customers who operate lifesaving and enhancing medical equipment from their homes.

Greg Hands:

The Government is committed to ensuring fair energy prices for consumers. The Government introduced the Domestic Gas and Electricity (Tariff Cap) Act, which requires the energy regulator Ofgem to cap standard variable and default energy tariffs in 2019. The Energy Price Cap will remain in place at least till the end of 2022 to protect millions of customers and ensure they pay a fair price for their energy.

■ Energy Supply: Public Bodies**Alan Brown:** [\[98977\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to publish his response to his Department's joint consultation with Ofgem on proposals for a Future System Operator.

Greg Hands:

The Energy Future System Operation consultation closed on the 28th of September 2021 and received a high volume of responses. The Department and Ofgem are considering these responses and will publish a response in due course.

■ Energy: Carbon Emissions**Sarah Olney:** [\[98375\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to respond to his Department's joint consultation with Ofgem on proposals for a Future System Operator; and what assessment he has made of the relative potential merits of (a) strategic planning of infrastructure investment and (b) a sector-by-sector approach.

Greg Hands:

The recent consultation on a Future System Operator closed on the 28th September. Within the consultation the Government invited views on a whole systems approach, including joining up planning and co-ordination of networks in the gas and electricity sectors and improving strategic decision making in the energy system. A response to this consultation will be published in due course.

■ Energy: Costs**Sarah Olney:** [\[99033\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has plans to bring forward legislative proposals to tackle the growing cost of energy consumption.

Greg Hands:

The current rising energy costs has been precipitated by unprecedented conditions in global energy markets. The Energy Price Cap continues to protect households, ensuring they pay a fair price for their energy.

Extensive engagement continues across government at both ministerial and official level on this situation to understand, and help mitigate the impacts of, high global energy prices. The Government's priority is to ensure costs are managed and energy supplies maintained.

■ Energy: Meters

Ruth Jones:

[\[99065\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent assessment he has made of the efficacy of the smart meter programme in reducing fuel poverty.

Greg Hands:

Households are achieving sustained savings using their smart meters and In-Home Displays. These provide accurate, near real-time information about energy consumption in pounds and pence so consumers can easily understand how to use less and save money on their bills. Evidence collected throughout the rollout to date shows that these savings are being realised, with prepayment customers seeing an estimated reduction in electricity consumption of 3% and gas consumption of 0.5%. The Government continues to actively monitor the impact of smart metering on consumers, including on those in vulnerable circumstances, through large-scale consumer research.

■ Foreign Companies: Property

Layla Moran:

[\[101815\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to bring forward legislative proposals to create a public beneficial ownership register of overseas entities that own UK property.

Paul Scully:

As set out in my Written Ministerial Statement made on 2nd November 2021, the Government remains committed to establishing a new beneficial ownership register of overseas entities that own UK property. This register will help combat money laundering and achieve greater transparency in the UK property market. We will legislate when parliamentary time allows.

■ Geothermal Power: Mining

Owen Thompson:

[\[99013\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent estimate he has made of the number of projects to create district heating networks using geothermal energy from abandoned coal mines that are underway or being considered throughout the UK.

Greg Hands:

The Heat Networks Investment Project has made two awards totalling £9.7 million for the construction of projects which use geothermal heat from minewater. The first of these is the Gateshead District Energy Scheme, which was awarded a grant of £5.9m for the expansion of the Gateshead District Energy Scheme and will deliver significant decarbonisation through the installation of a 6MW mine water source heat pump. The second is the Seaham Garden Village district heat network, which was

awarded a grant of £3.8m to supply low-carbon geothermal heat from former coalmines to the new garden village in south Seaham.

The Coal Authority has an ongoing programme to review opportunities for the use of geothermal energy from abandoned coal mines with both Local Authorities and private entities across the former coalfields. At present, there are 15 schemes being assessed.

■ Heating: East Midlands

Ben Bradley:

[\[98408\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to (a) tackle the disparity in the proportion of the weekly budget a household in the East Midlands spends on heating their home compared to London and (b) support affordable domestic production of oil and gas.

Greg Hands:

The Government is seeking to reduce the energy bills of low income and vulnerable households across England through energy efficiency measures. Schemes such as the Sustainable Warmth Competition and the Energy Company Obligation are delivering such measures through engagement with local authorities to ensure targeted delivery.

The upstream oil and gas production sector is well placed to deliver as much domestic production as possible during the winter period. There has been strong resilience in production and most of the maintenance delayed due to COVID-19 has now been completed.

■ Housing: Carbon Emissions

Alexander Stafford:

[\[98485\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps the Government is taking to support local authorities to help deliver the net zero transition and implement decarbonisation plans for housing within their areas.

Greg Hands:

The Net Zero Strategy sets out the Government's commitments to enable local areas to deliver net zero. This includes establishing a Local Net Zero Forum to bring together national and local government senior officials to discuss policy and delivery options on net zero, and continuing the Local Net Zero Programme to support all local areas with their capability and capacity to meet net zero.

The Local Authority Delivery Scheme (LAD), which supports projects to install energy efficiency measures such as various types of insulation and low-carbon heating systems for low-income households, has already provided £500million to Local Authorities for upgrades to low-income households across England, and is being delivered up to June 2022 through a managed closure.

■ Housing: Energy

Alexander Stafford:

[\[98484\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps the Government is taking to improve the energy efficiency of owner occupier homes.

Greg Hands:

The Government has committed to spend £6.6 billion in this Parliament on improving the energy efficiency of buildings. The Government has already allocated more than £900m to improving the energy efficiency of privately owned homes through the Local Authority Delivery scheme and the Home Upgrade Grant. In Spring 2022, the Government will launch the new Boiler Upgrade Scheme, worth £450 million, to support householders with the cost of installing of a heat pump. Moreover, the Government has already installed 3.3 million energy-efficiency measures in 2.3 million homes via the Energy Company Obligation scheme. Once this scheme ends in March 2022, a successor scheme, with a value of £1billion, is planned to provide support until 2026.

■ Housing: Repairs and Maintenance

Alexander Stafford:

[\[98486\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what support the Government plans to provide to industry to train and retrain the workers required to retrofit the UK's ageing housing stock.

Greg Hands:

Upskilling and growth of the supply chain is essential to deliver against Net Zero targets for the decarbonisation of buildings. In September 2020, the Government launched a £6.9m Skills Training Competition to provide 8,000 training opportunities for the energy efficiency and low carbon heating supply chains. Training delivery for this scheme finished at the end of October 2021.

The Government is also supporting growth of the supply chain by investing £2.5 billion in a National Skills Fund and continues to work closely with the market to support training in key skills shortage areas as well as opportunities for increasing capacity.

■ Hydrogen

Owen Thompson:

[\[99012\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent progress he has made on delivering the commitments of the UK hydrogen strategy.

Greg Hands:

Good progress is being made since the Hydrogen Strategy was published in August 2021. In November, the Government's Net Zero Strategy announced the Industrial Decarbonisation Hydrogen Revenue Support scheme, worth £100 million and in December, the Government published a call for evidence on 'hydrogen-ready'

industrial boiler equipment which will remain open until 14 March. Later this month the Regulators' Forum will have its first meeting to advise on the identification and prioritisation of regulatory roles, barriers and standards in the H2 value chain.

The Government has also published consultations on the proposed design of the £240m Net Zero Hydrogen Fund, a hydrogen business model and a UK standard for low carbon hydrogen. The Government will respond to these consultations, which closed in late October 2021, in the first quarter of this year alongside indicative Heads of Terms for the business model. The Government will then launch the Net Zero Hydrogen Fund and Standard.

■ Life Sciences

Chi Onwurah:

[101716]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to his oral Answer of 11 January 2022, Official Report, column 413, that the life science sector has grown, in terms of private investment, by 1,000 per cent in the last ten years and is creating jobs all around the UK, in Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, what the evidential basis is for that answer.

George Freeman:

Analysis conducted by the Office for Life Sciences using data from S&P Capital IQ showed that in the first 10 months of 2021, UK Life Sciences companies raised a total of £6.6bn in equity finance. This is an increase of 1,000% since 2012 when the equivalent figure was £0.6bn. These figures include public and private investment and cover the sectors of Biotechnology, Pharmaceuticals, Life Sciences Tools and Services, Health Care Equipment and Supplies and Health Care Technology. They were set out in the [press release](#) accompanying the recent Biopharmaceutical CEO Roundtable, held on 2 December 2021.

The [2020 Biosciences and Health Sector Statistics publication](#) shows that net employment in the UK life sciences industry increased by 31,500 between 2011 and 2020, and that during that period, net employment increased in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Annex: Supporting Data

REGION	NET CHANGE IN EMPLOYMENT BETWEEN 2011 AND 2020
London	8,200
East of England	4,900
South East	4,500
Yorkshire and the Humber	4,000
North West	2,500

REGION	NET CHANGE IN EMPLOYMENT BETWEEN 2011 AND 2020
Northern Ireland	2,200
Wales	1,700
North East	1,700
South West	1,500
East Midlands	800
Scotland	400
West Midlands	-800
Total	31,500

Source: Office for Life Sciences: Bioscience and Health Technology Statistics 2020

■ Nuclear Power Stations: Local Government

Kenny MacAskill:

[\[98456\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will set out what support and resources are provided to a local authority in the event that a nuclear power station is to close.

Greg Hands:

Following a decision by EDF to close one of their nuclear power stations, which would be taken in consultation with the Office for Nuclear Regulation, the first phase of closure is defueling, and this takes several years with continued use of EDF's uniquely experienced teams, and specialist supply chain companies, preserving jobs in a local community. A closure decision by EDF does not result in any specific additional support or resource being provided for the local authority in which the power station is located.

Following the defueling phase for the seven EDF-owned Advanced Gas-cooled Reactor power stations (all of which are due to close by 2028), each station will transfer to the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority to deliver the subsequent decommissioning activity. The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority has a duty to ensure that decommissioning activities benefit local communities and provide a beneficial legacy once decommissioning work is completed.

■ Power Failures: Storms

Ian Lavery:

[\[98950\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the cost was of restoring power lost as a result of Storm Arwen; and how that cost was met.

Greg Hands:

The cost of restoring power during Storm Arwen was met by Transmission and Distribution Network Operators. Their expenditure and charges to customers are carefully regulated by Ofgem through the network price controls process.

As the independent regulator for energy, Ofgem has also announced that it will undertake a review into the impact of Storm Arwen. This will focus on the role of the network companies in maintaining the resilience of the system and their emergency response.

Ian Lavery:[\[98954\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the average amount of time that people were without power as a result of Storm Arwen in (a) Wansbeck constituency, (b) Northumberland and (c) the North East.

Greg Hands:

Across Great Britain, around 830,000 electricity customers who were impacted by Storm Arwen had their power restored within 24 hours, however, nearly 10,000 households went without power for a week or more, many of whom were in the North East of England. The Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has commissioned his officials to carry out a post-incident review into the Distribution Network Operator's response to Storm Arwen, which will ascertain the full scale of customer disruption.

Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme: Coronavirus**Wera Hobhouse:**[\[98376\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he will make it his policy to extend the deadline for projects that have been initiated under the Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme ahead of its deadline of 31 March 2022 that have been delayed by the covid-19 outbreaks.

Greg Hands:

The Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive is scheduled to close as planned on 31 March 2022. There are currently no plans to delay closure or extend the scheme.

Research**Chi Onwurah:**[\[98281\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, which other Government departments will participate in the R&D Inter-Ministerial Group; and what the aims are of that Group.

George Freeman:

In order to support the Government's ambitions to cement the UK's status as a global science superpower and an innovation nation, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is in the early phases of developing an Inter-Ministerial Group,

to support ongoing cross-Government discussions on research and development. Further details about the group will be formalised in due course.

Chi Onwurah: [98942]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will publish the aims of the R&D Inter-Ministerial Group.

George Freeman:

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is in the early phases of developing the Inter-Ministerial Group, to support ongoing discussions on research and development. Further details about the group will be formalised and made available in due course.

■ Research: Finance

Chi Onwurah: [98274]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what proportion of research and development spending in his Department was channelled through UKRI or the research councils formerly organised under Research Councils UK in (a) 2010 and (b) 2021.

George Freeman:

Science and research allocations for 2010/2011 were published in [The Allocation of Science and Research Funding 2011/12 to 2014/15](#). Allocations for 2021 were published in May 2021 in [BEIS research and development budget allocations 2021 to 2022](#).

■ Wood-burning Stoves

Geraint Davies: [98189]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he will require the disclosure of the emission results for wood burning stoves, including efficiency, oxides of nitrogen, carbon monoxide, particulate matter and organic gaseous compounds, when they are sold in accordance with the Ecodesign regulations from 1 January 2022.

Greg Hands:

As of 1 January 2022, new Ecodesign regulations require that when a solid fuel local space heater (wood burning stove) is placed on the UK market, the product's efficiency and its emissions of particulate matter, organic gaseous compounds, carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxides under standardised test conditions must be provided in the instruction manual for installers and end-users as well as on a free-access website.

CABINET OFFICE**■ Cabinet Office: Buildings**

Rachel Hopkins: [\[98509\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the total floor area of his departmental estate was in each year from 2010-11 to 2020-21.

Michael Ellis:

The Cabinet Office total owned estate for 2020-21 was 726,917m² (In addition to this, 707,769m² is managed by the Government Property Agency, which is a part of the Cabinet Office, on behalf of departments). For all previous years, the total estate is published in the State of the Estate report on GOV.UK.

■ Government Departments

Rachel Hopkins: [\[98506\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will outline the changes to the central Government's office portfolio that led to the reduction in size of that office between March 2020 and March 2021.

Michael Ellis:

The office portfolio was reduced by 2%, from 3.5m m² to 3.4m m² from 2019-20 to 2020-21. Reductions were driven by a combination of departmental estate strategies and collaboration between departments to share space - for example - HMRC exiting 12 PFI properties led to a 25,000 m² reduction in floor area and relocation into government hubs.

■ Government Departments: Buildings

Rachel Hopkins: [\[98503\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many built assets were in the Government estates' portfolio in each year from 2010-11 to 2020-21.

Michael Ellis:

The number of built assets in 2020-21 was 136,844m², and covers central government estate general and specialist estate, including hospitals and schools. Equivalent figures for previous years are not held centrally by Cabinet Office.

Rachel Hopkins: [\[98505\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many (a) buildings and (b) plots of land were sold by the Government in 2020-21.

Michael Ellis:

The number of buildings or land plots disposed of is not held centrally by Cabinet Office.

The disposal value for 2020-21 was £473.5m.

■ Government Departments: Location

Rachel Hopkins: [\[98507\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many central Government offices were (a) in London and (b) outside of London in (i) 2019, (ii) 2020 and (iii) 2021.

Michael Ellis:

The number of central Government buildings in 2021 and 2020 is given in the below table. Equivalent data for 2019 is not held centrally by Cabinet Office.

	LONDON	OTHER REGIONS
2021	205	1,280
2020	212	1,325

■ Government: ICT

Chi Onwurah: [\[101713\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Government has competitive suppliers for cloud services; and what the the maximum proportion of cloud services the Government will place with one supplier is.

Michael Ellis:

There are a range of suppliers that compete to offer services via a number of framework agreements through the Crown Commercial Service, such as G-Cloud and Cloud Compute. Pricing and commercial offers in this industry are very competitive between suppliers.

Government does not place a cap on the proportion of cloud services provided by any of the current suppliers. Government Departments conduct their own assessments around value for money and implement their outsourcing strategies accordingly to meet their needs.

DEFENCE

■ Afghanistan: Refugees

Dan Jarvis: [\[101729\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent discussions he has had with ministerial colleagues in the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office on providing safe routes to the UK for successful applicants under the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy scheme from (a) Qatar and (b) other countries.

James Heappey:

Our ARAP Scheme is one of the most generous in the world and our commitment to those who are eligible and the process to deliver it, is not time-limited and will endure. Whilst thousands of ARAP eligible personnel have already been safely relocated to the UK, we are working closely with countries in the region to find safe routes for eligible Afghans to be evacuated from within Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. These are the subject of regular discussions with Ministerial colleagues in the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and others. This work is ongoing and will continue as the situation changes and develops. The safety and security of eligible Afghans and their families is paramount.

Dan Jarvis:[\[101730\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will publish the evidence behind the decision to use Pakistan as the main Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy third-country route; and if he will make a statement.

James Heappey:

Our ARAP Scheme is one of the most generous in the world and our commitment to those who are eligible and the process to deliver it, is not time-limited and will endure. Whilst thousands of ARAP eligible personnel have already been safely relocated to the UK, we continue to work at pace to safely evacuate eligible ARAP personnel and their families through a range of third countries. We are working closely with countries in the region to find safe routes for eligible Afghans to be evacuated from within Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. This work is ongoing and will continue as the situation changes and develops. The safety and security of eligible Afghans and their families are paramount. The decisions on suitable routes are based on a wide range of factors, and it would not be appropriate to discuss those in public.

Dan Jarvis:[\[101733\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what do the (a) M, (b) R and (c) ATAE reference codes indicate on an Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy application.

James Heappey:

'M' and 'R' reference codes are assigned to ARAP applications once they have been confirmed as eligible for the scheme by the Eligibility Team. They specifically indicate:

- 'M'- designates an eligible application made between 1st April 2021-31st August 2021
- 'R'- designates an eligible application made from 1st September 2021 onwards (Post Operation PITTING)

ATAE codes are internal reference numbers assigned to applications upon initial receipt and precede the allocation of an 'M' or an 'R' number.

■ Arctic: Defence

John Healey:

[\[101620\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he plans to publish the Defence Arctic Strategy as announced on 30 September 2018.

James Heappey:

The Ministry of Defence plans to publish the Defence High North Strategy in the spring.

■ Kinnegar Logistics Base

Jim Shannon:

[\[98297\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the timetable is for disposal of Kinnegar Barracks in County Down; and whether plans have changed for the scale of the disposal.

Jeremy Quin:

Following detailed assessment, the disposal of Kinnegar Logistics Base has been delayed by two years from 2022 to 2024.

There has been no change to the scale of the disposal. The Ministry of Defence intent remains to dispose of the whole site as surplus to requirements when military use has ended.

■ Maritime Patrol Aircraft: Procurement

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[101656\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 11 January 2022 to Question 96794, on Maritime Patrol Aircraft: Procurement, who those primary support partners are; and if he will provide details of all the companies involved in the support arrangements for the UK's P-8A aircraft.

Jeremy Quin:

In April 2021 the Ministry of Defence (MOD) signed a contract with Boeing Defence UK (BDUK) as the Prime Contractor to provide support for our Poseidon MRA1 aircraft and training service. BDUK used sub-contract competition for many elements of support. The provision of information necessary for the performance of these tasks is subject to Third Party Transfer agreements between the UK and US. Under the terms of those agreements we cannot release the details of entities permitted to access UK Poseidon MRA1 maintenance data.

■ Ministry of Defence: Annual Reports

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[101657\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 5 January 2022 to Question 93717, on Ministry of Defence: Annual Reports, which statutory provision provides that his Department's Annual Report and Accounts are not required to be released until the following calendar year.

Jeremy Quin:

The statutory provision covering the publication of the Department's Annual Report and Accounts is the Government Resource Accounts Act 2000, Section 6.

Specifically paragraph 4 which states: The Treasury shall lay accounts and reports received under subsection (3)(b) before the House of Commons not later than 31 January of the financial year following that to which they relate.

Ministry of Defence: Kickstart Scheme**John Healey:**[\[101621\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 19 January 2022 to Question 96770 on Kickstart Scheme: Defence, how many kickstart positions were (a) advertised and (b) filled in the Ministry of Defence during 2021.

Leo Docherty:

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

National Cyber Force: Finance**Mr Kevan Jones:**[\[101658\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will publish the projected £5 billion for the new National Cyber Force headquarters broken down by (a) CDEL and (b) RDEL.

James Heappey:

As part of the Integrated Review, we have established a National Cyber Force, a multi-billion pound investment, that will be based in Samlesbury and will ensure the UK is at the forefront of next-generation Defence and National Security capability. Further details of this spending cannot be provided as they would disclose sensitive information relating to security bodies.

National Flagship**John Healey:**[\[101622\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, on what date the Committee for the National Flagship is expected to begin the formal process of assessing submitted designs for the National Flagship; and when he expects that Committee's assessment to be complete.

John Healey:[\[101623\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will publish the (a) names and (b) roles of the people sitting on the Committee for the National Flagship.

Mr Ben Wallace:

Members of the National Flagship Aesthetics panel will be selected by myself on the basis of acknowledged relevant expertise. No members have yet been appointed to the panel, or individual roles agreed. It is anticipated that the panel will convene and complete its assessment during Spring 2022.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ Gambling: Vulnerable Adults****Rachael Maskell:**[\[98994\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps she plans to take to prevent gambling companies from targeting vulnerable communities.

Chris Philp:

All gambling operators providing gambling facilities to customers in Great Britain must be licensed by the Gambling Commission and comply with strict licence conditions and codes of practice including measures to protect children and vulnerable people. These require operators to put in place robust measures for age verification to ensure children cannot gamble online, an obligation to monitor data and intervene when customers show signs of harm, and a prohibition on operators advertising and marketing to those who have self-excluded.

The Government and the Gambling Commission have also significantly raised requirements around age verification, banned gambling on credit cards, made online slots safer with a new game design code, mandated integration with Gamstop (the one-stop online self exclusion scheme) and introduced new rules on VIP schemes.

We are also reviewing the Gambling Act to ensure it is fit for the digital age. A core objective of the Review is to ensure effective protections are in place for the further protection of vulnerable groups. We are considering the evidence carefully and will publish a white paper outlining any conclusions and proposals for reform in due course.

■ National Lottery: Regional Planning and Development**Chi Onwurah:**[\[101712\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether the National Lottery has a role in the Government's levelling up agenda; and whether she plans to require Camelot UK Lotteries Limited to publish regional lottery sales figures.

Chris Philp:

Communities across the whole of the United Kingdom benefit from the good cause income raised by the National Lottery. In 2020/21 this was £1.833 billion, and since 1994 when the National Lottery was launched a total of £43 billion has been raised.

There are currently no plans to require the National Lottery operator to publish a regional breakdown of sales.

■ Professional Footballers Association: Conduct**Chris Evans:**[\[101699\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether she has had sight of the independent QC-led review into the conduct of the Professional Footballer's

Association; and whether her Department plans to take any actions as a result of that review.

Nigel Huddleston:

The Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) is a trade union and has private membership. It is for the relevant National Governing Body of sport to take action in this area, but the government will take a keen interest in the findings.

We will continue to work closely with these bodies across the sports sector more broadly to ensure that appropriate measures are in place to protect participants from harm.

EDUCATION

■ Department for Education: Buildings

Rachel Hopkins: [98512]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the total floor area of his departmental estate was in each year from 2010-11 to 2020-21.

Michelle Donelan:

The Office for Government Property annually publishes the 'State of the Estate' report. The total floor area of the department's estate (including Arms Length Bodies) for each of the requested years is available in the relevant reports at GOV.UK, by searching here:

https://www.gov.uk/search/all?keywords=%22state%20of%20the%20estate%22&public_timestamp%5Bfrom%5D=2010&order=relevance.

■ Department for Education: Corruption

Bridget Phillipson: [101703]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 5 January 2022 to Question 92905 on the date of introduction of the Department's anti-bribery policy, what anti-bribery policy was in force in his Department from 11 May 2010 to the date on which the current policy was introduced in 2018; and what rules were in force between those dates on the declaration of gifts and hospitality received by (a) officials and (b) Ministers.

Michelle Donelan:

Prior to the introduction of the Anti-Bribery & Corruption Policy in 2018, Department staff were subject to the provisions of the Civil Service Code:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-service-code/the-civil-service-code>.

The Code specifies that:

“You must not:

- accept gifts or hospitality or receive other benefits from anyone which might reasonably be seen to compromise your personal judgement or integrity.”

The department also maintained, and continues to maintain, a Gift and Hospitality register for staff to record any such incidents.

Under the Transparency Agenda Gift and Hospitality data for Special Advisers and Ministers is published on GOV.UK at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dfe-special-advisers-gifts-hospitality-travel-and-meetings-2020>, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ministers-quarterly-returns-2010>.

■ Education: Carbon Dioxide

Helen Hayes: [101795]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate his Department has made of the proportion of (a) nursery and early years settings and (b) rooms in those settings which have a CO2 monitor.

Helen Hayes: [101796]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate his Department has made of the proportion of (a) special schools and (b) rooms in special schools which currently have a CO2 monitor.

Helen Hayes: [101797]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate his Department has made of the number of CO2 monitors offered to alternative provision settings; and what proportion of those monitors are yet to be delivered.

Helen Hayes: [101798]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate his Department has made of the proportion of (a) alternative provision settings and (b) rooms in alternative provision settings which currently have a CO2 monitor.

Helen Hayes: [101862]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate his Department has made of the proportion of (a) youth clubs and (b) rooms in youth clubs that have a CO2 monitor.

Will Quince:

I refer the hon. Member for Dulwich and West Norwood to the answer I gave on 13 January 2021 to Question [100625](#).

■ Gambling: Education

Rachael Maskell: [98995]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to require schools to provide education on the harms of gambling.

Mr Robin Walker:

We have made relationships education compulsory for all primary schools, relationships and sex education compulsory for all secondary school pupils and

health education compulsory for pupils in all state-funded schools. Health education includes teaching pupils about the risks associated with gambling and the statutory guidance is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>.

The subjects will support all young people in terms of managing risk and making informed decisions, as well as in key aspects such as mental wellbeing and online behaviour. For example, under the topic of internet safety and harms, the guidance sets out that young people should be taught about the risks related to online gambling, including the accumulation of debt, how advertising and information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online.

To support schools to deliver this content, the department has produced teacher training modules. The module on internet safety and harms includes teaching pupils about the risks associated with gambling. A link to the training modules is available on GOV.UK and can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>.

Many schools choose to draw on the work of subject associations when selecting resources to deliver these topics. The PSHE Association worked with GambleAware to develop free resources to improve delivery of school-based preventative gambling education.

Other curriculum subjects, such as citizenship, mathematics and computing can also address online gambling and its dangers. This includes developing young people's financial literacy and highlighting the dangers of online gambling whilst using digital platforms, such as gambling opportunities introduced within computer games and apps.

■ National Curriculum Tests: Coronavirus

Ian Lavery:

[98946]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has been made of the potential merits of suspending SATs in May 2022 for Year 6 pupils due to continuing high absence rates and ongoing disruption in schools due to the outbreak of covid-19.

Mr Robin Walker:

We are continuing to plan for a full programme of primary assessments to take place in summer 2022. The assessments will be crucial in helping parents, schools and the department gauge the impact of education lost and will enable us to better understand the effectiveness of education recovery initiatives.

The results from the 2022 assessments will not be published in Key Stage 2 performance tables. We will ensure that any data shared with Ofsted, regional schools' commissioners and others is caveated with clear messages about the uneven impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on pupils and schools, and to advise caution when drawing conclusions from the data.

■ Pupils: Coronavirus

Ian Lavery:

[98944]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many children and young people in (a) primary and (b) secondary schools have been confirmed with covid-19 in Wansbeck constituency since September 2021.

Mr Robin Walker:

The department collects data on the total number of pupils that are absent each day from school with confirmed COVID-19, as opposed to the total number of positive test results in an area. As we collect the total number of pupils absent from school, we are unable to determine if the same pupil is absent on consecutive days, so are unable to provide a total for the number of pupils absent in this period.

The proportion of pupils in state-funded primary and secondary schools absent due to COVID-19, since the start of the academic year, can be found on Explore Education Statistics. The lowest geographical level the data is split to is local authority level. Published data for Northumberland is available at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-tables/permalink/3d84bca3-0d0c-4c10-9163-a37d888dc624>.

The latest set of published data is from 11 January, available at this link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements/attendance-in-education-and-early-years-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic--6>.

■ Schools: Air Conditioning

Ian Lavery:

[98943]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many air purifiers are currently installed in school classrooms in the Wansbeck constituency; and how many air purifiers are planned to be fitted in school classrooms in that constituency and by what date.

Mr Robin Walker:

During the autumn term, we provided over 353,000 CO2 monitors to all state-funded education providers, including early years, schools and further education colleges, backed by £25 million in government funding. Feedback suggests that schools are finding the monitors helpful to manage ventilation and, in the majority of schools, colleges and nurseries, existing ventilation measures are sufficient.

Maintaining adequate ventilation remains the responsibility of individual providers. Where an area of poor ventilation has been identified that cannot be resolved through simple measures such as opening doors and windows, schools are advised to explore what remedial works may be required to improve ventilation. Where it is not possible to maintain adequate ventilation, it may be appropriate to consider the use of an air cleaning unit while the underlying ventilation issue is addressed.

When used properly, air cleaning units can help reduce airborne contaminants in a poorly ventilated space, including viruses like COVID-19. Air cleaning units are not a

substitute for ventilation and should never be used as a reason to reduce ventilation. They are not necessary in spaces that are adequately ventilated.

The department will also make up to 8000 air cleaning units available for poorly ventilated teaching spaces in state-funded education providers, where quick fixes to improve ventilation are not possible.

Deliveries of air cleaning units will start from this week to special educational needs and disabilities and alternative provision providers. These were allocated in the first application round announced in November 2021. The second round of applications is open until 9am on 17 January. All state funded schools, colleges and nurseries can apply. Special and alternative provision providers that were not successful or did not apply in the first round are also eligible to apply in this round. Once applications have closed, all applications will be assessed against strict criteria and allocated to providers based on need. Providers with successful applications will be contacted individually to arrange delivery, with deliveries expected from February 2022.

For those providers that are not eligible for funded units, the online marketplace provides a route to purchasing air cleaning units directly from suppliers at a suitable specification and competitive price. The marketplace is available to view here: <https://s107t01-webapp-v2-01.azurewebsites.net/list/air-cleaning>.

Throughout the COVID-19 outbreak, we have emphasised the importance of ventilation and provided guidance to providers on ventilation requirements. In addition to our existing guidance on ventilation we have provided schools, colleges and nurseries with guidance on how to use the air cleaning units as well as how to order a unit via the marketplace. The application process has been communicated to settings via our Daily Bulletin and we continue to support providers with their queries via the Coronavirus Helpline.

■ Schools: Finance

Daisy Cooper:

[98444]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the additional funding required by schools to cover the costs of hiring agency workers as a result of teachers self-isolating during the covid-19 outbreak.

Mr Robin Walker:

School leaders and staff have worked incredibly hard to make sure all pupils have been able to return to school safely. The department is extremely grateful to all the teachers who are responding to our call to return temporarily to the classroom to support schools whilst cases of the Omicron variant continue to rise.

This should be seen in the wider context of funding for schools. The government is delivering the biggest funding boost for schools in a decade which will give every school more money for every child. This financial year, in 2021-22, mainstream school funding for 5 to 16-year-olds increased by 3.5% overall. In financial year 2022-23 it will increase by a further 5.8%, or £300, cash increase in funding per pupil, on average.

This funding boost will rapidly give schools the resources they need to rise to the challenges of COVID-19 response and recovery, increase teacher pay, and meet the cost of the Health and Social Care Levy, while continuing their work to raise attainment and educational outcomes for all children and young people.

Schools have the flexibility to make their own decisions on how to prioritise their spending to invest in a range of resources and activities that will best support their staff and pupils. Schools will be able to use their existing budgets to help with the costs associated with COVID-19 absences.

The department has re-introduced the COVID-19 workforce fund to provide financial support to eligible schools and colleges for absence costs from 22 November until 18 February. The fund is available to support schools and colleges facing the greatest staffing and funding pressures to continue to deliver face-to-face, high-quality education to all pupils.

All schools can access a range of school resource management tools to help them get the best value from their resources. Schools in financial difficulty should contact the Educational Skills and Funding Agency or their local authority.

■ **Schools: Standards**

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[98213\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the current number of schools that fail to meet legal standards is.

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[98214\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to ensure that local agencies have the required powers to (a) visit, (b) check and (c) close unsafe schools.

Mr Robin Walker:

The Department for Education is the regulator for independent schools in England and sets the Independent School Standards (ISS) that registered schools must meet, including those in the important area of safeguarding. The department commissions Ofsted and the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) to carry out inspections of registered schools on a regular cycle to assess their compliance with the ISS. Where an inspection finds that a school has not met the ISS, the department may issue a statutory notice requiring an action plan to bring about rapid improvement. It also has powers to take enforcement action. Enforcement action is the strongest step the department can take to achieve compliance with the ISS. This can take one of two forms. The department can either impose a 'relevant restriction' on the proprietor of the school, or where appropriate, remove a school from the register of independent schools. This has the effect of requiring it to cease operating as a school.

There are approximately 2,500 registered independent schools in England of which, 143 are currently failing to meet the legal requirements set out in the ISS. Of the 143 schools, 135 are in regulatory action and the remaining 8 are under enforcement action.

It is a criminal offence under section 96 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 to conduct an unregistered independent school. All unregistered schools are unsafe since they are not regulated or subject to regular inspection against agreed standards. The department and Ofsted continue to investigate schools believed to be operating as unregistered schools. As set out in section 97 of the Education and Skills Act 2008, Ofsted can carry out inspections without notice where it has reasonable cause to believe that an unregistered school is being operated on the premises. Evidence gathered through these investigations is used to support the prosecution of those responsible for running such schools.

The department has committed to introducing legislation to bring measures to make it easier for Ofsted to investigate and gather evidence of breaches of section 96 of the 2008 Act and prosecute those responsible for running unregistered schools.

■ Schools: Ventilation

Stephen Morgan: [\[100671\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when he informed schools that five consecutive days of carbon dioxide monitor readings from a particular classroom would be needed, or be likely to be needed, in order for his Department to consider further ventilation support.

Stephen Morgan: [\[100672\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will place information in the Library on (a) how many carbon dioxide monitors were sent to each school in England in the autumn term of 2021 and (b) the dates on which those monitors were received.

Stephen Morgan: [\[100673\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made in respect of each school to which his Department issued carbon dioxide monitors in autumn 2021 of the minimum length of time required by those schools, using the allocated carbon dioxide monitors at a time when classrooms are in use, to secure five days of consecutive readings from each classroom teaching context in the school; and if he will place a copy of the calculations underpinning that estimate in the Library.

Mr Robin Walker:

The department has now delivered over 353,000 CO₂ monitors to over 99% of eligible maintained schools, further education colleges, and the majority of early years providers. Special schools and alternative provision (AP) education providers were prioritised, given their higher than average number of vulnerable pupils. Deliveries to these providers are now complete. Final deliveries to providers will be made shortly. Schools are finding the monitors helpful to manage ventilation and, in the majority of providers, existing ventilation measures are sufficient.

CO₂ monitors are an additional measure that we have rolled out to education settings to be used as a guide for where ventilation can be improved. It is up to school leaders to decide how to best use them in their specific school, college or nursery.

The department is also making up to 8,000 air cleaning units available for poorly ventilated teaching spaces in state-funded education providers, where quick fixes to improve ventilation are not possible. Deliveries will start from this week to special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and AP schools, colleges and nurseries. These were allocated in the first application round announced in November 2021.

The second round of applications is open until 9am on 17 January 2022. All state funded schools, colleges and nurseries can apply. Special and AP providers that were not successful or did not apply in the first round are also eligible to apply in this round. Once applications have closed, all applications will be assessed against strict criteria and allocated to providers based on need. Schools, colleges and nurseries with successful applications will be contacted individually to arrange delivery, with deliveries expected from February 2022.

For those providers that are not eligible for funded units, the online marketplace provides a route to purchasing air cleaning units directly from suppliers at a suitable specification and competitive price. Further information is available here:

<https://s107t01-webapp-v2-01.azurewebsites.net/list/air-cleaning>.

Throughout the COVID-19 outbreak, we have emphasised the importance of ventilation and provided guidance to providers on ventilation requirements, including on how to use CO2 monitors effectively to identify areas where ventilation can be improved. In addition to our existing guidance on ventilation we have provided settings with guidance on how to use the air cleaning units as well as how to order a unit via the marketplace. The application process has been communicated to settings via our Daily Bulletin and we continue to support settings with their queries via the department's Coronavirus helpline.

■ Teachers: Coronavirus

Ian Lavery:

[98945]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many teachers working in schools in Wansbeck constituency have been confirmed with covid-19 since September 2021.

Mr Robin Walker:

The department collects data on the total number of teachers that are absent each day from school with confirmed COVID-19, as opposed to the total number of positive test results of teachers in an area. As we collect the total number of teachers absent from school, we are unable to determine if the same teacher is absent on consecutive days, so are unable to provide a total for the number of teachers absent in this period.

The proportion of teachers in state-funded schools absent due to COVID-19, since the start of the academic year, can be found on Explore Education Statistics. The lowest geographical level the data is split to is local authority level. Published data for Northumberland is available at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-tables/permalink/df96718b-b549-42cb-98f4-4e34afd9ee77>.

The latest set of published data is from 11 January, available at this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements/attendance-in-education-and-early-years-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic--6>.

■ Teachers: Incentives

Daisy Cooper:

[98443]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether the Government plans to offer teachers any recognition or rewards for their work during the covid-19 outbreak in order to help retain teaching staff.

Mr Robin Walker:

The COVID-19 outbreak has shone a light on the life-changing role that teachers play in children's lives. I recognise and am grateful for the extraordinary efforts that school leaders and staff have made to ensure pupils get the best possible education throughout the COVID-19 outbreak.

Teacher retention is key to ensuring effective teacher supply and quality, and we are taking action to support teachers to stay in the profession and thrive. Over two-thirds of teachers who started 5 years ago are still teaching today, and of those who started 10 years ago, nearly 3 in 5 are still teaching. However, we recognise that more needs to be done.

The department is creating an entitlement to at least three years of structured training, support and professional development for all new teachers, to bring teaching into line with other prestigious professions such as law, accountancy, and medicine. Underpinning this is the initial teacher training (ITT) Core Content Framework and the Early Career Framework. These ensure that new teachers will benefit from at least 3 years of evidence-based training, across ITT and into their induction.

We have also published a range of resources to help address teacher workload and wellbeing and support schools to introduce flexible working practices. These include the staff wellbeing charter and the workload reduction toolkit, available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/education-staff-wellbeing-charter> and here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-workload-reduction-toolkit>.

This year's remit to the School Teachers' Review Body reiterates the government's commitment to raising teacher starting salaries to £30,000 and seeks recommendations for pay awards in the 2022/23 and 2023/24 academic year. This will give schools the opportunity to better plan their budgets as we make the uplifts required to progress towards a £30,000 starting salary.

We are looking to deliver this through balanced pay uplifts across the entire workforce, with investment targeted as effectively as possible to address recruitment and retention challenges and, ultimately, ensure the best outcomes for pupils.

Additionally, we will be offering a Levelling Up Premium worth up to £3,000 tax-free for maths, physics, chemistry and computing teachers in years 1 to 5 of their careers.

This will support recruitment and retention of specialist teachers in these subjects and in the schools and areas that need them most.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Clean Air Zones: Greater Manchester

Lisa Nandy:

[\[100530\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of providing additional financial support to help businesses, organisations and individuals in Greater Manchester to move to cleaner, compliant vehicles under the plans for the introduction of a Greater Manchester Clean Air Zone.

Jo Churchill:

The Government has provided £132 million to Greater Manchester through the Clean Air Fund to support individuals and businesses to upgrade vehicles, together with £36 million for the implementation of measures to improve local air quality including the Clean Air Zone.

The HGV support scheme supported by this funding has recently opened for applications. Schemes for those vehicles that will initially be exempted from the CAZ are due to launch later in the year. Therefore, most of the funding already provided to the relevant local authorities is yet to be allocated.

■ Food Supply

Navendu Mishra:

[\[99081\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to (a) mitigate the impact of increasing costs of food for consumers and (b) ensure that suppliers of food are adequately supplied.

Victoria Prentis:

Consumer food prices depend on a range of factors including food import prices, domestic agricultural prices, domestic labour and manufacturing costs, and Sterling exchange rates, all of which fluctuate over time. Some of these factors are influenced by our trading arrangements with other countries. Most food sectors businesses (retail etc) are accustomed to fluctuations in supply chain costs so they do not necessarily translate into consumer price rises. Food prices are set individually by businesses and it is not for the UK Government to set retail food prices nor to comment on day-to-day commercial decisions by companies.

The UK has a highly resilient food supply chain, as demonstrated throughout the Covid-19 response. It is well equipped to deal with situations with the potential to cause disruption. Our high degree of food security is built supply from diverse sources; strong domestic production as well as imports through stable trade routes. UK consumers have access through international trade to food products that cannot

be produced here, or at least not on a year-round basis. This supplements domestic production, and also ensures that any disruption from risks such as adverse weather or disease does not affect the UK's overall security of supply.

■ Forests: North East

Ian Lavery: [98948]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate his Department has made of the extent of damage to forest and wooded areas as a result of Storm Arwen in (a) Wansbeck, (b) Northumberland and (c) the North East.

Rebecca Pow:

Using satellite imagery, Forest Research estimates that around 5,500 hectares of woodland was damaged by Storm Arwen. Of this, around 1,700 hectares was in England and most damage occurred in the North East. A map showing suspected areas of windblow is available to the public at <https://windblow-assessment-forestergis.hub.arcgis.com/> and is being used to validate satellite imagery. A summary of this information will be made available in February.

Forestry England is continuing to survey the forests it manages in Northumberland and the wider North East and it will be some time before the full extent of damage is known. There are no Forestry England woodlands within the Wansbeck constituency.

■ Public Footpaths

Hilary Benn: [98887]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many new footpaths his Department has created in England in each of the last five years.

Rebecca Pow:

The Highways Act 1980 allows highway authorities to create a new right of way where it can be shown that there is a need for it. As such, local highway authorities have statutory duties to record public rights of way, these are kept at a local authority level and the relevant date for each public right of way can be found in the definitive map and statement. The department does not hold a record of what footpaths have been created in an individual year.

However, our network of National Trails is managed centrally, and work is continuing to support this network and in particular to complete the England Coast Path. To date, Natural England has published proposals for more than 99% of the England Coast Path route, and over 450 miles is already open to the public. The table below shows the total mileage of England Coast Path opened in each of the last five years:

YEAR	MILES OPENED
2017	44
2018	N/A

YEAR	MILES OPENED
2019	94.5
2020	16.2
2021	56.7

■ Tree Planting

Charlotte Nichols:

[\[98464\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department sets targets for the number of trees planted in the UK each year.

Rebecca Pow:

The Government has committed to bring tree planting rates across the UK up to 30,000 hectares per year by the end of this parliament in May 2024. The England Trees Action Plan set out our target of trebling woodland creation in England to contribute to this, and we will continue to work with the Devolved Administrations to deliver a UK-wide step change in tree planting and establishment.

The England Trees Action Plan is supported by an intended £500 million from the Nature for Climate Fund. In the recently launched Net Zero Strategy, the Government also announced that it will boost the Nature for Climate fund with a further £124 million of new money, ensuring total spend of more than £750 million by 2025 on peat restoration, woodland creation and management – above and beyond what was promised in the manifesto. As set out in the Net Zero Strategy, we will consult on a statutory tree planting target to provide further long-term clarity.

Ian Lavery:

[\[98949\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans his Department has to ensure that the trees lost as a result of Storm Arwen are replaced.

Rebecca Pow:

Forestry is devolved and so this answer is for England only.

Initial efforts have been focused on supporting the emergency services and utility providers in re-establishing essential networks and infrastructure with ongoing work to make sure impacted forests are safe for public access. It is estimated that it will take over a year to plan and implement the full recovery effort.

A felling licence is not required to harvest trees that are no longer growing such as those that are blown over or snapped by the wind or are dead or dangerous. In some situations, this may lead to blown trees being cleared with no obligation for the owner to restock. In England, Defra and the Forestry Commission are investigating how regulation and incentives could be used to reduce the risk that there is a loss of tree cover or woodland area in these situations. Regulatory arrangements for clearing windblown trees vary between devolved administrations.

The Government has committed to bring tree planting rates across the UK up to 30,000 hectares per year by the end of this parliament in May 2024. The England Trees Action Plan is supported by an intended £500 million from the Nature for Climate Fund. In the Net Zero Strategy, the Government also announced that it will boost the Nature for Climate fund with a further £124 million of new money, ensuring total spend of more than £750 million by 2025 on peat restoration, woodland creation and management.

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

■ Africa: Coronavirus

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[98897\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, further to the Answer of 21 December 2021 to Question 91892 on Africa: Coronavirus, (a) how much funding the UK has allocated to the Africa Vaccine Confidence Campaign to date, (b) what estimate she made of the reach of this campaign to date in terms of (i) number of African countries supported and (ii) number of people reached, and (c) what the timescale is for this project.

Vicky Ford:

The UK recognises that community demand and vaccine confidence are key factors influencing vaccine rollout. Through FCDO's Africa Vaccine Confidence Campaign, the UK is working with Wits University in South Africa and the Botswana Institute for Technology Research and Innovation to develop content which seeks to tackle vaccine hesitancy. The campaign has been used and amplified in the following countries: Botswana, Ghana, Uganda, Liberia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, and Sudan.

In terms of funding, £7,000 has been spent on producing new high quality video content, for use by HMG Posts across Africa and partners to support traditional and social media activity that builds Covid-19 vaccine confidence. The campaign is ongoing so the total number of people reached cannot yet be quantified, but in November 2021 alone, 60,000 people across Sub-Saharan Africa engaged with (liked, shared or viewed) the campaign on social media. The Africa Vaccine Confidence Campaign is to run until the end of April 2022. The UK is also supporting wider efforts in vaccine delivery on the continent. For example, in South Africa we have contributed £1.8 million to the Covid-19 Solidarity Fund to support the roll out of Covid-19 vaccines and provided technical advice for vaccine deployment.

■ Armenia: Prisoners of War

Jim Shannon:

[\[98289\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions her Department has had with international counterparts to help (a) secure

protections under international treaties and (b) facilitate the release and return of any Armenian prisoners of war and detained civilians.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

In her meetings with the Azerbaijani and Armenian Foreign Ministers, on 4 and 17 November 2021 respectively, the former Minister for Europe and Americas, Wendy Morton MP, raised the importance of the return of all prisoners of war and detainees. The UK Government will continue to reinforce these points in its contacts with the parties and in other fora, as well as to support the efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs to settle all outstanding matters related to the conflict.

■ **Brazil: Coronavirus**

Fabian Hamilton:

[\[101639\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions she has had with her Brazilian counterpart on the Brazilian government's response to the covid-19 pandemic, including the take-up of covid-19 vaccines.

Vicky Ford:

The UK engages regularly with Brazil on the topic of the COVID-19 pandemic and vaccines. Over the last two years this has been a core area of cooperation between our countries. The UK has supported the partnership between a Rio-based research institution, Fiocruz, and Oxford-AstraZeneca which has been fundamental to increasing the production of vaccines in Brazil.

In late October 2021, Secretary of State Sajid Javid met with Brazilian Health Minister Queiroga to discuss how we can continue and deepen our work together. In June 2021 my predecessor also discussed vaccine cooperation with Brazilian Foreign Minister França. In addition, senior officials in Brasilia regularly engage with the Brazilian government to ensure that we are working closely and effectively in the global effort to combat the pandemic. We look forward to continuing our productive and valuable partnership with Brazil in response to COVID-19.

■ **British Overseas Territories: LGBT People**

Stephen Doughty:

[\[101737\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, when she last made an assessment of (a) the legal rights and status of LGBT+ people in the UK Overseas Territories and (b) any potential differences from UK domestic law and commitments under the European Convention on Human Rights.

Amanda Milling:

The inhabited Overseas Territories are separate, largely self-governing jurisdictions with their own democratically-elected representatives. Our relationship with the Territories is based on partnership and we are working together to put in place arrangements to protect the legal status and rights of LGBT+ people. Nine of the Overseas Territories have legal recognition and protection for LGBT+ people, six

have also introduced legislation to introduce civil partnerships or legalise same-sex marriage.

We continue to assess and engage with all the Overseas Territories to ensure that their legislation is compliant with their international obligations.

■ Chevening: Official Hospitality

Layla Moran: [98403]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what the cost to the public purse was of hosting Baltic Foreign Ministers at Chevening in October 2021; and what the costs were of the (a) accommodation and (b) subsistence expenses for that function.

James Cleverly:

The FCDO publishes the costs related to overseas visits, incoming visits and events hosted by the Foreign Secretary as part of the Quarterly Transparency Return <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/minister-data#2020>. We will release the costs for this event in due course as per the usual timeline.

■ Colombia: Police

Fabian Hamilton: [101636]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what training the UK has provided to the (a) Colombian police force in general and (b) the Mobile Anti-Disturbance Squadron (ESMAD).

Vicky Ford:

The UK is a key supporter of the implementation of Colombia's historic peace agreement. Since 2015, the UK has provided £68 million through our Conflict, Security, and Stabilisation Fund (CSSF), which has allowed us to provide niche technical and financial support on stabilisation, policing, and transitional justice in Colombia.

As part of the CSSF funding in Colombia, the UK launched a three year, £2.1 million Police Innovations for Stabilisation in Colombia Programme (SCIP) in 2020, which is helping the transformation of the Colombian National Police. The SCIP aims to contribute to the modernisation of the police service by scaling up and improving police practices with a preventive approach, focusing on i) building links and trust with communities to improve relations and reduce conflict; ii) putting human rights first when managing social tensions and preventing violence; iii) developing and implementing strategies for tackling and preventing gender-based violence. The project is being implemented through the International Organisation of Migration, which will design and deliver activities alongside the Colombian National Police at national and field level, with strategic support and advice from Police Scotland. FCDO programming does not support the training of any units from ESMAD.

The UK is committed to continuing its programming in support of peace, stability and security in Colombia to help implement the peace agreement and build a more peaceful and prosperous society.

■ Developing Countries: Health Services

David Mundell:

[\[98892\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether the Safe To Be Me conference will provide opportunities to platform UK Government funded aid mechanisms, including the Global Fund To Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, that support marginalised groups in accessing healthcare.

Amanda Milling:

With the risk of acquiring HIV globally 25 times higher amongst men who have sex with men, and 34 times higher for transgender women, it is clear that this remains one of the greatest healthcare challenges for LGBT+ people. The UK Government continues to be a major donor to international health organisations and programmes, including the Global Fund.

'Safe To Be Me: A Global Equality Conference' will take place 29 June-1 July 2022, coinciding with the 50th anniversary of the first official London Pride marches. The global event will be the first of its kind in the UK, bringing together governments, policy experts and international organisations who advocate for human rights in every corner of the globe, as well as representatives from business who are leading the way in their respective sectors. It will provide many opportunities to highlight the amazing work that the UK government and our partners are doing to improve the lives of LGBT+ people around the world, including in accessing healthcare and other services.

■ Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Buildings

Rachel Hopkins:

[\[99108\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what the total floor area of her departmental estate was in each year from 2010-11 to 2020-21.

Amanda Milling:

Central estate data for the former Foreign Commonwealth Office and Department for International Development United Kingdom portfolios was published in the annual State of the Estate reports which are published by the Cabinet Office and can be found on www.gov.uk. For example, the 2020-21 report can be found [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/state-of-the-estate-in-2020-2021);

The data for the period requested has been extracted and is summarised in the table below;

	FOREIGN COMMONWEALTH FOREIGN & & DEVELOPMENT OFFICE*(NIA, M ²)	DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT(NIA, M ²)	TOTAL(NIA, M ²)
2020-21	35,078		35,078
2019-20	75,374	16,990	92,364
2018-19	75,374	16,990	92,364
2017-18	75,186	19,358	94,544
2016-17	75,430	19,358	94,788
2015-16	78,386	19,358	97,744
2014-15	96,702	19,358	116,060
2013-14	96,503	48,558	145,061
2013	96,356	48,558	144,914
2012	109,473	63,832	173,305
2011	109,473	55,154	164,627

*Excluding British Council

This data includes Arms Length Bodies, but excludes the British Council estate and the whole of the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office's overseas estate.

In September 2020 the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Department for International Development were merged into a new, single Department; Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office. In March 2021 the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office's Core Central Office premises were onboarded to the Government Property Agency as at 31 March 2021 (King Charles Street, 22 Whitehall and Abercrombie House).

The 2020-21 State of the Estate report published in December 2021 was the first time that Foreign Commonwealth Development Office reported on its combined United Kingdom portfolio, less the onboarded premises (now held and reported on by the Government Property Agency), British Council and leased offices given up in Milton Keynes.

■ Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Official Hospitality

Layla Moran:

[98395]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what the cost to the public purse was of hosting Western Balkans Ministers in London in

December 2021; and what the costs were of the (a) accommodation and (b) subsistence expenses for that function.

James Cleverly:

The FCDO publishes the costs related to overseas visits, incoming visits and events hosted by the Foreign Secretary as part of the Quarterly Transparency Return <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/minister-data#2020>. We will release the costs for this visit in due course as per the usual timeline.

Layla Moran:

[98396]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what the cost to the public purse was of hosting G7 Foreign Ministers in Liverpool in December 2021; and what the costs were of the (a) accommodation and (b) subsistence expenses for that function.

James Cleverly:

The FCDO publishes the costs related to overseas visits, incoming visits and events hosted by the Foreign Secretary as part of the Quarterly Transparency Return <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/minister-data#2020>. We will release the costs for this visit in due course as per the usual timeline.

Layla Moran:

[98397]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what the cost to the public purse was of hosting the Ukrainian Foreign Minister in London in December 2021; and what the costs were of the (a) accommodation and (b) subsistence expenses for that function.

James Cleverly:

The FCDO publishes the costs related to overseas visits, incoming visits and events hosted by the Foreign Secretary as part of the Quarterly Transparency Return <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/minister-data#2020>.

Layla Moran:

[R] [98405]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what the total cost to the public purse was of hosting Gulf Foreign Ministers in London in December 2021; and what the costs were of the (a) accommodation and (b) subsistence expenses for that function.

James Cleverly:

The FCDO publishes the costs related to overseas visits, incoming visits and events hosted by the Foreign Secretary as part of the Quarterly Transparency Return <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/minister-data#2020>. We will release the costs for this event in due course as per the usual timeline.

■ Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria**David Mundell:****[98891]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether the Government plans to continue to work with the Global Fund To Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria in the Government's planned international development and global health strategies.

Amanda Milling:

The UK is the second largest donor to the sixth replenishment (2020-2022) of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria with a pledge of up to £1.4 billion. Future support to the Global Fund will be determined through the finalisation of the Spending Review and linked to the next Global Fund replenishment round taking place in Autumn 2022, and with a view to the international development and global health strategies which remain under development.

■ Gulf States: Visits Abroad**Layla Moran:****[R] [98404]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what the total cost to the public purse was of her visit to Saudi Arabia and Qatar in October 2021; and what the costs were of the (a) flights, (b) accommodation, (c) internal travel and (d) subsistence expenses for that visit.

James Cleverly:

The FCDO publishes the costs related to overseas visits, incoming visits and events hosted by the Foreign Secretary as part of the Quarterly Transparency Return <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/minister-data#2020>. We will release the costs for this visit in due course as per the usual timeline.

■ Hong Kong: British National (Overseas)**Mike Kane:****[98320]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps she is taking to help ensure that people who have arrived in the UK through the Hong Kong British National (Overseas) route can access their Hong Kong Mandatory Provident Fund from the UK using a British National (Overseas) passport.

Amanda Milling:

Hong Kong's Mandatory Provident Fund Authority is unfairly disrupting people's livelihoods by refusing to accept the BN(O) visa when Hong Kongers apply for early withdrawal of their pensions. This is preventing Hong Kongers from accessing funds they are entitled to. The Government has raised our concerns with the relevant Hong Kong authorities.

■ India: Homicide

Mr Steve Baker:

[98270]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the accuracy of reports of extrajudicial killings in India where persons falsely accused of terrorism have been killed by (a) Indian armed forces and (b) police in Kashmir.

Amanda Milling:

We are aware of reports of ongoing violence in Kashmir in recent weeks. We express our condolences to the families of those who have lost their lives, including security personnel and civilians. Any allegations of mistreatment by the police or armed forces should be investigated thoroughly and transparently by the relevant authorities.

■ India: Visits Abroad

Layla Moran:

[98402]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what the cost to the public purse was of her visit to India in October 2021; and what the costs were of the (a) flights, (b) accommodation, (c) internal travel and (d) subsistence expenses for that visit.

James Cleverly:

The FCDO publishes the costs related to overseas visits, incoming visits and events hosted by the Foreign Secretary as part of the Quarterly Transparency Return <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/minister-data#2020>. We will release the costs for this visit in due course as per the usual timeline.

■ International Assistance: Climate Change

Sarah Jones:

[99369]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether it is her policy to recognise the importance of loss and damage finance as a pillar of wider climate finance; and what plans her Department has to increase the international availability of such funds.

Vicky Ford:

The UK provided £9.8 billion of International Climate Finance (ICF) between 2011/12 and 2020/21, and we are committed to providing a further £11.6 billion between 2021/22 and 2025/26 (a doubling of our ICF spend in the previous five years), with an extra £1 billion in 2025 if the economy grows as forecast. Between 2016 and 2019, the UK spent £2 billion of ICF on adaptation and investments in areas needed to address loss and damage directly linked to climate change, including over £200 million on humanitarian assistance, £283 million on social protection and £115 million on financial protection and risk management.

In addition, we are using our COP Presidency to drive greater action on adaptation and loss and damage having given these issues more prominence at COP26 than at

any other COP, including by hosting a Presidency event on Loss and Damage. We are delighted that this COP recognised the need for money to be provided to tackle loss and damage through existing sources, agreed the functions and funding arrangements for the Santiago Network and founded the Glasgow Dialogue, where Parties, civil society and technicians will come together to discuss how to increase the funds applied to loss and damage and how Parties in need can access these funds.

■ Iran: Terrorism

Alexander Stafford:

[\[98487\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions she has had with international partners on Iran's support for regional terror groups.

James Cleverly:

The Government regularly engages with partners, both in the region and internationally, on Iran, including Iranian political, financial and military support to several militant and proscribed groups. Most recently on 20 December 2021 the Foreign Secretary hosted representatives from the Gulf Co-operation Council at Chevening, where Iran's destabilising regional activity was discussed. The Foreign Secretary also discussed such activity with the Israeli Foreign Minister Lapid on his visit to the UK on 29 November 2021.

■ Iraq: Syria

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[98250\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the impact on humanitarian access to north-east Syria of the closure of the border crossing with the Kurdistan region of Iraq on 15 December 2021.

James Cleverly:

We are engaging with our aid partners in north east Syria, who are responding to disruptions to their operations, where they assess 1.8 million are in need of humanitarian assistance. The closure carries a greater impact given the spread of the Omicron Covid variant and there are a number of critical humanitarian supplies in the pipeline affected by the closure, including medical supplies for health facilities, materials for rehabilitating drinking water and irrigation infrastructure, and wheat seeds. The UK continues to advocate for increased cross-border access across all of northern Syria and supports the resumption of passage for humanitarian personnel and life-saving humanitarian supplies.

■ Khurram Parvez**Mr Steve Baker:****[98269]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the welfare of Khurram Parvez, the Kashmiri human rights activist, who was arrested by the National Investigation Agency in Srinagar Indian-administered Kashmir and who is currently reported to be imprisoned in New Delhi; and if she will make a statement.

Amanda Milling:

We are aware of the reports regarding the detention of Khurram Parvez and continue to follow his case closely. We are clear on the importance of rights being respected and continue to call for all remaining restrictions imposed in Kashmir since the constitutional changes in August 2019 to be lifted as soon as possible, and for political detainees to be released.

■ Latvia: Visits Abroad**Layla Moran:****[98399]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what the cost to the public purse was of her visit to Latvia in December 2021; and what the costs were of the (a) flights, (b) accommodation, (c) internal travel and (d) subsistence expenses for that visit.

James Cleverly:

The FCDO publishes the costs related to overseas visits, incoming visits and events hosted by the Foreign Secretary as part of the Quarterly Transparency Return <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/minister-data#2020>. We will release the costs for this visit in due course as per the usual timeline.

■ Marfrig Global Foods: Loans**Ms Lyn Brown:****[98249]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether any (a) UK Official Development Assistance or (b) other public funds have been used in connection with the Inter-American Development Bank's loan to Marfrig Global Foods.

James Cleverly:

The UK is aware of a prospective Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Group loan to Marfrig Global Foods, which is due to be considered by the Board of Directors of IDB Invest in April 2022. IDB Invest is the private sector arm of the IDB Group. The UK is a member of the IDB, which is the arm of the IDB Group that lends to sovereign governments. However, the UK is not currently a member of IDB Invest, which is a separate entity from the IDB and invests in the private sector. No UK ODA or other public funds have been used in connection with this loan.

■ Myanmar: International Cooperation

Catherine West:

[101801]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the Minister for Asia's visit to Cambodia in January 2022, whether the Minister made representations to her Cambodian counterparts on the situation in Myanmar during that visit; and whether she made representations to those counterparts on the Government's support for the position of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on Myanmar as ASEAN Chair during that visit.

Amanda Milling:

I was in Cambodia between 9-11 January. In my meetings with members of the Cambodian Government, including Foreign Minister Prak Sokhonn, I reaffirmed the UK's support for ASEAN leadership on the situation in Myanmar, and pressed on the importance of the Five Point Consensus.

I expressed concern at the escalating violence in Myanmar and urged Cambodia to use its ASEAN Chairmanship in 2022 to move towards a lasting solution to the crisis.

■ North America: Visits Abroad

Layla Moran:

[98406]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what the total cost to the public purse was of her visit to the US and Mexico in September 2021; and what the costs were of the (a) flights, (b) accommodation, (c) internal travel and (d) subsistence expenses for that visit.

James Cleverly:

The FCDO publishes the costs related to overseas visits made by the Foreign Secretary as part of the Quarterly Transparency Return, which can be viewed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/minister-data#2020>. We will release the costs for this visit in due course as per the usual timeline.

■ Philippines: Storms

Ms Lyn Brown:

[98900]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps she is taking to support (a) children and (b) adults affected by Typhoon Rai/Odette in the Philippines on (i) increased risks of infectious disease, (ii) WASH needs, (iii) nutrition needs, (iv) education needs, (v) shelter needs, and (vi) protection from increased risks of abuse, exploitation and gender-based violence.

Amanda Milling:

The UK was saddened to see the devastation wrought by Typhoon Rai on the Philippines on 16 and 17 December. We offer our deepest sympathies to those who have been affected.

The UK has committed £1 million to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) emergency appeal, launched on 18 December. This

will go towards supporting the immediate and early recovery needs of affected people in areas including water, sanitation and hygiene; shelter; and protection of the most vulnerable.

The UK is also one of the top contributors to the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) which is contributing £9 million to the UN's Humanitarian Response Plan for Typhoon Odette. With CERF funding, UN agencies and partners are providing life-saving assistance in areas including health; protection; food assistance; and education to a total of 244,800 people. The IFRC are still considering what the longer-term support to those affected by the Typhoon is appropriate.

■ **Royal Institute of International Affairs: Official Hospitality**

Layla Moran: [98398]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what the cost to the public purse was of her speech at Chatham House in London in December 2021; and what the costs were of the subsistence expenses for that function.

James Cleverly:

The FCDO publishes the costs related to overseas visits, incoming visits and events hosted by the Foreign Secretary as part of the Quarterly Transparency Return <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/minister-data#2020>.

■ **South East Asia: Visits Abroad**

Layla Moran: [98401]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what the cost to the public purse was of her visit to Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand in November 2021; and what the costs were of the (a) flights, (b) accommodation, (c) internal travel and (d) subsistence expenses for that visit.

James Cleverly:

The FCDO publishes the costs related to overseas visits, incoming visits and events hosted by the Foreign Secretary as part of the Quarterly Transparency Return <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/minister-data#2020>. We will release the costs for this visit in due course as per the usual timeline.

■ **Spain: Visits Abroad**

Layla Moran: [98394]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what the cost to the public purse was of her visit to Madrid in December 2021; and what the costs were of the (a) flights, (b) accommodation, (c) internal travel and (d) subsistence expenses for that visit.

James Cleverly:

The FCDO publishes the costs related to overseas visits, incoming visits and events hosted by the Foreign Secretary as part of the Quarterly Transparency Return

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/minister-data#2020>. We will release the costs for this visit in due course as per the usual timeline.

■ **Sweden: Visits Abroad**

Layla Moran: [98400]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what the cost to the public purse was of her visit to Sweden in December 2021; and what the costs were of the (a) flights, (b) accommodation, (c) internal travel and (d) subsistence expenses for that visit.

James Cleverly:

The FCDO publishes the costs related to overseas visits, incoming visits and events hosted by the Foreign Secretary as part of the Quarterly Transparency Return <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/minister-data#2020>. We will release the costs for this visit in due course as per the usual timeline.

■ **Tigray: Ethnic Groups**

Ms Lyn Brown: [98247]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will take steps to engage with the (a) Government of Saudi Arabia and (b) United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on allegations of mistreatment of ethnic Tigrayan migrants following (i) deportation or (ii) other forms of repatriation to Ethiopia.

James Cleverly:

We are aware of reports of mistreatment and poor conditions in detention centres, and the deportation of illegal migrants in Saudi Arabia. We regularly raise this and other human rights issues with the Saudi authorities through diplomatic channels, including Ministers, our Ambassador, and the British Embassy in Riyadh. In November 2020, I raised the treatment of migrants with the Saudi Ambassador to the UK. Later that month, representatives from British Embassy Riyadh visited the Al-Shumaisi Deportation centre - where approximately 90% of the detainees at the time were Ethiopian. Vicky Ford MP, Minister for Africa, spoke with Ethiopian Justice Minister Gedion in December 2021 and pressed him for an end to mass detentions in Ethiopia. Senior FCDO officials have also regularly engaged the UNHCR on this situation. We continue to monitor this situation carefully. No aspect of our relationship with Saudi Arabia prevents us from speaking frankly about human rights at both ministerial and official level.

■ **Venezuela: Human Rights**

Fabian Hamilton: [101637]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recommendations the Government is making to the International Criminal Court to assist with its investigation into human rights violations in Venezuela.

Vicky Ford:

The UK respects the independence of the International Criminal Court (ICC), and as a State Party to the Rome Statute, we do not provide recommendations on investigations undertaken by the Office of the Prosecutor. As an ICC State Party, the UK often provides assistance in response to requests for assistance or cooperation from the Court pursuant to Part 9 of the Rome Statute. However, we have not yet received any such requests in relation to this situation.

Fabian Hamilton:[\[101638\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recommendations the Government is making to the UN Human Rights Council in regard to its Universal Periodic Review into Venezuela.

Vicky Ford:

We are currently finalizing our statement for the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review into Venezuela. The Advance Questions we have submitted to the UN highlight our concerns around humanitarian access, LGBTQ+ rights, the justice system, treatment of prisoners and the handling of corrupt individuals who cause harm to society. We expect that the recommendations in our statement will address some of these points.

■ Yemen: Peace Negotiations**Gill Furniss:**[\[101802\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of the potential for a ceasefire and peace talks in Yemen.

James Cleverly:

A negotiated political settlement is the only way to bring long-term stability to Yemen. On 10 January I and senior officials hosted UN Special Envoy for Yemen, Hans Grundberg, in London and reiterated UK support for UN led peace efforts to drive forward the political process in Yemen. We urge the parties to engage constructively in negotiations to end the conflict and alleviate the dire humanitarian crisis.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**■ Accident and Emergency Departments****Helen Morgan:**[\[100752\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assistance the Government plans to provide to NHS trusts in England that have average A&E waiting times almost double the national average.

Helen Morgan:

[\[100754\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what extra assistance the Government plans to provide to NHS trusts in England that have ambulance queues almost three times greater than the national average.

Edward Argar:

The National Health Service will receive an extra £5.4 billion to April 2022 to support performance and the response to COVID-19. This includes £478 million to continue the enhanced hospital discharge programme to ensure bed capacity, improve patient flow through hospitals and improve accident and emergency (A&E) performance. We have also invested £450 million to upgrade A&E facilities in over 120 trusts to improve capacity through expanding waiting areas, increasing the number of treatment cubicles, reducing overcrowding and supporting social distancing.

In addition, NHS England and NHS Improvement are providing support to hospital sites with ambulance queues and handover delay challenges. This includes the placement of specialised hospital ambulance liaison officers, safe cohorting of patients and direct access other area of hospitals to accelerate ambulance handovers. NHS England and NHS Improvement have also provided an extra £55 million for ambulance trusts to increase staffing levels, such as more than 700 additional staff in control rooms and on the frontline. This includes £1.85 million to place hospital ambulance liaison officers at the most challenged hospitals to help address ambulance queues.

■ Ambulance Services: Coronavirus

Ian Lavery:

[\[98955\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to provide additional support to the ambulance service amid (a) staff shortages and (b) high demand during the current covid-19 outbreak.

Edward Argar:

NHS England and NHS Improvement are supporting to ambulance trusts in England with an investment of an extra £55 million to increase staff numbers for the winter, including over 700 additional staff in control rooms and on the frontline. This includes £1.85 million to place more hospital ambulance liaison officers at the most challenged hospitals to address ambulance queues and £4.4 million to maintain an additional 154 ambulances.

■ Coronavirus

Adam Holloway:

[\[92848\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many and what proportion of hospitalised covid-19 patients are unvaccinated.

Maggie Throup:

Between week 46 (week commencing 15 November 2021) and week 49 (week commencing 6 December 2021) there were 8235 COVID-19 cases presenting to

emergency care within 28 days of a positive specimen, resulting in overnight inpatient admission. Of these, 3532 (42.9%) were not vaccinated.

■ **Coronavirus: Screening**

Jon Trickett:

[\[99303\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of access to lateral flow tests in the (a) Wakefield district and (b) West Yorkshire region as of 7 January 2022.

Jon Trickett:

[\[99304\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has been made of the effect on adherence to his Department's guidelines for those people needing to take daily covid-19 lateral flow tests where there is a shortage of access to those tests.

Maggie Throup:

In the light of the Omicron wave, demand for LFD tests has increased; however, there is no shortage of lateral flow device tests and we continue to procure enough stock, including in the Wakefield and West Yorkshire areas, through our national and local delivery channels. We have significantly increased distribution capacity to meet current demand. Lateral flow device tests can also be collected from local pharmacies and some community sites.

■ **Coronavirus: Vaccination**

Rebecca Long Bailey:

[\[93770\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 26 October 2021 to Question 56604, what progress his Department has made towards the provision of a vaccination facility in every region of England offering the service for overseas vaccinations to be recorded in the National Immunisation Management Service (NIMS); and which of these facilities are currently available for those in (a) Salford and Eccles and (b) the wider North West of England.

Maggie Throup:

Currently, there are 17 vaccination centres capable of recording overseas vaccinations in the National Immunisation Management Service. There is at least one site in each of the seven National Health Service regions. The closest vaccination site to Salford and Eccles is the Etihad Vaccination Centre in Manchester. Two more vaccination centres are planned in the North West of England.

■ **Coroners: Perinatal Mortality**

Tim Loughton:

[\[98879\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to publish the findings of the consultation on amending the Coroners Act 2009 to permit coroners to

investigate stillbirths as specified in the Civil Partnerships, Marriages and Deaths (Registration Etc) Act 2019.

Maria Caulfield:

The Government's response to the consultation on coronial investigations of stillbirths has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are working to publish the response as soon as possible.

■ **Dementia and Heart Diseases**

Jim Shannon:

[\[98283\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether there has been a relative increase in the numbers of people diagnosed with (a) dementia and (b) heart disease over the last 18 months.

Edward Argar:

There has been a decrease in the numbers of people diagnosed with dementia and heart disease in the last 18 months. The reduction in the numbers of people diagnosed with dementia and heart disease can be attributed to the impact of COVID-19.

The number of people registered to with a general practitioner (GP), the data shows that 0.72% were diagnosed with dementia in November 2021, compared to 0.73% in June 2020. This coincided with a reduction of 25% in referrals from GPs to memory clinics. There has been a reduction of 0.04% in the number of people diagnosed with heart disease in England in the last 18 months.

■ **Department of Health and Social Care: Buildings**

Rachel Hopkins:

[\[99103\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the total floor area of his departmental estate was in each year from 2010-11 to 2020-21.

Edward Argar:

The following table shows the total floor area of the estate and land held by the Department and its arm's length bodies in each year from 2010/11 to 2020/21.

	TOTAL FLOOR AREA IN METRES	
	SQUARED	LAND IN HECTARES
2020/21	467,408	68.44
2019/20	422,204	69.25
2018/19	409,765	68.68
2017/18	415,473	68.86
2016/17	392,125	60.35

	TOTAL FLOOR AREA IN METRES	
	SQUARED	LAND IN HECTARES
2015/16	379,430	65.54
2014/15	353,435	111.71
2013/14	343,532	111.77
2012/13	350,762	133.88
2011/12	367,992	26.74
2010/11	420,004	-

■ Diabetes: Medical Equipment

Jim Shannon:

[\[98295\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what his timetable is for conclusion of the pilot of the closed loop technology to continually monitor blood glucose and adjust insulin given for type one diabetics; and what estimate he has made of when that technology will be widely available to all suitable type one diabetics.

Maria Caulfield:

NHS England and NHS Improvement are currently collecting data on the use of closed loop systems as part of the hybrid closed loop pilot. The data collected is due to be analysed in April 2022. The findings will be shared with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) to inform a multiple technology appraisal. The outcome of this appraisal is expected in autumn 2022. This will determine whether the technology will be offered in the National Health Service and which patients it is recommended for. If recommended by NICE, trusts would be expected to routinely offer the technology within six months of the publication of the guidance.

■ Hospital Beds

Helen Morgan:

[\[100753\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what extra assistance the Government plans to provide to NHS trusts in England that have hospital bed waiting times over double the national average.

Edward Argar:

The National Health Service is working with local authorities and partners to ensure that medically fit patients can be discharged home as soon as possible seven days a week. People who are clinically ready and no longer need to be in hospital are supported to return to a familiar environment where possible, until they are assessed for their long-term health and care needs.

We have established a national discharge taskforce and allocated approximately £3.3 billion to support safe and timely hospital discharge since March 2020. This includes an additional £478 million to continue hospital discharge programmes until March 2022. Systems are also making full use of non-acute beds in the local health and care system, including in hospices, community beds and the independent sector.

■ Hospital Beds: Coronavirus

Charlotte Nichols: [99078]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the capacity is for covid-19 patients in hospitals in England.

Edward Argar:

There is no fixed capacity for COVID-19 patients in hospitals in England. The number of available beds is flexible to meet changes in demand.

■ Maternity Services: Finance

Catherine West: [99025]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will provide additional support to NHS maternity wards in England during winter 2021-22.

Maria Caulfield:

NHS England and NHS Improvement published 'Winter Preparedness: Nursing and midwifery safer staffing' guidance in November 2021, which is available at the following link:

https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2021/11/BW1068_Staffing-assurance-framework-for-winter-2021-preparedness_12112021.pdf

This sets out planning measures for the midwifery workforce, as well as guidelines on escalation, governance, indemnity and staff training and wellbeing. It supplements previous guidance on procedure to ensure that maternity wards have planned for the winter months during the pandemic.

■ Members: Correspondence

Robert Largan: [98470]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to respond to the enquiry from the hon. Member for High Peak of 16 November 2021, referenced RL30693.

Edward Argar:

We replied to the hon. Member on 12 January 2022.

Robert Largan:

[\[98473\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to respond to the enquiry from the hon. Member for High Peak of 27 October 2021, referenced RL29959.

Edward Argar:

We replied to the hon. Member on 26 November 2021.

Robert Largan:

[\[98478\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to respond to the enquiry from the hon. Member for High Peak of 29 September 2021, referenced RL27501.

Edward Argar:

We replied to the hon. Member on 10 January 2022.

Robert Largan:

[\[98479\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to respond to the enquiry from the hon. Member for High Peak of 8 October 2021, referenced RL21517.

Edward Argar:

We replied to the hon. Member on 10 January 2022.

■ **Motor Neurone Disease: Research**

Claire Hanna:

[\[100727\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how the £50 million for targeted motor neurone disease research can be accessed.

Maria Caulfield:

This funding is available through the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). The NIHR and UKRI rely on researchers submitting high-quality applications to access funding. All applications are subject to peer review and judged in open competition, with awards made on the basis of the importance to patients and health and care services, value for money and scientific quality.

■ **NHS and Social Services: Staff**

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[98216\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to (a) recruit and retain NHS and social care workers, (b) tackle the staffing shortage in the NHS and social care services.

Edward Argar:

Workforce statistics for October 2021 show that there are over 1.2 million full time equivalent staff working in the National Health Service or over 1.3 million, headcount. We are on schedule to deliver 50,000 more nurses by the end of this Parliament and ensure a sustainable long-term workforce supply in the future. We have funded an

additional 1,500 undergraduate medical school places each year for domestic students in England - an increase of 25% over three years. This expansion was completed in September 2020 and has delivered five new medical schools in England. The NHS People Plan aims to retain staff by assisting organisations to provide ongoing support to staff to improve their health and wellbeing.

The adult social care reform white paper, 'People at the Heart of Care', sets out an investment of at least £500 million in the adult social care workforce. This aims to deliver a rewarding career with opportunities to develop and progress, where social care staff are recognised and their wellbeing prioritised. On 10 December we announced £300 million for local authorities and care providers to recruit and retain care staff through the winter. This funding will enhance the existing £162.5 million Workforce Recruitment and Retention Fund. On 24 December, we announced that care workers, care assistants and home care workers will be eligible for the Health and Care Visa for a 12-month period. These roles will also be added to the Shortage Occupation List.

■ **NHS: Coronavirus**

Mr Steve Baker:

[R] [101706]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what calculation he has made of the last date that a person working for the NHS, who is covered by the Government's Vaccination as a Condition of Deployment, would be to receive their first covid-19 vaccination in order to have received both covid-19 vaccinations by the April deadline.

Edward Argar:

For all COVID-19 vaccines currently available in the United Kingdom, the clinical advice states there should be an eight-week interval between first and second doses. Therefore, existing National Health Service staff would require a first dose by 3 February in order to have received a second dose by 1 April.

■ **Ovarian Cancer: Health Services**

Mrs Sharon Hodgson:

[98893]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that all women diagnosed with ovarian cancer are able to access the best possible treatment.

Maria Caulfield:

As part of the NHS Long Term Plan, the Department and NHS England and NHS Improvement are aiming to offer personalised care to all cancer patients, providing greater choice and control on how their care is planned and delivered.

NHS England and NHS Improvement are commissioning a clinical audit into ovarian cancer to understand any variations in care, improve access to treatments and ensure the greatest impact on patient outcomes. NHS England and NHS Improvement's Cancer Quality of Life Survey collates information from patients on their quality of life and assist cancer teams to improve cancer care and outcomes.

Mrs Sharon Hodgson:

[\[98894\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the importance of a shortened referral pathway for ovarian cancer where a CA125 blood test and ultrasound are carried out at the same time.

Edward Argar:

The National Health Service is considering the most effective use of diagnostic testing, including the use of CA125 blood test and ultrasound early in the suspected ovarian cancer pathway.

HOME OFFICE

■ Alpha Men Assemble

Michael Fabricant:

[\[100425\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if her Department or its agencies are aware of and are monitoring the activities of anti-vax group Alpha Men Assemble and Mr Danny Glass who reportedly recently held an exercise in Chasewater Park near Lichfield; and if she will make a statement.

Kit Malthouse:

[Holding answer 13 January 2022]: Home Office officials are aware of the event held at Chasewater Park at the weekend and police were in attendance to ensure safety of the public.

The Government engages with partners to build a picture of the prevalence of potentially radical groups within communities. We keep our response to groups and individuals under constant review to ensure it is best placed to tackle the evolving threat.

■ Asylum: Domestic Violence

Owen Thompson:

[\[99015\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she had made a recent assessment of the adequacy of protection and support available for migrant victims of domestic abuse in complying with obligations under Articles 4(3) and 59 of the Istanbul Convention.

Rachel Maclean:

The Government is committed to ensuring that all victims of crime are treated first and foremost as victims, regardless of their immigration status. We are committed to looking at options to support all migrant victims of domestic abuse over the longer term.

In April 2021 the Home Office launched the £1.5 million Support for Migrant Victims (SMV) Scheme to support migrant victims of domestic abuse who have no recourse to public funds. The pilot is being run by Southall Black Sisters and their delivery partners for a duration of 12 months and provides accommodation and wrap-around

support. We have also appointed an independent evaluator, Behavioural Insights Ltd, to assess the Scheme, with a view to producing a final report in Summer 2022. The Scheme will help the Government secure an accurate picture of the support needs of migrant victims of domestic abuse and will inform subsequent policy decisions.

As set out in the report published on 1 November 2021 under the Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (Ratification of Convention) Act 2017, the compliance position for Article 4(3) of the Istanbul Convention (to the extent that it relates to non-discrimination on the grounds of migrant or refugee status) and Article 59 is under review pending the evaluation and findings from the SMV scheme. This Government remains committed to ratifying the Convention as soon as possible and is working to resolve the outstanding issues. This commitment was reiterated in the Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy, published in July 2021.

■ British Nationality

Chi Onwurah:

[\[101714\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the provisions of the Nationality and Borders Bill in respect of powers to remove British citizenship from people that the Government believes are eligible for foreign citizenship will apply to British citizens who are eligible for Israeli citizenship under Israel's law of return.

Tom Pursglove:

Clause 9 of the Nationality and Borders Bill relates solely to how a person is notified of a decision to deprive them of their British citizenship. There is no change to the reasons for which a person could be deprived of their British citizenship or to their right of appeal.

■ Home Office: Buildings

Rachel Hopkins:

[\[99105\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the total floor area of her departmental estate was in each year from 2010-11 to 2020-21.

Damian Hinds:

Details of the department's total floor area in each year are published as part of the annual State of the Estate report.

■ Interpol: Public Appointments

Catherine West:

[\[98361\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the adequacy of the recent appointment Ahmed Naser Al-Raisi as President of Interpol in the context of the UAE's human rights record.

Kit Malthouse:

The UK Government reviewed all candidates for the presidency of INTERPOL and considered our vote carefully in advance of the elections. We are committed to the promotion of universal freedoms and human rights and we encourage all states, including the United Arab Emirates, to uphold international human rights obligations.

Proportionate due diligence is undertaken into individuals seeking election to the role of INTERPOL President. In the run up to the elections at the General Assembly, officials from the Home Office, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and the National Crime Agency were in regular contact with international counterparts.

The decision on who to support was based on a thorough assessment of the merits of each candidate.

Members: Correspondence**Robert Largan:**[\[98477\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the enquiry from the hon. Member for High Peak of 1 September 2021, referenced RL26044.

Victoria Atkins:

In due course.

Nationality and Borders Bill**Stuart C McDonald:**[\[99342\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 4 November 2021 to Question 67180 and the oral contribution from the Minister for Justice and Tackling Illegal Migration to the Home Affairs Committee on 17 November 2021, when she will publish the economic impact assessment for the Nationality and Borders Bill.

Tom Pursglove:

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

As previously stated, an economic impact assessment of the Nationality and Borders Bill will be published in due course, to complement the Equality Impact Assessment, which was published on 16 September.

The Equality Impact Assessment can be found on the GOV.UK website;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-nationality-and-borders-bill-equality-impact-assessment>.

Police Custody**Robert Largan:**[\[98481\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to Answer of 20 December to Question 93082, (a) why her Department does not collect data on the

number of police holding cells in England and Wales; (b) whether data has been collected on the number of police holding cells in England and Wales at any time within the last ten years; (c) and whether her Department has made an assessment of the effecting on holding that data on estimating policing capability.

Kit Malthouse:

The Home Office does not hold information centrally on the number of police holding cells across England and Wales. Therefore, this information has not been collected at any time within the last ten years. Data collected from police forces are done so on a priority basis in line with policy and user requirements whilst balancing the burden that data reporting places on forces.

Decisions about the most effective use of resources and capability, including the number of police holding cells, are an operational matter for police and crime commissioners and chief constables, tailored to the needs of their local community.

■ **Refugees: Afghanistan**

Dan Jarvis: [\[100552\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people in the UK as at 5 January 2022 will be resettled through the Afghan Citizen Resettlement Scheme.

Dan Jarvis: [\[100553\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people who were called forward for evacuation under Operation Pitting but were not relocated to the UK will be resettled in the UK through the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme.

Dan Jarvis: [\[100554\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish the details of how the UNHCR referral pathway will identify people in third countries eligible for resettlement in the UK through Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme.

Dan Jarvis: [\[100555\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish the (a) timescale for opening and (b) further details of the third referral pathway of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme.

Dan Jarvis: [\[100556\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people evacuated under Operation Pitting will be included in the 5,000 people earmarked for resettlement in the UK in the first year of the Afghan Citizen Resettlement Scheme.

Victoria Atkins:

[Holding answer 13 January 2022]: The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme opened on 6th January, providing up to 20,000 women, children and others at risk with a safe and legal route to resettle in the UK.

Due to the success of our emergency evacuation and the larger than anticipated number of people brought over to the UK, we plan to exceed our initial aim of 5,000 people in the first year of the ACRS.

Dan Jarvis:

[101732]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what progress her Department has been made on moving Afghan refugees out of bridging accommodation; and what assessment her Department has made of the impact on Afghans in (a) Afghanistan and (b) third countries by the time taken in being able to relocate them to the UK.

Victoria Atkins:

We do not want to keep people in temporary accommodation for any longer than is absolutely necessary and homes have already been provided for more than 4,000 Afghans who arrived in the UK before, during, and after Operation Pitting. Over 300 local authorities have pledged to resettle families so far, and the government continues to work alongside local authorities and the private rented sector to secure more permanent homes. The pace at which people move out of bridging accommodation is dependent on the number of offers the Government receives from Local Authorities.

We continue to encourage councils that have not yet made offers or those that can offer more housing to do so. Landlords are also being encouraged to submit housing offers via the Government's Housing Portal.

We have already evacuated around 1,500 Afghans from neighbouring countries since the end of Operation Pitting and, from Spring, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) will refer refugees for resettlement under the ACRS, based on assessments of protection need.

The ACRS scheme was formally announced on 6th January 2022, providing up to 20,000 women, children and others at risk with a safe and legal route to resettle in the UK. Further information can be found at the following gov.uk website [Afghan citizens resettlement scheme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/afghan-citizens-resettlement-scheme)

Ruth Jones:

[99050]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent discussions she has had with Cabinet colleagues on the roll out of the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme.

Victoria Atkins:

The design and implementation of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) has been worked on and discussed regularly by Ministers across Government.

We are taking a cross-Government approach to ensuring Afghans arriving in the UK are able to rebuild their lives, find work, pursue education and integrate with their local communities.

We are also working closely with Devolved Governments in welcoming and supporting people fleeing Afghanistan.

■ Theft: Catalytic Converters

Steve Reed:

[101742]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of arrests on suspicion of theft of catalytic converters from motor vehicles in each of the last three years.

Tom Pursglove:

The Home Office does not hold information on the number of arrests for theft of catalytic converters from motor vehicles centrally.

The Home Office collect and publish data annually on the number of arrests, including reason for arrest, in the Police Powers and Procedures publication which can be found here: [Police powers and procedures England and Wales statistics - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/police-powers-and-procedures-england-and-wales-statistics). However, data for reason for arrest are collected at offence group level only (e.g. theft offences) and cannot be broken down to identify if it was a theft of a catalytic converter.

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) provides estimates of the number of incidents of theft from vehicles, including details of the items stolen, such as car parts. The latest available data is published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in the 'Nature of Crime: vehicle related theft' tables, available here:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/natureofcrimevehiclerelatedtheft>.

■ Tools: Theft

Thangam Debbonaire:

[98331]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to help tackle theft of tradespeople's tools from vehicles.

Kit Malthouse:

The Government is tackling acquisitive crime as a priority and is committed to reducing the ability for criminals to profit. We understand the negative impact theft has on victims who rely on the tools of their trade to earn a living. We have established an expert Stolen Goods Working Group with the police and academia to tackle the markets for stolen goods. The group is examining ways to make property more identifiable and traceable, and are working with partners to increase enforcement.

We also continue to work closely with the police and motor manufacturers through the National Vehicle Crime Working Group, established by the National Police Chiefs' Council lead for vehicle crime. This includes consideration of how we can reduce thefts of items from vehicles. Through this Working Group, a network of vehicle crime specialists has been established across all police forces in England and Wales to share expertise.

To ensure the police have the resources they need to tackle crime, the Government is recruiting an additional 20,000 police officers by March 2023. The police have now recruited an additional 11,053 officers towards the target.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Arms Trade: Human Rights

Ruth Cadbury:

[\[100567\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to the Written Statement of 8 December 2021, HCWS449 on Trade Policy Update, whether she received representations from representatives of human rights organisations on the potential effect impact of that statement on the quantity of export licenses granted .

Penny Mordaunt:

[Holding answer 13 January 2022]: We did not receive representations from human rights organisations; however, officials are meeting with representatives of non-governmental organisations to discuss the revised Criteria on 18 January.

JUSTICE

■ Administration of Justice: Freedom of Expression

Bob Seely:

[\[98418\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what his policy is on international libel litigation in the UK courts; and what steps he is taking to help ensure freedom of speech in the justice system.

James Cartlidge:

The Government believes that the right to speak freely and debate issues without fear of censure is a vital part of a democratic society, and that libel proceedings should not be used to impede and frustrate that debate.

The reforms we introduced in the Defamation Act 2013 have helped to rebalance the law to offer more effective protection for freedom of speech. In particular, by tightening the test to be applied by the courts in relation to libel actions brought against people who are not domiciled in the UK.

■ Catalytic Converters: Theft

Steve Reed:

[\[101743\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the number of convictions for theft of catalytic converters from motor vehicles.

James Cartlidge:

Acquisitive crime is when the offender derives material gain from the crime, such as theft, burglary, fraud and robbery. Acquisitive crime, which includes catalytic converter theft, is a Home Office responsibility. Nonetheless the Government is committed to tackling the theft of catalytic converters, working closely with police and motor manufacturers through the National Vehicle Crime Working Group, established by the National Police Chiefs' Council lead for vehicle crime and overseen by the Government's Crime and Justice Taskforce, to determine what more can be done.

The Government enacted the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 which has been instrumental in tackling this crime. The Government also funded the set-up of the National Infrastructure Crime Reduction Partnership (NICRP), which ensures national co-ordination of policing and law enforcement partners to tackle metal theft, including the theft of catalytic converters. It provides training to law enforcement and other partner agencies, shares intelligence to target offenders, and implements crime prevention measures. The British Transport Police, through the NICRP, has conducted two national weeks of actions, which resulted in 64 arrests, over 1,400 stopped vehicles and over 1,000 catalytic converters and other items of stolen property were recovered.

■ **Courts****Steve Reed:****[100558]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he has made of the average number of cases (a) crown courts and (b) magistrates courts have heard in each of the last three years.

James Cartlidge:

The table below shows the latest published data on the number of disposals in the Crown Courts in the last three years. This data can be found on the [criminal court statistics information page](#).

NUMBER OF DISPOSALS IN THE CROWN COURTS

2019	2020	2021 (up to June)
99,654	78,195	48,018

The table below shows the latest published data on the number of disposals of criminal cases in the Magistrates' Courts in the last three years. This data can be found on the [criminal court statistics information page](#)

NUMBER OF DISPOSALS IN THE MAGISTRATES' COURTS

2019	2020	2021 (up to June)
1,441,778	1,040,308	590,065

■ Courts: Security

Steve Reed:

[101741]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many courts with secure docks for holding defendants have been closed in England and Wales since 2012.

James Cartlidge:

We do not hold information on the number of courts in England and Wales with secure docks that have closed since 2012.

The decision to close any court is not taken lightly, it only happens following full public consultation and only where sufficient capacity existed in other nearby courts to accommodate the work of the closing courts, and where suitable facilities, such as secure docks are available. Courts that have closed were either underused, dilapidated or too close to one another.

■ Criminal Proceedings

Steve Reed:

[101740]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many criminal cases were heard in each (a) magistrates' court and (b) crown court in England and Wales in each year between 2016 and 2021.

James Cartlidge:

The table below shows the latest published data on the number of disposals in the Crown Courts in England and Wales from 2016 to 2021. This data can be found on the [criminal court statistics information page](#).

NUMBER OF DISPOSALS IN THE CROWN COURTS

2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021 (up to June)
123,257	115,726	105,782	99,654	78,195	48,018

The table below shows the latest published data on the number of disposals of criminal cases in the Magistrates' Courts from 2016 to 2021. This data can be found on the [criminal court statistics information page](#).

NUMBER OF DISPOSALS IN THE MAGISTRATES' COURTS

2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021 (up to June)
1,566,357	1,509,022	1,456,735	1,441,778	1,040,308	590,065

For further data on disposals including by each Crown Court and by region in the Magistrates' court please see the Crown Court cases received, disposed and outstanding tool and the Magistrates' courts cases received, disposed and outstanding tool available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-court-statistics-quarterly-april-to-june-2021>.

■ Criminal Proceedings: Artificial Intelligence

Darren Jones: [98380]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the debate of 10 March 2021, Official report, col 144WH, what discussions his Department has had on the recent work of the Criminal Procedure Rule Committee in respect of proposed changes to the legal status of algorithmic decisions in criminal law.

James Cartlidge:

The outcome of the Rule Committee's continuing discussion is awaited and Ministry of Justice officials are participating. The Committee will be pleased to describe that discussion in full detail and to supply the hon. Member with copies of its papers. Its secretary will write to him with those documents.

■ Demonstrations: Bristol

Michael Fabricant: [98885]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether he plans to bring forward legislative proposals to amend the law following the acquittal of the four people accused of causing criminal damage to a statue of Edward Colston in Bristol.

James Cartlidge:

The Crown Prosecution Service can choose to refer the case to the Attorney General, and if she agrees, she can ask the Court of Appeal to review whether the law needs to be clarified. This would not change the outcome of this specific case.

Through the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, we are in the process of changing the law to ensure that those found guilty of desecrating or damaging a memorial face a punishment that better reflects the high sentimental and emotional impact these actions can have.

■ Ministry of Justice: Buildings

Rachel Hopkins: [99107]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the total floor area of his departmental estate was in each year from 2010-11 to 2020-21.

James Cartlidge:

Details of the department's total floor area in each year are published as part of the annual State of the Estate report.

The most recent report can be found at the following link:

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachm>

[ent_data/file/1040332/CCS118_CCS1021490260-001_State_of_the_Estate_Report_PAGES.pdf](#)

■ Prisoners: Coronavirus

Ellie Reeves: [99366]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prisoners in women's prisons have tested positive for covid-19 each month from March 2020 to December 2021.

Ellie Reeves: [99367]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many staff in women's prisons have tested positive for covid-19 each month from March 2020 to December 2021.

Victoria Atkins:

A total of 1,096 prisoners in women's prisons have tested positive for COVID-19 from March 2020 to November 2021. Data on the number of prisoners who tested positive for COVID-19 was published in the November edition of the HM Prison and Probation Service COVID-19 statistics monthly series. The data for December 2021 is due to be published on 14 January 2022.

The total number of prisoners in women's prisons who have tested positive for COVID-19 each month between March 2020 and November 2021 is given in the following table.

Table 1: Number of prisoners tested positive for COVID-19 in the women's estate each month from March 2020 to November 2021.

	MAR 2020	APR 2020	MAY 2020	JUN 2020	JUL 2020	AUG 2020	SEP 2020	OCT 2020	NOV 2020	DEC 2020
Women Prisoners	(c)	31	18	0	0	0	0	59	107	169

	JAN 2021	FEB 2021	MAR 2021	APR 2021	MAY 2021	JUN 2021	JUL 2021	AUG 2021	SEP 2021	OCT Nov2021
Women Prisoners	192	146	40	3	(c)	3	44	39	12	15 215

Data Quality

Although care is taken when processing and analysing the returns, the detail collected is subject to the inaccuracies inherent in any large-scale recording system. Much of the data collected during the COVID-19 pandemic has been done at pace, with recording practices evolving as we understand more about the requirements and

conditions we are facing. In order to present the timeliest information, the data presented in this report have not been subjected to the usual standard of quality assurance associated with official statistics.

Notes:

1). The data for the latest month are provisional due to the time lag between taking the test and recording of the results on the central data collection.

2). Values (c) are confidential to prevent disclosure of individuals.

The number of staff in women's prisons who have tested positive for covid-19 each month between March 2020 and October 2021 is given in the following table.

Table 2: COVID-19 Positive test results for staff ^{1,2} working in Women's prisons, by directly/non-directly employed, March 2020 to October 2021 ³

	MAR 2020	APR 2020	MAY 2020	JUN 2020	JUL 2020	AUG 2020	SEP 2020	OCT 2020	NOV 2020	DEC 2020
Directly employed	~	~	~	0	~	0	9	66	77	133
Non-directly employed	~	~	~	~	~	~	5	20	22	27
Total	4	37	5	~	4	~	14	86	99	160

	JAN 2021	FEB 2021	MAR 2021	APR 2021	MAY 2021	JUN 2021	JUL 2021	AUG 2021	SEP 2021	OCT 2021	TOTAL
Directly employed	178	81	18	~	3	11	43	37	30	38	770
Non-directly employed	49	19	10	0	0	4	14	13	11	12	214
Total	227	100	28	~	3	15	57	50	41	50	984

Source : MoJ/HMPPS administrative systems and data collections

Data Quality: Although care is taken when processing and analysing the returns, the detail collected is subject to the inaccuracies inherent in any large-scale recording system. Much of the data collected during the COVID-19 pandemic has been done at pace, with recording practices evolving as we understand more about the requirements and conditions we are facing.

Notes:

- 1). Counts the distinct staff who have tested positive for COVID-19. These are self-reported.
 - 2). Where staff have multiple positive tests within a 90-day period, they are now assumed to be from the same infection and are therefore only counted once. This has resulted in a small number of positive tests being removed from the published figures.
 - 3). October 2021 is the latest published data. The next set of data for the period to 30 January 2022 is due to be published in the Workforce Statistics Report on 17 February 2022.
- ~ denotes suppressed values of 2 or fewer, or other values (including zeroes) which would allow values of 2 or fewer to be derived by subtraction. Low numbers are suppressed to prevent disclosure in accordance with the Data Protection Act, 2018.

■ Prisoners: Gender Recognition

Tim Loughton:

[\[98878\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many transwomen are currently held in (a) female prisons and (b) all prisons; and how many of those offenders have previous convictions for sexual offences.

Victoria Atkins:

As of our latest data collection on 31 March 2021, there were 146 transgender women (that is, prisoners who were legally male and identified as female) in all prisons across England and Wales.

Of these, fewer than five transgender prisoners were housed in the women's estate. These figures do not include transgender prisoners with gender recognition certificates, although information on these individuals will be published early this year.

On the offences committed by individuals, we are only able to provide figures for the offence or offences that have led to an individual's current imprisonment. To provide offence information for previous convictions would involve a complex data matching exercise which would exceed the prohibitive cost threshold for responding to a Parliamentary Question. Previous convictions, along with other relevant information, are considered, however, as part of the risk assessment set out in the Care and Management of Individuals who are Transgender Policy 2019.

On current offences, in the men's estate, there were 87 transgender women with a conviction for at least one sexual offence. In the women's estate, the number of transgender women with a conviction for at least one sexual offence was fewer than 5. This includes prisoners with a GRC.

Where transgender prisoners with GRCs are deemed too high risk to be held in the general women's estate, they can be held on E Wing, part of HMP Downview. This allows them to be held separately with only supervised contact with other women.

■ Prisons: Digital Technology

Matt Hancock:[\[98272\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prisons have (a) provision for and (b) operational in-cell devices provided by (i) Coracle and (ii) other providers, broken down by prison.

Victoria Atkins:

The total number of prison sites which have provision for, and operational in-cell devices provided by Coracle is currently 21. There will also be approximately 300 more devices being deployed across an additional 20 sites in total by the end of January 2022. The table below breaks down the figures for the number of these in-cell devices by prison.

HMP BELMARSH	17
HMP Buckley Hall	20
HMP Cardiff	5
HMP Full Sutton	15
HMP Guys Marsh	8
HMP Highpoint (North and South)	18
HMP Hollesley Bay	11
HMP Hull	12
HMP Hydebank Wood College	16
HMP Isle of Wight	20
HMP Isis	15
HMP Kirklevington Grange	10
HMP Northumberland	8
HMP Parc	5
HMP Pentonville	11
HMP Prescoed	2
HMP Stocken	3
HMP Swaleside	12
HMP Swansea	5
HMP Warren Hill	10

HMP BELMARSH	17
HMP Whitemoor	15
Total	238

The total number of prison sites which have provision for, and operational in-cell devices by **other** providers (MoJ D&T managed in-cell technology devices) is currently 8 with an additional 7 sites planned for deployment by the end of 2022. The table below breaks down the figures for the number of these in-cell devices by prison, currently deployed, together with the sites that have the infrastructure deployed, with device and digital services deployment planned for this year:

SITE	NO. OF MOJ MANAGED IN-CELL TECH DEVICES	NOTES
HMP Lindholme	900	Full deployment under In-Cell Tech Programme
HM YOI Feltham	260	Full deployment under In-Cell Tech Programme
HMP/YOI New Hall	323	Full deployment under In-Cell Tech Programme
HM YOI Wetherby	2	Deployment in progress under in-cell tech programme
HM YOI Cookham Wood	106	Full deployment under In-Cell Tech Programme
HM YOI Werrington	68	Full deployment under In-Cell Tech Programme
HMP Wayland	923	Full deployment in 2016
HMP Berwyn	1810	Full deployment in 2016
HMP The Mount		Deployments planned by end of 2022 under In-Cell Tech Programme
HMP Ranby		Deployments planned by end of 2022 under In-Cell Tech Programme
HMP Styal		Deployments planned by end

SITE	NO. OF MOJ MANAGED IN-CELL TECH DEVICES	NOTES
		of 2022 under In-Cell Tech Programme
HMP Erlstoke		Deployments planned by end of 2022 under In-Cell Tech Programme
HMP Stoke Heath		Deployments planned by end of 2022 under In-Cell Tech Programme
HMP Garth		Deployments planned by end of 2022 under In-Cell Tech Programme
HMP Swaleside		Deployments planned by end of 2022 under In-Cell Tech Programme

**Total devices deployed as of 4392
6/1/2022**

■ Prisons: Drugs

Ruth Jones:

[98429]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many random drug tests in prisons in England and Wales returned positive results in (a) 2019, (b) 2020 and (c) 2021.

Victoria Atkins:

In the year ending March 2019 there were 9,193 positive random drug tests in prisons in England and Wales (16.9% of all tests taken). This was published in the [HMPPS Annual Digest: April 2018 to March 2019 – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#). In the year ending March 2020 there were 7,275 positive random drug tests in England and Wales (14% of all tests taken). This was published in the [HMPPS Annual Digest: April 2019 to March 2020 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

Data for the year to March 2021 is not comparable to previous years due to a significant reduction in testing volumes caused by the impact of COVID-19 in prisons. As a result, random drug testing data was not reported in the [HMPPS Annual Digest: April 2020 to March 2021 – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) in the usual format. However, it is noted in the Digest that in the 12 months to March 2021, there were 4,738 random mandatory drug tests (rMDT) carried out nationally in total, of which 606 (12.8%) gave a positive result.

■ Prisons: Overcrowding

Ruth Jones:

[98430]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prisons in England and Wales are overcrowded.

Victoria Atkins:

As at 31 December 2021, 61 prisons operated with a population above their Certified Normal Accommodation (CNA) but not above their operational capacity. The operational capacity of a prison is the total number of prisoners that an establishment can accommodate and is determined by the Prison Group Director.

CNA, or uncrowded capacity, is the Prison Service's own measure of accommodation. CNA represents the good, decent standard of accommodation that the Service aspires to provide all prisoners. Where operational capacity of a prison is higher than the CNA it will be classed as having the potential to be 'crowded', which can mean prisoners share cells.

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) publishes monthly individual prison population and capacity information through the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/prison-population-statistics>

■ Public Statues: Vandalism

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[101648]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent discussions he has had with the Attorney General on the implications of the acquittal of four people charged with criminal damage to a statue of Edward Colston in Bristol for the criminal justice system.

James Cartlidge:

In any case where there is an acquittal in the Crown Court, the Attorney General has the power to ask the Court of Appeal for its opinion on a point of law which arose in the case.

The Attorney General is carefully considering whether to make such a referral.

■ Reoffenders

Jim Shannon:

[98293]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps the Government is taking to prevent people released from prison from re-offending within 14 days of their release.

Kit Malthouse:

This Government is committed to reducing crime by tackling reoffending. We know the likelihood of ex-offenders reoffending is significantly decreased if they have a home, a job and access to healthcare, including substance misuse treatment. We are building on the investment made in 2021 by spending £200 million a year by 2024-25 to address these factors and ensure prison leavers have a strong foundation on release.

Our [Prisons Strategy White Paper](#), published in December, sets out our vision for reducing reoffending. This includes our aim that no-one subject to probation supervision is released from prison homeless. We are therefore expanding our new Community Accommodation Service, 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.

We plan to transform how prisons get offenders into work. We will open our doors to the private sector to overhaul the opportunities for work offered in prisons, on Release on Temporary Licence and on release. We will do this by implementing dedicated Employment Advisors in prisons, developing a digital tool that will match prisoners to jobs and establishing local employment boards to link prisons with business networks.

We will also introduce new Resettlement Passports, which will be set up prior to release and will bring together the key information and services that an individual needs to resettle into society.

■ **Television Licences: Fees and Charges**

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[101629]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many (a) people in total and (b) women were sent to prison for the non-payment of a magistrates' court fine arising from a conviction for evasion of payment of TV licence fees in 2019.

James Cartlidge:

The number of people admitted to prison for failing to pay magistrates' court fines in respect of the non-payment of a TV licence in 2019 was two or fewer (the actual number has not been released in order to protect against personal identification), none of whom were women.

■ **Youth Custody: Ethnic Groups**

Afzal Khan:

[101820]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he has made of the number of BAME children in youth custody in the UK.

Victoria Atkins:

The youth justice statistics collection is published on GOV.UK. Within these, monthly statistics on children and young people within the secure estate are released, including the ethnic background of children in custody. The latest publication providing data on those present in custody can be found via the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/youth-custody-data>

Population data is also published as part of the annual report, with the most recent release covering the year ending March 2020 and the next update due for publication 27 January.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/youth-justice-statistics-2019-to-2020>

Data includes those aged under 18, and 18-year olds. Some 18-year olds remain in the secure estate for children and young people if they only have a short period of their sentence to serve, to avoid disrupting their regimes.

LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

■ Antisemitism

Ruth Jones:

[99064]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether he plans to encourage UK media organisations to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism.

Kemi Badenoch:

Antisemitism has absolutely no place in our society, which is why we are taking a strong lead in tackling it in all its forms. Following encouragement from the Government, at least three quarters of local councils in the UK have adopted the IHRA definition of Antisemitism.

The Government is committed to a free and independent press and does not intervene in what the press can and cannot publish. The Government is also committed to independent self-regulation of the press. Press regulators issue codes of conduct which provide guidelines on a range of areas, including discrimination, accuracy, privacy, and harassment.

■ Building Safety Fund

Shabana Mahmood:

[98907]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of funding available through the Building Safety Fund to meet (a) current and (b) future demand.

Christopher Pincher:

All eligible applications currently made to the Building Safety Fund will be funded. For any buildings that may have missed the original registration deadline we will be opening the next phase of the Building Safety Fund early this year and it will cover the costs of addressing fire safety risks caused by unsafe cladding on all eligible buildings.

It remains the building owner's responsibility to address any fire safety issues in their buildings. Building owners should do all they can to make sure their buildings and residents are safe, without passing costs onto leaseholders or relying on taxpayer funding. In many cases, as we have seen for with the funding for the remediation of half of all private sector residential buildings with unsafe ACM cladding, building owners and freeholders or the original developer can meet the costs of remediating unsafe cladding from their own resources, by claiming on insurance policies or warranties, or taking legal action. It is incumbent on them to pursue those avenues.

Where building owners apply for funding they are required to demonstrate they have taken all reasonable steps to recover the costs of replacing the unsafe non-ACM cladding from those responsible through insurance claims, warranties, legal action etc.

■ Buildings and Housing: Solar Power

Daisy Cooper:

[\[98447\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will make it a requirement that all new homes and buildings should have solar panels as default, except in defined cases; and if he will issue guidance as to those defined cases.

Eddie Hughes:

The Government remains committed to meeting its target of net zero emissions by 2050 and recognises the important contribution that the energy efficiency of buildings has to make in meeting it. We must ensure that the energy efficiency standards we set through the Building Regulations for new homes put us on track to meet the 2050 target.

The Building Regulations will continue to set a performance-based standard rather than mandating or banning the use of any technologies. This provides builders and developers with the flexibility to innovate and select the most practical and cost-effective solutions appropriate in any development.

■ Buildings: Fire Prevention

Daisy Cooper:

[\[101844\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to his announcement of 10 January 2022 that leaseholders will not be held liable for fire safety defect remediation not of their own making, if he will introduce a moratorium on freeholders and managing agents enforcing leasehold agreements in the event that the enforcement relates to non-payment of an existing demand for payment from a leaseholder for their share of fire safety remediation.

Christopher Pincher:

Building owners and industry should make buildings safe without passing on costs to leaseholders, and leaseholders living in their own medium and high-rise buildings should not pay a penny to remediate historic cladding defects that are no fault of their own. It is also wrong to look to the taxpayer for another bailout for manufacturers and developers who created and installed dangerous fire safety building systems. Instead, we are clear that industry must develop a solution to resolve the problems they have caused and pay to fix them. We will work intensively with industry to ensure they rapidly step up to the plate to help solve this problem. If they do not agree to solving this crisis, we will look to impose a solution in legislation. We are determined that no leaseholder should lose their homes as a result of forfeiture or eviction in building safety cases, and will work with colleagues across Government on achieving this in the period before these long term solutions are in place.

■ Buildings: Safety

Shabana Mahmood:

[\[98255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will make an estimate of the potential cost to the public purse of commissioning the British Standards Institution to create a competence framework for the Building Safety Manager role.

Christopher Pincher:

We expect that the work to develop the Publicly Available Specification for the Building Safety Manager role will cost around £132,000 + VAT.

Shabana Mahmood:

[\[98256\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what plans he has to evaluate the (a) effectiveness and (b) cost efficiency of the Building Safety Manager role.

Christopher Pincher:

The Building Safety Manager role is considered critical in supporting Accountable Persons to ensure fire and structural safety is delivered and maintained.

To ensure a robust and consistent approach to assuring competence, we are sponsoring the British Standards Institution to create a suite of national competence standards for higher risk buildings. This will include the competence framework for the Building Safety Manager and other key roles.

The Principal Accountable Person will be responsible for appointing, and entering into a contract with, the Building Safety Manager. They will need to agree the extent of the role and must be satisfied in the Building Safety Manager's capability to deliver it, this will provide an incentive for the Principal Accountable Person to ensure the role is delivered in an effective and cost efficient way. Where an individual or organisation is appointed as the Building Safety Manager, we expect professional residential management agents to supply much of the demand. This is in line with the vision set out by Dame Judith Hackitt.

The Building Safety Bill contains a requirement to review the legislation at least every 5 years, including the effectiveness of the Building Safety Regulator and the regulatory system for building safety.

■ Commonhold and Leasehold

Kim Johnson:

[\[99088\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what funded training the Government is considering to ensure that lay directors of Right to Manage Companies, Residential Management Companies and Commonholds are able to undertake their roles to a suitable standard.

Eddie Hughes:

The Government continues to examine what more can be done to protect and support leaseholders to ensure buildings are managed effectively, including increased provision of training for those who become right to manage company directors. In their 2020 report on the Right to Manage, the Law Commission recommended that free online training covering company law and building management should be made available to RTM company directors and prospective directors. We will respond to the Law Commission's recommendation in due course.

■ **Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities: Buildings****Rachel Hopkins:**[\[99100\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what the total floor area of his departmental estate was in each year from 2010-11 to 2020-21.

Eddie Hughes:

Between January 2011 and December 2017 the Department was known as the Department for Communities and Local Government. In January 2018 it became the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government. In September 2021 the Department was re-established as the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

The table below gives details of the Department's estate floor area for the years in question, as reported in the Cabinet Office *State of the Estate* reports.

YEAR	TOTAL M2 (GROSS INTERNAL AREA)
2011- 1st Jan 2011	30,622
2012 -1st Jan 2012	30,622
2013- 1st Jan 2013	29,221
2013/14	29,221
2014/15	13,283
2015/16	13,872
2016/17	13,872
2017/18	13,872
2018/19	13,872
2019/20	15,608
2020/21	15,173

This data is for the Department's main office space. It excludes our arms-length bodies and land and buildings that are registered with the Land Registry as DLUHC's but are occupied or the responsibility of other Government Departments.

■ Elections: Proof of Identity

Jon Trickett:

[\[101626\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the Written Ministerial Statement of 6 January 2022, HCWS525 on Protecting the Integrity of our Elections, which authorities or bodies will have authority to issue a voter card; and what plans his Department has for there to be arrangements to maintain a national database of voter cards.

Jon Trickett:

[\[101627\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the Written Ministerial Statement of 6 January 2022, HCWS525 on Protecting the Integrity of our Elections, what additional sources of data the issuing authority will be required to check before issuing a voter card.

Jon Trickett:

[\[101628\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the Written Ministerial Statement of 6 January 2022, HCWS525 on Protecting the Integrity of our Elections, whether the voter card will be designed to have the capacity to hold (a) biometric or electronic data and (b) further fields of data or information for future uses.

Kemi Badenoch:

Electoral Registration Officers will have the power to determine an application and issue Voter Cards. Information relating to applications for Voter Cards and issued Voter Cards will be held by Electoral Registration Officers at the local authority level.

The process for confirming the identity of an applicant for a Voter Card will be set out in secondary legislation, and will include a range of data sources that an Electoral Registration Officer may choose to check an application against, to ensure an inclusive process. The Government intends to allow for online applications to be made via a centralised website, and applications made in this way may be checked automatically against data sources held by central government - for example checking a national insurance number. The results of any such checks would be passed on to the relevant Electoral Registration Officer, for them to consider while making their decision.

The Government has no plans for Voter Cards to have the capacity to hold biometric or electronic data. As set out in the Government's recent policy statement 'Protecting the integrity of our elections: Voter identification at polling stations and the new Voter Card', published on 6 January 2022, Voter Cards will be designed solely for the purpose of voting at polling stations. They will intentionally not include information that is not necessary for that purpose - for example they will not show a date of birth.

■ Housing: Construction**Stephen Morgan:** [\[101814\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the letter from the Minister for Housing to the hon. Member for Portsmouth South of 16 June 2021, when the Minister plans to meet with the hon. Member to discuss housing and planning targets as committed to in that letter.

Christopher Pincher:

If the Hon Member wishes to understand the standard methodology he is more than welcome to an official level meeting and should contact my office to arrange.

■ Housing: Energy**Daisy Cooper:** [\[98442\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps the Government is taking to enable leaseholders to install energy saving measures in their homes which require freeholder consent in the event of absent or non-responsive freeholders.

Eddie Hughes:

The Government set out its aspiration in the Clean Growth Strategy for as many homes as possible to be upgraded to Energy Performance Certificate Band C by 2035, where practical, cost-effective and affordable.

A new £450 million three-year Boiler Upgrade Scheme will see households, including leasehold households, offered grants of up to £5,000 for low-carbon heating systems so they cost the same as a gas boiler now.

Where leases require freeholder consent to these kinds of energy-efficiency improving works and the freeholder is absent or non-responsive, leaseholders can already apply to the First-tier Tribunal to appoint a new property manager.

Leaseholders are already able to exercise their Right to Manage, which gives them the ability to take over the freeholder's management functions in respect of their building. They can also opt to join together and buy the freehold of their building as part of collective enfranchisement. The law is clear in that, subject to certain conditions, leaseholders of flats have the right to enfranchise their building as a group if they and their building qualify. The Government is considering proposals from the Law Commission that would enable greater numbers of leaseholders to take on management and ownership of their buildings themselves.

■ Housing: Sales**Dr Matthew Offord:** [\[98259\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what effect the UK leaving the EU has had on the residential housing market.

Christopher Pincher:

HMRC publishes monthly data on UK Residential Property transactions and their latest seasonally adjusted data is available up to August 2021.

This data shows that in the 19 months since the UK left the EU there have been 1,996,090 transactions and this compares with 1,871,840 transactions in the 19 month period prior to leaving the EU. The volume of property transactions is influenced by a large range of factors and differences should not be attributed to any single factor. For example, the figures for the period after leaving the EU will include the impact of Covid restrictions and temporary changes to Stamp Duty rates.

■ Leasehold: Service Charges**Daisy Cooper:****[98445]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will make it his policy to bring forward legislative proposals to protect leaseholders from excessive commission charges levied by (a) managing agents and (b) freeholders, when providing (i) buildings insurance policies, (ii) communal energy agreements and (iii) other services contracted from third party suppliers.

Daisy Cooper:**[98446]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will make it his policy to include in future legislative proposals on leasehold reform provisions to compel freeholders and managing agents to be transparent about commission fees they receive when arranging (a) buildings and other insurance policies, (b) communal energy services and (c) other services contracted from third party suppliers.

Eddie Hughes:

The Government is committed to ensuring that those living in the leasehold sector are protected from abuse and poor service. We believe very strongly that service charges should be transparent and communicated effectively, and that there should be a clear route to challenge or redress if things go wrong. The law is clear that service charges must be reasonable and, where costs relate to work or services, the work or services must be of a reasonable standard. Leaseholders may make an application to the First-tier Tribunal to make a determination on the reasonableness of their service charges or fees.

We established an independent working group chaired by Lord Best that considered how the service charge regime could be improved to increase transparency for leaseholders. The working group published its final report to Government (see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulation-of-property-agents-working-group-report>) and we are considering the report's recommendations.

■ Parish Councils: Meetings

Alberto Costa:

[98334]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of allowing parish council meetings to be conducted virtually during the ongoing covid-19 outbreak.

Kemi Badenoch:

We launched a call for evidence on 25 March to gather views and inform a longer-term decision about whether to make express provision for councils to meet remotely on a permanent basis. The call for evidence closed on 17 June.

The Department has considered the responses to the consultation and the Government will respond shortly.

■ Planning Permission

Ben Bradley:

[98409]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps he is taking to prevent applicants from deliberately carrying out works prior to then seeking retrospective planning permission; and if he will bring forward legislative proposals to tackle that matter.

Christopher Pincher:

The Government is clear that unauthorised development is unacceptable and unfair to the majority who abide by the rules. It is also important that where people have made a genuine mistake, or where the development does not harm the amenity of the area, there is an opportunity to rectify the situation by submitting a retrospective planning application.

We are continuing to consider the best way forward for planning reforms, including how it can support planning enforcement. An announcement on next steps will be made shortly.

■ Regional Planning and Development: Rural Areas

Bob Seely:

[98417]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what progress he has made on delivering levelling up outcomes in (a) the Isle of Wight and (b) other isolated communities.

Neil O'Brien:

The UK Government is committed to levelling up areas across the UK to ensure that no community, however isolated, is left behind.

I am delighted that the Isle of Wight Council has recently been awarded £5.8 million from the Levelling Up Fund in round one for East Cowes Marine Hub. Details of other successful bids can be found at www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-fund-first-round-successful-bidders.

This is not the only way we will level up. The forthcoming Levelling Up White Paper will contain further detail on our policies, including driving further devolution through County Deals, future rounds of the Levelling Up Fund, and The UK Shared Prosperity Fund. That fund, worth over £2.6 billion, is one of the government's flagship programmes for delivering on Levelling Up objectives and will help people access opportunity in places in need, such as ex-industrial areas, deprived towns and rural and coastal communities, and people in disadvantaged groups across the UK.

■ Supported Housing: Older People

Dr Lisa Cameron:

[\[98326\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps his Department plans to take to support the expansion in supported housing for older people, including integrated retirement communities, as set out 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 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. We already work closely with the Department of Health and Social Care to provide capital funding to incentivise their supply. This includes our new £11.5 billion Affordable Homes Programme, which includes delivery of new supported housing for older, disabled and other vulnerable people. Furthermore, 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 will continue to work closely with colleagues across government and with a range of stakeholders to look at how we can further support the growth of a thriving older people's housing sector.

■ Trees: Biodiversity and Climate Change

Munira Wilson:

[\[98458\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the impact of the (a) The Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012 and (b) guidance issued on 6 March 2014 on (i) Tree Preservation Orders and (ii) trees in conservation areas with regards to their ability to improve biodiversity and mitigate climate change issues.

Christopher Pincher:

This Government recognises the biodiversity and climate mitigation value of trees. We committed in the England Trees Action Plan to spend over £500 million of the

Nature for Climate Fund on trees and woodland in England between 2020 and 2025. The England Tree Action Plan also committed this Government to publishing guidance on managing woodland for a changing climate.

The planning practice guidance, as published on 6 March 2014, sets out that local authorities may consider taking into account the importance to nature conservation and climate change response when assessing amenity value. Information on the impact of tree preservation policy and legislation on biodiversity is not held nationally, as information on trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders is held by the local authority who made the decision.

NORTHERN IRELAND

■ Castlereagh Foundation

Carla Lockhart: [\[99414\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, if he will provide an update on the work of the Castlereagh Foundation.

Conor Burns:

In July 2021, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland appointed an Advisory Committee to provide advice on appropriate delivery partners to establish the Castlereagh Foundation, the legal form it should take, the role of the foundation and the cost to establish it. The Advisory Committee submitted their written advice to the Secretary of State in January and we thank the committee for its work.

The Secretary of State is considering that advice and considering the appropriate next steps.

■ Northern Ireland Office: Buildings

Rachel Hopkins: [\[99109\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what the total floor area of his Office estate was in each year from 2010-11 to 2020-21.

Conor Burns:

The area of my offices in Belfast has remained constant across each year from 2011 is as follows:

	BELFAST TOTAL FLOOR AREA (M ²)
2020-21	3166
2019-20	3166
2018-19	3166
2017-18	3166

	BELFAST TOTAL FLOOR AREA (M^2)
2016-17	3166
2015-16	3166
2014-15	3166
2013-14	3166
2013: 01/01/13	3166
2012: 01/01/12	3166
2011: 01/01/11	3166

The total area of my London office in 1 Horse Guards Road (HGR) is:

	LONDON TOTAL FLOOR AREA (M^2)
2020-21	554
2019-20	554
2018-19	554
2017-18	519
2016-17	431
2015-16	373
2014-15	431
2013-14	Information not held
2013: 01/01/13	Information not held
2012: 01/01/12	Information not held
2011: 01/01/11	Information not held

The Northern Ireland Office did not occupy 1 HGR prior to 2014/15 and does not hold the information for my London offices prior to 2014/15.

SCOTLAND**■ Scotland Office: Consultants**

Gareth Thomas: [\[101604\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, whether his Department has held (a) any financial or consultancy contracts and (b) meetings with representatives of (i) Clifford Chance LLP, (ii) FTI Consulting and (iii) Fenchurch Advisory Partners in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Alister Jack:

My Department has not held any financial or consultancy contracts or held meetings with representatives of (i) Clifford Chance LLP, (ii) FTI Consulting or (iii) Fenchurch Advisory Partners in any of the last five years.

TRANSPORT**■ A1: Stibbington**

Sir Greg Knight: [\[101644\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when the A1 near Stibbington and south of Wansford (a) was last inspected for potholes and (b) is next scheduled for re-surfacing.

Trudy Harrison:

National Highways' inspectors carry out weekly safety inspections of the A1. The A1 near Stibbington and south of Wansford was last inspected for potholes and other safety defects on 11 January 2022.

Where safety critical defects, including potholes, are identified, they are made safe within 24 hours. The inspection on 11 January identified a safety critical pothole in the northbound A1 carriageway, that was then made safe overnight on 11/12 January 2022.

Permanent repairs are carried out according to the severity of the defect, often within 28 days.

No resurfacing is currently scheduled for the A1 near Stibbington and south of Wansford. National Highways does, however, have plans to improve the skid resistance of the road surface at the A1 Wansford southbound junction and for drainage improvements at the northbound entry slip road on the A1 at Stibbington.

■ Bicycles: Recycling

Rachael Maskell: [\[101786\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of providing additional support for bicycle recycling centres in every local community.

Trudy Harrison:

None, but the Department has funded various programmes which help get old bicycles roadworthy again. In 2020-21, for example, it made available some 400,000 "Fix Your Bike" vouchers to enable people to get £50 off the cost of a bicycle service. The Government has also provided £2 million to Cycling UK's Big Bike Revival programme this financial year, to support activities such as free events that teach bicycle maintenance skills, enabling more people to give a new lease of life to their old bicycles. In previous years the Department has also provided funding for programmes such as the Big Birmingham Bike Scheme which made bicycles available free of charge to people across Birmingham who could not otherwise have afforded them.

■ **Bus Services****Louise Haigh:**[\[101790\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate his Department has made of the proportion of bus users that earned under £25,000 per year in each year from 2017 to 2022 as of 11 January 2022.

Trudy Harrison:

According to the National Travel Survey covering households in England, the proportion of bus users who fall into different individual income brackets is as shown in the following table below. Data for 2021 and 2022 will be available in summer 2022 and summer 2023 respectively.

	LESS THAN £25,000	£25,000 TO £49,999	£50,000 AND OVER	UNWEIGHTED SAMPLE SIZE (INDIVIDUALS)
2017	72%	21%	7%	8533
2018	70%	22%	8%	8268
2019	71%	21%	8%	8054
2020	68%	23%	9%	2645

The figures above refer only to bus users aged 16 and older as individual income information is not held for children.

■ **Bus Services: Coronavirus****Daniel Zeichner:**[\[101753\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of the potential impact on bus users of the expiration of emergency covid-19 funding for bus services.

Trudy Harrison:

The Department has provided unprecedented levels of financial support to the bus sector during the pandemic. Through the Coronavirus Bus Service Support Grant, over £1.5 billion in emergency funding has been provided to operators and Local Transport Authorities. Since September 2021, an additional £226.5 million has been made available to the sector through the Bus Recovery Grant.

Together, this funding has played an important role in ensuring those who need to travel by bus have been able to do so. The Department is committed to seeing the sector return to financial sustainability, but recognises the ongoing challenges faced to maintain services.

The Department is working with the sector to understand the implications of recovery funding ending, including the effect this would have on service levels and passengers.

Daniel Zeichner:[\[101754\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to his oral contribution of 16 December 2021, Official Report, column 1138, when he plans to return to the House to provide additional information to operators on the bus recovery grant.

Trudy Harrison:

The Bus Recovery Grant will provide £226.5m in support for operators and Local Transport Authorities until April 2022. The Department is consulting with the sector on its needs once the scheme ends, and the potential merits of providing further support.

Buses: Fuels**Louise Haigh:**[\[101789\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate his Department has made of the total cost of fuel to bus operators in each year from 2010 to 2022 as of 11 January 2022.

Trudy Harrison:

The Department does not produce estimates for the cost of fuel for bus operators.

As part of monitoring the Bus Recovery Grant and current covid situation, the Department is engaging with bus operators to understand the impact of cost inflation on fuel.

Cars**Rachael Maskell:**[\[101787\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of a car scrappage scheme to replace cars with (a) bikes, (b) e-bikes and (c) other forms of active or electric active transport for the purposes of accelerating net zero plans.

Trudy Harrison:

The Government has no plans at this stage to introduce a vehicle scrappage scheme. It is vital that the policies we implement to deliver net zero emissions across the transport sector are evidence-based and provide value-for-money. The Prime Minister's bold vision for cycling and walking, detailed in the July 2020 publication *Gear Change*, set out the steps we will take to boost cycling in England. These measures include support for local authorities to reallocate road space, changing the Highway Code to make the streets safer for cyclists, and establishing the new body Active Travel England.

■ Cycling**Rachael Maskell:**[\[101785\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will publish a detailed strategy on the establishment of a cycling network in England.

Trudy Harrison:

In July 2020, the Prime Minister launched ambitious plans to boost walking and cycling in England, with a vision for half of all journeys in towns and cities to be walked or cycled by 2030. This commitment is backed with £2 billion of investment over five years, including significant funding for local authorities to develop and deliver local cycling and walking networks, and for the National Cycle Network.

The Department intends to publish the second statutory Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS 2) later this year. It will reflect these new policies and the multi-year funding settlement for walking and cycling announced at the recent Spending Review. It will also reflect the commitment published in the Transport Decarbonisation Plan in 2021, to deliver a world class cycling and walking network in England by 2040.

■ Cycling: Highway Code**Sarah Olney:**[\[99360\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he plans to amend rule 66 of the Highway Code.

Trudy Harrison:

The proposed changes to The Highway Code to improve road safety for cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders includes amendments to Rule 66 of The Highway Code.

In accordance with section 38 of the Road Traffic Act 1988, the revised version of The Highway Code was laid before both House of Parliament on 1 December 2021 for approval.

■ Department for Transport: Buildings

Rachel Hopkins: [\[99101\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the total floor area of his departmental estate was in each year from 2010-11 to 2020-21.

Andrew Stephenson:

Below is a table containing the Department's estate size year-by-year from 2010-11.

YEAR	ESTATE SIZE (SQUARE METRES)	COMMENTS
2020-21	699,669 (NIA) or 931,286 (GIA)	Inflated due to inclusion of NR, LCR and HS2.
2019-20	565,082 NIA	Central Estate
2018-19	566,893 NIA	Central Estate
2017-18	568,458 NIA	Central Estate
2016-17	567,903 NIA	Central Estate
2015-16	508,938 NIA	Central Estate
2014-15	571,769 NIA	Central Estate
2013-14	581,422 NIA	Mandated Estate
2012-13	611,029 NIA	Mandated Estate. Report collated by calendar year instead of financial year.
2011-12	583,518 NIA	Mandated Estate. Report collated by calendar year instead of financial year.
2010-11	590,145 NIA	Mandated Estate. Report collated by calendar year instead of financial year.

■ Department for Transport: Bullying

Louise Haigh: [\[98998\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when his Department's internal anti-bullying policy was (a) first introduced and (b) last revised.

Andrew Stephenson:

The Department for Transport is committed to creating and maintaining a working environment that is free from hostility, abuse, offensive behaviour, harassment, bullying, prejudice, discrimination and victimisation. This commitment is included in

the Staff Handbook and in our Dignity at Work policy which was published on the Departments Intranet in September 2016.

The policy is supported by a Bullying Harassment and Discrimination toolkit launched on 31 January 2018 and republished as part of a revised Dispute Resolution policy in October 2019.

■ Department for Transport: Corruption

Louise Haigh: [\[98999\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when his Department's internal anti-bribery policy was (a) first introduced and (b) last revised.

Andrew Stephenson:

The DfTc Staff handbook includes a policy statement on fraud, theft and corruption that was first published in October 2016 and last updated in August 2020.

The DfT Group Counter Fraud, Bribery and Corruption strategy for 2019-2021 was published in November 2019. A new DfT Group Counter Fraud, Bribery and Corruption strategy for 2022-2025 is due to be published in April 2022.

■ Department for Transport: Location

Louise Haigh: [\[101788\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to his Department's announcement of 15 March 2021 on the creation of 650 roles in a second headquarters in Birmingham and Leeds, how many of those roles have been filled as of 11 January 2022.

Andrew Stephenson:

As of 31st December, the most recent point at which this data is available, 262 roles have been filled.

■ Department for Transport: Research

Louise Haigh: [\[99007\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will list the (a) studies, (b) reports, and (c) research currently being conducted by his Department and the estimated date of publication of each.

Andrew Stephenson:

DfT is committed to evidence-based policy making, and so as part of its business as usual activity, undertakes a wealth of research and conducts studies to inform decision-making in specific policy areas. This includes areas such as Transport Security Resilience and Response, Road Safety, National and High Speed Rail, Electric Vehicles, Local Transport, and Aviation and Airports. Specific pieces of research/ studies (not exhaustive) due to be published in 2022 include: Retrospective evaluation of key Office for Zero Emission Vehicle schemes, National Evaluation of the E-scooter Trials and In-depth Research into Confidence in Public Transport.

In addition to policy-led research to support specific modes, the department conducts cross-cutting research, development and innovation (see DfT's Science Plan for more information). Often, this is to support delivery of its strategic priorities such as decarbonisation and in response to emerging issues, like Covid-19. The department publishes its Areas of Research Interest each year which sets out its strategic evidence and research needs for the medium-long term to help achieve DfT's wide-ranging and ambitious objectives.

The department is committed to publishing the social research and evaluation studies it commissions to inform its policies and projects. Studies will be published at the final report stage after thorough analytical review of their findings has been completed, including peer review where appropriate. Interim outputs are not published routinely. As a guideline for publication timing, we follow the Government social research publication protocol.

In terms of upcoming reports, the department is hoping to publish a number in 2022 which will bring together research into a number of key areas. These include, the **UK's EV Infrastructure Strategy for 2030** (our long-term plan for a world-leading charging infrastructure network across the UK), **Course to Zero** (aimed at achieving net zero emissions in the UK domestic maritime sector by 2050), **Aviation Jet Zero** (our vision for how the aviation sector will reach net zero aviation by 2050), and a **Low Carbon Fuels Strategy** (a strategy on the deployment of low carbon fuels across different transport modes in the period up to 2050).

■ Department for Transport: Staff

Louise Haigh:

[101792]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will publish the (a) directorates within his Department (i) as at 1 December from 2015 to 2021 and (ii) as of 11 January 2022 and (b) staffing levels in terms of (A) full-term equivalent and (B) total headcount in each of those directorates.

Andrew Stephenson:

Please find attached the XLSX file – “387004 – PQ Data”

The department is able to provide information on the staffing levels (full-time equivalent and headcount) for each Director General led area of the department. This data can be provided for the last 24 months from 31 December 2019 to 31 November 2021 (the most recently available data).

Important notes on the data provided:

This data can only be provided for the last 23 months because accurate and cleansed data to this level of detail is only held in our systems for a rolling 24 month period. December 2021 has not been included as we are currently conducting QA internally.

Our data is consolidated as at the last day of the month rather than the first day of the month.

Changes in organisational structure over time will be part of the cause for increases or decreases for the size of these Director General led areas, as well as growth or decline in total headcount.

March 2020 data is unavailable.

Attachments:

1. 387004 – PQ Data [387004 & 387003 - PQ Request - DFTc Directorate General Breakdown - FINAL.xlsx]

■ **Driving Under Influence**

Bridget Phillipson:

[\[101704\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if (a) he or (b) another Minister in his Department will meet with the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South and her constituent to discuss the effectiveness of the legislative framework relating to offences of drink- and drug-driving.

Trudy Harrison:

Drink and drug driving is unacceptable and has no place on our roads, and we as Ministers are aware of the trauma that results. If the Honourable Member for Houghton and Sunderland South writes to the Secretary of State requesting a meeting the invitation will be considered.

■ **High Speed 2 Line: North East**

Louise Haigh:

[\[99006\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the total cost of the work conducted by his Department on the Eastern leg of HS2 was; and what the full-time equivalent headcount was of people working on the Eastern leg.

Andrew Stephenson:

Since the Prime Minister announced the Integrated Rail Plan in February 2020, development of the Eastern Leg of HS2 has been paused to avoid nugatory spend whilst the Integrated Rail Plan took this work forward. Safeguarding of the Eastern leg route remains in place pending conclusion of work on the most effective way to serve Leeds and towns and cities along the Eastern Leg. Any property that has been acquired already by the Government but is not required for the eventual route will be resold.

In relation to staff numbers there were five FTE staff working on the Eastern Leg at the end of October 2021, which remains unchanged. Their work continues to be supported by other officials across the department.

■ **Highway Code**

Sarah Olney:

[\[99359\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he plans to make a statement in the House of Commons on the recent changes to the Highway Code.

Trudy Harrison:

The Secretary of State for Transport does not have any plans to make a statement on the proposed alterations of The Highway Code to improve safety for cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders as a revised version of The Highway Code was laid before both House of Parliament on 1 December 2021 in accordance with section 38 of the Road Traffic Act 1988. The revised Highway Code will remain in Parliament for a period of 40 days and if Parliament agrees to the proposed changes being made, The Highway Code will be updated in early 2022.

Transport for London: Property Transfer**Theresa Villiers:**[\[101670\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 9 December 2021 to Question 87625, on Transport for London: Property Transfer, what criteria he plans to apply for his decision on the application submitted by Transport for London under section 163 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 to dispose of operational land at Cockfosters tube station.

Trudy Harrison:

This matter is currently under consideration and therefore it would not be appropriate to comment on this specific application. The Secretary of State's consideration of section 163 applications is in line with the relevant sections of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 and other legal requirements such as those under the Equality Act 2010.

The Secretary of State's consideration will include whether operational land is no longer required by Transport for London for discharging its functions. The Secretary of State may also consider whether an application would impact their ability to implement national policies relating to transport affecting any area outside of Greater London.

Theresa Villiers:[\[101671\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 9 December 2021 to Question 87625, on Transport for London: Property Transfer, if he will place in the Library the documents he is considering to assist him to make his decision on the application submitted by TfL under under section 163 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 to dispose of operational land at Cockfosters tube station.

Trudy Harrison:

Transport for London's application, submitted under section 163 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999, relating to Cockfosters Underground Station remains under consideration. It would not therefore be appropriate to publish a copy in the House of Commons Library at this time.

Theresa Villiers:[\[101672\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 9 December 2021 to Question 87625, on Transport for London: Property Transfer, if he will place in the

Library a copy of the applications made to his Department by Transport for London under section 163 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 to dispose of operational land at (a) Arnos Grove Underground Station in the London borough of Enfield in 2020-21 and (b) Canons Park Underground Station, Rayners Lane Underground Station and Stanmore Underground Station in the London borough of Harrow in 2019.

Trudy Harrison:

The applications submitted by Transport for London to the Department contain sensitive information and are subject to agreements with potential developers. It would not be appropriate to publish this information. However, the planning process provides the necessary transparency in relation to these applications.

TREASURY

■ Buildings: Fire Prevention

Stephen Doughty:

[\[101735\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to his oral contribution of 10 January 2022, Official Report, column 283, what consequential funding will be made available to the Welsh Government.

Mr Simon Clarke:

As set out in the Statement of Funding Policy, the Barnett formula applies to changes in UK Government department budgets.

The Welsh Government's existing funding already includes Barnett consequentials on changes in overall funding provided to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, which is responsible for cladding remediation in England. Most recently, Spending Review 2021 provided the Welsh Government with the biggest annual block grants, in real terms, of any spending review settlement since devolution in 1998.

It is for the Welsh Government to allocate funding as it sees fit across its devolved responsibilities including tackling unsafe cladding in residential properties in Wales.

■ Debts: Developing Countries

Sarah Jones:

[\[99368\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make it his policy to support an extension of the Debt Service Suspension Initiative and cancelling debts with the aim of enabling countries to respond more effectively to climate change.

John Glen:

The UK has supported significant action on debt through the G20-Paris Club Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI). Preliminary estimates suggest the DSSI has suspended over \$12.7 billion in debt service repayments due by the poorest countries in the world. In April 2021, the G20 and Paris Club endorsed a final extension of the DSSI to the end of 2021.

The DSSI was designed as a short-term initiative to tackle the immediate financing needs of eligible countries. To deliver a longer-term, more sustainable approach to dealing with debt vulnerabilities the UK, along with the G20, also agreed a new Common Framework for Debt Treatments beyond the DSSI, designed to provide more efficient, equitable and effective debt treatments. The UK is fully committed to implementing the Common Framework in coordination with our international partners. This will support those countries who request a debt treatment in returning to a more fiscally sustainable path and support their development goals, including responding to climate change.

■ Economic Situation: Environment Protection

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[98215\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment he has made of the state of the economy in respect to the environmental impact of businesses and individuals.

Helen Whately:

Since 1990 the UK has reduced our greenhouse gas emissions by 44%, while growing our economy by over 75%.

The Net Zero Strategy sets out our long-term plan to end the UK's domestic contribution to man-made climate change by 2050. However, the government recognises that sustainable economic growth goes further than tackling climate change.

Our response to the Dasgupta Review on the Economics of Biodiversity recognises that nature sustains our economies, livelihoods and well-being, and commits to a nature positive future in which we leave the environment in a better condition than we found it. The world leading Environment Act 2021 supports this ambition.

■ Hospitality Industry: Government Assistance

Rachael Maskell:

[\[98341\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent discussions he has had with the hospitality sector on economic support in response to the effect of covid-19 and staff shortages on that sector.

Helen Whately:

Government ministers, including the Chancellor, as well as officials, meet regularly with business leaders and representative organisations from the hospitality sector and other sectors impacted by Covid-19.

On 21 December, the Chancellor announced a package of support for businesses impacted by the Omicron variant. This included cash grants of up to £6,000 per premises for the hospitality, leisure and accommodation sectors; a further £102m of discretionary funding for local authorities to deliver to businesses most in need; and the reintroduction of the Statutory Sick Pay Rebate scheme for small- and medium-sized employers.

■ Infrastructure: Investment

Stephen Hammond:

[\[98906\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the implications for its policies of the analysis by the Institution of Civil Engineers that improving strategic planning of infrastructure investment would unlock more benefits than the current, siloed sector-by-sector approach, as outlined in its policy position statement, *Evolving the UK strategic infrastructure planning system post-National Infrastructure Strategy*, published July 2021.

Wera Hobhouse:

[\[99034\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the implications for its policies of the analysis by the Institution of Civil Engineers that improving strategic planning of infrastructure investment would unlock more benefits than the current, siloed sector-by-sector approach, as outlined in its policy position statement, *Evolving the UK strategic infrastructure planning system post-National Infrastructure Strategy*, published July 2021.

Helen Whately:

The government is committed to the approach to infrastructure that was set out in the National Infrastructure Strategy (NIS) in November 2020. This addresses the long-term issues that have held back investment in and delivery of UK infrastructure, and ensures a coherent cross-sectoral approach to decision-making.

As committed to in the NIS, last year the government reviewed the National Infrastructure Commission's (NIC's) role and responsibilities, and the NIC's fiscal remit. As a result of those reviews, at Spending Review 2021 the government updated the NIC's objectives to reflect the government's climate commitments and increased the NIC's fiscal remit. These changes will inform the NIC's Second National Infrastructure Assessment, to be published in 2023, which launched recently with the publication of a baseline report and will set out the NIC's expert independent assessment of the UK's economic infrastructure needs. ICE's policy statement was one of the sources that informed the reviews, and ongoing engagement with industry stakeholders and representative organisations remains central to the government's infrastructure strategy.

■ Revenue and Customs: Cybercrime

Carla Lockhart:

[\[98482\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many cyber attacks against Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs have been recorded in each of the last three years.

Lucy Frazer:

The Government can neither confirm nor deny whether HMRC has been the target of any cyber-attacks.

HMRC is responsible for the collection of around £700 billion in tax annually and undertakes a range of actions to monitor and maintain the security of their systems

and services from cyber-attacks. To disclose the number is likely to attract additional questions which may include specific threats or incidents identified and dealt with, aiding criminals to determine weaknesses in HMRC's defences or the methods used to identify and respond to such threats.

To provide the information requested would reveal the extent to which HMRC had been subject to such attacks, revealing where cyber intrusion had been successful.

The National Cyber Security Centre advice continues to be that Government departments should withhold detailed and specific information which may provide insight into the likelihood of success of specific techniques. In some cases, the successful application of such insight may still pose a security risk with the potential to prejudice the prevention of crime and/or national security. A successful attack could lead to the loss of confidentiality, integrity, and availability of Government information.

HMRC publish details about security breaches reported to the Information Commissioner in their annual reports:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmrca-annual-report-and-accounts>

■ Treasury: Buildings

Rachel Hopkins: [99104]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the total floor area of his departmental estate was in each year from 2010-11 to 2020-21.

Helen Whately:

The State of the Estate series of reports published by Cabinet Office provides information on HM Treasury's occupied floor area on an annual basis. The reports from 2010-11 to 2013-14 can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/state-of-the-estate>. Subsequent reports from 2014-15 to 2020-21 can be found by using links in the following style:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/state-of-the-estate-2014-to-2015>.

■ Unemployment: Brexit

Dr Matthew Offord: [98260]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the effect of the UK leaving the EU on unemployment levels.

Dr Matthew Offord: [98261]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what effect the UK leaving the EU has had on average earnings.

Mr Simon Clarke:

The free trade agreement with the EU is the first the EU has ever reached based on zero tariffs and zero quotas, supporting families and businesses in every part of the UK.

Labour market data since January 2020 has been affected significantly by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and does not provide an indication of the effect of leaving the EU on unemployment or average earnings.

According to the latest Office for National Statistics nominal average weekly earnings stood at £586 in October 21. Unemployment stood at 1.4 million in the 3m to October 2021.

■ Universal Credit

Ruth Jones:

[\[101825\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make it his policy to restore the £20 universal credit uplift.

Mr Simon Clarke:

The government has always been clear that the £20 per week increase to Universal Credit (UC) was a temporary measure to support households whose incomes and earnings were affected by the economic shock of COVID-19.

There have been significant positive developments in the public health and economic situation since the uplift was first announced. Now that the economy has reopened, the government is focusing on supporting people to move into and progress in work.

To continue to boost employment, wages and living standards, the government is continuing or enhancing the most successful Plan for Jobs schemes and introducing a new package of measures – taking the total DWP spend on labour market support to more than £6 billion over the next three years. This includes investing over £900m each year on work coaches, who will provide effective support to help job seekers on Universal Credit move into work and, for the first time ever, help people progress once in work, and funding for the Kickstart scheme, which has so far supported over 112,000 young people into Kickstart jobs.

The government has also taken decisive action to make work pay by cutting the Universal Credit taper rate from 63p to 55p, and increasing Universal Credit work allowances by £500 a year. This is effectively a tax cut for the lowest paid in society worth around £2.2bn in 2022-23 and strengthens incentives to move into and progress in work. 1.9m households will keep, on average, around an extra £1000 on an annual basis.

■ VAT

David Duguid:

[\[101809\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of increasing the £150,000 threshold to the VAT Flat Rate Scheme in the context of increased costs faced by businesses during the recovery from the covid-19 pandemic.

Lucy Frazer:

The VAT Flat Rate Scheme was introduced in 2002 as an administrative simplification scheme for small businesses. All taxes are kept under review, but there are no current plans to change the entry threshold for the Flat Rate Scheme.

The Government has made a comprehensive package of support available, worth billions, to a wide range of businesses that have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes extensions to the reduced rate of VAT for tourism and hospitality, the furlough scheme, extensions to the COVID-19 loan schemes, grant support, a business rates holiday for all retail, hospitality, and leisure business properties, mortgage holidays, enhanced Time to Pay for taxes, and VAT deferrals.

WORK AND PENSIONS**■ Conditions of Employment: Mental Health****Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:**[\[99029\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the adequacy of mental health and wellbeing support available in the workplace; and what steps her Department is taking to encourage businesses to improve workplace mental health support.

Chloe Smith:

The Government has taken steps to encourage businesses to improve workplace mental health. For example, the Disability Confident scheme provides employers with the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to understand health and disability issues, including mental health, in the workplace. As of 31 December 2021, Disability Confident employers reported over 11m paid employees working in their businesses.

To support mental health and well-being, the Access to Work Mental Health Support Service is available for those who need mental health support whilst in employment. The support can be accessed remotely, and is delivered by external partners, Remploy Employment Services and Able Futures, who offer individualised workplace support from experienced mental health practitioners. The support and advice is available for up to nine months and can offer coping strategies, a step-by-step support plan, advice on adjustments, and support for employers to enable them to fully understand the person's condition.

In addition, in March 2021, the Government published the COVID-19 Mental Health and Wellbeing Recovery Action Plan. This acknowledged the important role that employers play in creating workplaces in which employees with health conditions, including mental illnesses, can stay and thrive in work. We are supporting employers in this, particularly with our commitment to develop a new digital service, designed directly with small and medium-sized businesses to provide employers with better-tailored and integrated information about health and disability at work. An early version of the service is currently in private live-testing.

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Buildings

Rachel Hopkins:

[\[99102\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the total floor area of her departmental estate was in each year from 2010-11 to 2020-21.

Guy Opperman:

Total DWP Floorspace (NIA m2) Managed Estate including Arm's Length Bodies'.

Source: Cabinet Office: State of the Estate report (parliamentary report) published on Gov.uk.

Year Area m2

2010 1,856,832

2011 1,788,883

2012 1,799,716

2013 1,720,464

2014 1,646,766

2015 1,592,693

2016 1,563,185

2017 1,561,604

2018 1,577,606

2019 1,399,875

2020 1,380,476

2021 1,379,939

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Complaints

Jonathan Ashworth:

[\[101734\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, for what reasons the number of complaints made about her Department accepted by the Independent Case Examiner has increased over the last 12 months.

Guy Opperman:

The Independent Case Examiner (ICE) plays an important role in responding to complaints about the Department, where the customer remains dissatisfied with DWP's final response, and there are a variety of factors that can influence the numbers of complaints accepted by the ICE office.

As yet, it is too early to draw any firm conclusions about what may have caused any increase in complaints being accepted by ICE over the last 12 months, but we continue to monitor escalation rates closely and work with the ICE office to identify and address potential drivers.

■ Industrial Health and Safety: Coronavirus**Ruth Jones:****[99054]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps she has taken to increase health and safety enforcement in response to the omicron variant of covid-19.

Chloe Smith:

In 2021/22 the Government provided an additional £14m to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to continue its' programme of spot checks on compliance, to ensure businesses are protecting workers from COVID-19. The focus of the compliance checks is reviewed and adapted in line with Government advice and the different approaches taken in England, Scotland and Wales; most recently, in response to the omicron variant.

Businesses must still control the risks and review and update their risk assessments, taking into the account their statutory obligations, the public health guidance in their own nation, and the requirement to consult their workers.

Since the start of the pandemic, HSE has carried out more than 380,000 interventions to check how businesses are implementing measures to reduce transmission of COVID-19 at their sites. Where contraventions are identified and to ensure standards are being met, inspectors continue to take enforcement action, in line with HSE's published Enforcement Policy Statement

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Energy Infrastructure Planning Projects

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Industry) (Lee Rowley):

[[HCWS538](#)]

This Statement concerns the application for development consent made under the Planning Act 2008 by NNB Generation Company (SZC) Limited for the construction and operation of the Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station, with associated infrastructure near Leiston in Suffolk.

Under section 98(3) of the Planning Act 2008, the Examining Authority must submit its report to the Secretary of State by the end of the period of three months beginning with the deadline for completion of its examination of the application, or (if earlier) the end of the day on which it completes the examination, unless the Secretary of State sets a new deadline under section 98(4) of that Act. Where a new deadline is set, the Secretary of State must make a Statement to Parliament to announce it.

A request has been made to the Secretary of State by the Planning Inspectorate to extend the report writing stage of the Examination by six working weeks, from 14 January 2022 to 25 February 2022. The reasons given for this request were that a significant number of change requests were submitted by the Applicant during the Pre-Examination and Examination stages of the planning process. These changes require significant additional consideration from the Examining Authority. The Examining Authority has also been affected by unexpected health issues which have impacted upon the reporting stage of the process.

Taking these reasons into account and, after careful consideration, the Secretary of State has decided to reset the statutory timescale for the report writing stage, extending the deadline for the Examining Authority to submit its report to the Secretary of State by six working weeks, from the original deadline of 14 January 2022 to 25 February 2022.

However, mindful of the need to avoid unnecessary delays to the development consent processes, the Secretary of State requests the Examining Authority make best efforts to complete its report as soon as is reasonably practicable within the extended period.

The decision to set the new deadline for the report writing stage for this application is without prejudice to the decision on whether to grant or refuse development consent.