



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 16 May 2022 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:57 P.M., 16 May 2022). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

CONTENTS

ANSWERS	6	■ Warm Home Discount Scheme	13
ATTORNEY GENERAL	6	CABINET OFFICE	13
■ Corruption and Fraud	6	■ 10 Downing Street: Taxis	13
■ Fraud	6	■ Civil Service: Surveys	13
BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY	7	■ Independent Adviser on Ministers' Interests	14
■ British Airways: Redundancy	7	■ Senior Civil Servants: Free School Meals	14
■ Business: Closures	7	■ UK Commission on Covid Commemoration	15
■ Business: Coronavirus	8	■ United Kingdom Security Vetting: Applications	15
■ Directors: Criminal Proceedings	8	DEFENCE	15
■ Energy Company Obligation	8	■ Air Force: Unmanned Air Vehicles	15
■ Energy Company Obligation and Energy Supply: Finance	9	■ Armed Forces: Private Education	16
■ Industry	9	■ Armed Forces: Training	17
■ Investment Security Unit	9	■ AWACS: Procurement	17
■ McColl's: Insolvency	10	■ Commonwealth: Armed Forces	18
■ Neurology: Research	10	■ Defence Equipment	18
■ Personal Care Services: Coronavirus	11	■ Defence Equipment: Sales	18
■ Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme: Insolvency	11	■ Defence: Procurement	19
■ Scottish Limited Partnerships	12	■ European Fighter Aircraft: Radar	19
■ Scottish Limited Partnerships: Organised Crime	12	■ Kenya: Army	19
■ UK Research and Innovation	12		

■ Ministry of Defence: NATO	20	■ Special Educational Needs: Standards	33
■ Ministry of Defence: Staff	20	■ Teachers: Veterans	34
■ Poland: Challenger Tanks	21	■ University of Oxford: Overseas Students	35
■ RAF Lakenheath: Nuclear Weapons	22	ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS	36
■ Russia: Defence Equipment	22	■ Fish Farming: Animal Welfare	36
■ Ukraine: Humanitarian Aid	23	■ Flood Control: Housing	36
■ Ukraine: Ranger Regiment	23	■ Food: UK Trade with EU	37
■ Veterans: Identity Cards	24	■ Nitrous Oxide: Misuse	38
DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT	24	■ Outdoor Recreation	39
■ Data Protection	24	■ Pet Travel Scheme	40
■ Internet: Safety	24	■ Plastics: Litter	40
■ Musicians	25	FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE	40
■ Pornography: Internet	25	■ Afghanistan: Diplomatic Service	40
■ Staff: Surveillance	26	■ Alaa Abd el-Fattah	41
EDUCATION	27	■ British Council: Finance	41
■ Adoption	27	■ Cameroon: Human Rights	41
■ Department for Education: Verbal Dyspraxia Awareness Day	27	■ Cameroon: Sexual Offences	42
■ Foster Care	27	■ Developing Countries: Sanitation and Water	42
■ Free School Meals	28	■ Developing Countries: Tree Planting	43
■ Higher Education: Care Leavers	28	■ Development Aid: Health Services	44
■ Primary Education: Free School Meals	29	■ Great Green Wall: Deserts	44
■ Primary Education: Physical Education and Sports	30	■ Jim Fitton	45
■ Schools: Catering	30	■ Kenya: Diplomatic Service	45
■ Schools: Coronavirus	30	■ Malaria: Disease Control	46
■ Schools: Energy	31	■ Rwanda: Asylum	46
■ Special Educational Needs	32	■ Shireen Abu Akleh	47
■ Special Educational Needs: Coronavirus	32	■ Syria: Refugees	47

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	47	■ Surgery	58
■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]	47	■ Usher Syndrome	59
■ Aortic Aneurysm: Screening	48	HOME OFFICE	59
■ Bicalutamide	48	■ Asylum: RAF Linton-on-Ouse	59
■ Cancer: Children	48	■ Asylum: Rwanda	61
■ Clinical Trials	49	■ Deportation: Jamaica	63
■ Coronavirus	49	■ Domestic Abuse: Males	63
■ Coronavirus: Disease Control	50	■ Hate Crime	63
■ Coronavirus: Medical Treatments	50	■ HM Passport Office: Durham	64
■ Defibrillators: Finance	50	■ HM Passport Office: Standards	64
■ Dental Services: Finance	51	■ Home Office: Correspondence	65
■ Dental Services: Greater Manchester	51	■ Immigration	66
■ Eating Disorders	52	■ Immigration Controls: Airports	66
■ Health and Care Act 2022	52	■ Members: Correspondence	67
■ Healthy Start Scheme	52	■ Migrant Workers: Football	68
■ Healthy Start Scheme: North West	53	■ Passport Office: Telephone Services	68
■ HIV Infection: Drugs	53	■ Passports: Applications	69
■ Immensa Health Clinic: Wolverhampton	54	■ Passports: Educational Visits	69
■ Independent Review on Tobacco Control	54	■ Refugees: Afghanistan	70
■ Long Covid	54	■ Refugees: Housing	70
■ Members: Correspondence	55	■ Sexual Harassment: Public Places	71
■ Neurology: Staff	56	■ Travel Requirements	71
■ NHS 111	56	■ UK Visas and Immigration: Telephone Services	72
■ Nutrition	56	■ Visas: Russia	72
■ Obesity: Health Services	57	■ Visas: South Africa	73
■ Poverty: Health	58	■ Whetstone Synagogue: Security	73
■ Prescriptions: Fees and Charges	58	INTERNATIONAL TRADE	73
■ Protective Clothing	58	■ Trade Agreements: Gulf States	73

JUSTICE	74	■ Government Departments: Coronavirus	85
■ COE Commissioner for Human Rights	74	SCOTLAND	86
■ Prisons: Education	74	■ Lord Advocate	86
■ Prisons: Labour Turnover	75	TRANSPORT	86
■ Reoffenders	75	■ Aviation: Accidents	86
■ Robbery	76	■ Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency: Staff	86
■ Secure Schools: Medway	77	■ Driving Tests	87
■ Trial of Lunatics Act 1883	77	■ East Coast Main Line	87
■ Youth Custody	78	■ Electric Scooters	88
■ Youth Services: Contracts	78	■ Electric Scooters: Accidents	88
LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES	78	■ Ferries: Safety	88
■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]	78	■ Govia Thameslink Railway	89
■ Council Tax: Homes for Ukraine Scheme	79	■ Highway Code	89
■ COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund	79	■ Kosovo: Driving Licences	89
■ Devolution	79	■ Large Goods Vehicles: Concrete	90
■ Homes for Ukraine Scheme	80	■ Merchant Shipping: Discrimination	90
■ Housing: Disability and Older People	81	■ Motor Vehicles: Safety Measures	90
■ Local Government Finance	82	■ Network Rail: Social Media	91
■ Private Rented Housing: Tenants' Rights	83	■ P&O Ferries	91
■ Refugees: Children	83	■ P&O Ferries: Fleet Management	92
■ Refugees: Ukraine	83	■ P&O Ferries: Inspections	92
■ Regional Planning and Development: Devolution	84	■ P&O Ferries: Redundancy	92
■ Social Rented Housing: Standards	84	■ Pedestrian Areas: Visual Impairment	93
■ Urban Areas: Housing	85	■ Railways: Concessions	93
PRIME MINISTER	85	■ Railways: Tickets	94
■ Energy Supply	85		

■ Seafarers (Insolvency, Collective Redundancies and Information and Consultation Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2018	94	■ Safe Hands Plans: Insolvency	104
■ South Western Railway	94	■ Treasury: Aviation	105
■ Train Operating Companies: Fines	95	■ Treasury: Hotels	105
■ Underground Railways: Noise	95	WOMEN AND EQUALITIES	106
TREASURY	95	■ Discrimination	106
■ Apprentices: Taxation	95	WORK AND PENSIONS	106
■ Bank Services	95	■ Access to Work Programme	106
■ Bank Services: Charities	96	■ Department For Work and Pensions: Seaham	106
■ Beer: Excise Duties	97	■ Local Housing Allowance	107
■ Business: Coronavirus	98	■ Medical Certificates	108
■ Business: Red Diesel	98	■ Poverty: Children	108
■ Cryptocurrencies	99	■ Universal Credit	109
■ Debts: Coventry	99	■ Way to Work Scheme	109
■ Debts: Developing Countries	100	WRITTEN STATEMENTS	110
■ Economic Growth: Hendon	100	EDUCATION	110
■ Energy: Housing	101	■ Condition Improvement Fund Update	110
■ Financial Services: Competition	102	■ Education Update	110
■ Insurance: Investment	102	FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE	111
■ Money Lenders	102	■ International Development Strategy	111
■ Motor Vehicles: Excise Duties	103	HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	112
■ Motor Vehicles: Insurance	103	■ Health Update	112
■ Revenue and Customs: ICT	104	TREASURY	113
		■ Update on carbon leakage mitigations	113

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

■ Corruption and Fraud

Emily Thornberry: [\[655\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many reports of (a) serious or complex fraud, (b) bribery and (c) corruption, as defined within the remit of the Serious Fraud Office, there have been in each of the last ten years.

Alex Chalk:

The SFO receives approximately 1,200 referrals of alleged criminality every year. These range in seriousness and come from a variety of sources, including the public, whistle-blowers and corporate referrals.

Every referral received is researched and/or assessed to help determine if it is a matter that the SFO should investigate.

The SFO only takes on only the most complex fraud and bribery cases. Should a referral not meet the reasonable suspicion threshold and the Director's Statement of Principle, it may be referred to another law enforcement agency or discontinued.

The Serious Fraud Office does not hold data on reported fraud cases to other law enforcement agencies.

■ Fraud

Emily Thornberry: [\[658\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what the estimated value of fraud reported to the Serious Fraud Office has been in each of the last ten years.

Alex Chalk:

The Serious Fraud Office (SFO) does not hold the data on the estimated value of fraud reported to the Office over the last 10 years.

Referrals received by the SFO, whilst alleging crime, often do not provide an estimate of loss or actual loss reported. Identifying the true value of reported fraud requires investigation.

The SFO is committed to supporting the victims of fraud, bribery or corruption.

Emily Thornberry: [\[659\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what proportion of total reported fraud cases have fallen under the remit of (a) the Serious Fraud Office and (b) other law enforcement agencies over the last twelve month period for which figures are available.

Alex Chalk:

Neither of the Law Officers Department's responsible for prosecuting fraud cases, the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), hold data requested. Reported crime data is collated and held by the Home Office.

The SFO receives approximately 1,200 referrals of alleged criminality every year. These range in seriousness and come from a variety of sources, including the public, whistle-blowers and corporate referrals.

Every referral received is researched and/or assessed to help determine if it is a matter that the SFO should investigate.

The SFO only takes on only the most complex fraud and bribery cases. Should a referral not meet the reasonable suspicion threshold and the Director's Statement of Principle, it may be referred to another law enforcement agency or discontinued.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY**■ British Airways: Redundancy****Alan Brown:**[\[312\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will list the dates of submission of HR1 forms by British Airways in the last three years.

Paul Scully:

The information requested under the statutory advanced notification of redundancy scheme is commercially confidential and to publish it would prejudice the commercial interests of those employers. Management information on the volume of notifications received under the scheme is published by the Insolvency Service on GOV.UK.

■ Business: Closures**Seema Malhotra:**[\[267\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to help reduce the number of business deaths per quarter.

Paul Scully:

In a dynamic and competitive economy, a proportion of businesses will cease trading each year, for a range of reasons.

Recognising the impact of the pandemic on businesses across the UK, this government has provided around £400 billion of direct support to the economy since March 2020, which has helped to safeguard jobs, businesses and public services in every region and nation of the UK. This includes a total of over £26bn in business grants.

■ Business: Coronavirus**Seema Malhotra:****[265]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Answer of 10 February 2022 to Question 119598, on Business: Coronavirus, whether companies with links to the Russian government have received a covid-19-related grant or loan.

Paul Scully:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave her on 10th February 2022 to Question [119598](#).

■ Directors: Criminal Proceedings**Mr Kevan Jones:****[75]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department is taking steps to assess the possibility of criminal proceedings being brought against directors of companies that are subject to compulsory strike-off.

Paul Scully:

Where a Company has been subject to a compulsory strike off and there is a suspected breach of the Companies Act 2006 by a Director, Companies House may make a Criminal Referral to the Insolvency Service to consider whether to commence a criminal investigation.

■ Energy Company Obligation**Dr Alan Whitehead:****[19]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Energy Company Obligation ECO4: 2022 – 2026 Government Response published in April 2022, what his timescale is for laying draft affirmative regulations to bring forward ECO4.

Greg Hands:

The Government is working quickly to lay regulations. These are subject to the Parliamentary process and priority.

Dr Alan Whitehead:**[26]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if his Department will guarantee that suppliers undertaking works under ECO4 from 1 April 2022 will be reimbursed in full for that work.

Greg Hands:

The Government does not fund or reimburse suppliers to meet their obligations under the Energy Company Obligation (ECO). ECO is a supplier obligation, and it is up to suppliers how they dispense their obligation and recoup costs from energy bills.

■ Energy Company Obligation and Energy Supply: Finance

Dr Alan Whitehead:

[\[568\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the potential financial impact on (a) energy suppliers and (b) builders of ECO4 starting on 1 April 2022 before relevant legislative proposals have been made.

Greg Hands:

The Government recognises industry preference for legislative certainty to deliver ECO4. However, ECO4 delivery from 1 April 2022, prior to legislation, will still count under the scheme when legislation is in place. Furthermore, the supply chain may continue to deliver to previous ECO3 rules until the end of June 2022, subject to minor amendments. Suppliers have four years to deliver their obligation, and there is not likely to be a financial impact as a result of the legislative timetable.

■ Industry

Rachael Maskell:

[\[332\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent steps he has taken to assess the future industrial opportunities of (a) towns, (b) cities and (c) the regions.

Lee Rowley:

The Government is committed to levelling-up across the whole of the UK and so that people feel proud of their local areas, whether in a large city, town, rural or coastal area.

The Government has recently published the levelling-up strategy which commits to extensive work, support and monitoring for individual areas in the future. It is for local leaders, as the representatives who are best placed, to determine the best strategies for their future growth and success.

Government will continue to work in partnership with local authorities, and within the framework of the levelling-up agenda, to support improvements and growth across the whole of the United Kingdom. Examples of specific programmes with an industrial dimension including the Levelling Up Fund, Made Smarter, Help to Grow and the Towns Fund.

■ Investment Security Unit

Sir Iain Duncan Smith:

[\[571\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many notifications the Investment Security Unit has received in relation to the National Security and Investment Act 2021 since that Act came into force.

Sir Iain Duncan Smith: [572]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will publish those notifications made to the Investment Security Unit under the National Security and Investment Act 2021, by sector.

Sir Iain Duncan Smith: [573]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will publish the target response time between (a) notification being made to the Investment Security Unit and (b) response from that Unit; and what his Department's latest assessment is of that Unit's performance against that target.

Paul Scully:

The National Security and Investment Act 2021 requires the Secretary of State to prepare an annual report, including information on the numbers of notifications accepted and rejected, the average number of working days taken to accept or reject them, and the sectors in which they fall.

The first annual report covering 4 January 2022 – 31 March 2022 is currently being prepared and will be laid before both Houses and published in due course.

The Government does not publish individual notifications in recognition of the fact that most acquisitions raise no national security risks and are primarily a matter for the parties.

■ McColl's: Insolvency**Jonathan Reynolds:** [238]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the impact of McColl's entering administration on access to community Post Office services.

Paul Scully:

We were pleased to see a deal reached for the sale of McColl's that helps protect jobs and enable the business to continue to deliver convenience for customers.

■ Neurology: Research**Mr Virendra Sharma:** [147]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much funding his Department made available for neurological research in each year from 2012-13 to 2020-21.

George Freeman:

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) funds a variety of research within this broad-ranging area. The UKRI Gateway <https://gtr.ukri.org/> provides data on publicly funded research and innovation which is searchable by year and subject area.

■ Personal Care Services: Coronavirus

Dame Diana Johnson: [\[653\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, for what reason hairdressers were not included in the additional grant for hospitality and leisure businesses impacted by the covid-19 omicron variant over the 2021-22 winter period.

Dame Diana Johnson: [\[654\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what support his Department made available for hairdressers in response to business disruptions as a result of the omicron variant of covid-19.

Paul Scully:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Batley and Spen on 27 January 2022 to Question [110644](#).

While the Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant focused on sectors where social mixing was a primary motivation for consumers, Local Authorities were encouraged to support the personal care sector through the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) scheme. Local Authorities reported that close to 750,000 payments of ARG, worth a total of over £2 billion, had been made to businesses by 31 March 2022, the scheme closure date.

The additional measures announced on 21 December 2021 reinforced the existing package of wider Government support.

■ Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme: Insolvency

Dan Jarvis: [\[261\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to help support people on the Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive scheme with monitoring payments where the firm providing the monitoring service has become insolvent.

Greg Hands:

Participants in the Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (DRHI) have always been able to change their Metering and Monitoring Service Package (MMSP) to a new installer should their existing installer become insolvent. The recent legislation that closed the DRHI to new applicants streamlined this process.

The DRHI closed to new applications on 31 March 2022. However, the Department will continue to keep the scheme (including MMSP) under review to determine whether further changes to scheme operation are required, until the final DRHI payments are made in 2029. This will take into account market conditions such as installer availability.

■ Scottish Limited Partnerships

Kenny MacAskill: [\[489\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent representations his Department has received from the Scottish Government on Scottish Limited Partnerships.

Paul Scully:

Officials have had an active dialogue with counterparts from the Scottish Government and most recently met on 2 March 2022 to discuss Scottish Limited Partnerships. I anticipate that they will have further exchanges on this subject in due course.

Kenny MacAskill: [\[491\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the number of Scottish limited partnerships set up in each year since 2015.

Paul Scully:

The official statistics on companies and the total size of the register are made publicly available online by Companies House. The most recent data can be found in this link [here](#) and show that 5,706 limited partnerships were incorporated in Scotland in 2015/16, 4,932 in 2016/17, 2,689 in 2017/18, 751 in 2018/19, 657 in 2019/20 and 591 in 2020/21.

■ Scottish Limited Partnerships: Organised Crime

Kenny MacAskill: [\[490\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans his Department has to tackle the abuse of Scottish Limited Partnerships by organised crime organisations.

Paul Scully:

The Government outlined its proposals for limited partnership reform in December 2018 in response to a consultation (link [here](#)). The reforms will modernise Limited Partnership law, helping to tackle illicit activity and the abuse of Scottish Limited Partnerships. The proposals include tightening registration requirements, requiring limited partnerships to demonstrate a firmer connection to the United Kingdom, increasing transparency requirements, and enabling the Registrar to strike from the register limited partnerships which are dissolved, or which are no longer carrying on business. The Government will be reforming the relevant legislation through the forthcoming Economic Crime and Transparency Bill.

■ UK Research and Innovation

Dr Alan Whitehead: [\[18\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much funding has been allocated to climate and environment related projects from UKRI's funding allocation in (a) 2020-21 and (b) 2021-22.

Greg Hands:

Details on funding allocated to climate and environment related projects are provided by UKRI through their National Environment Research Council. The UKRI Gateway <https://gtr.ukri.org/> provides data on publicly funded research and innovation, which is searchable by year and subject area.

■ Warm Home Discount Scheme**Alan Brown:****[848]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what his timescale is for bringing forward legislative proposals for the 2022-2023 Warm Home Discount scheme.

Greg Hands:

The Regulations for the Warm Home Discount in England and Wales were laid in Parliament on Wednesday 12 May.

The consultation on the future scheme in Scotland is currently open and will close on Sunday 22 May. After this, the Government will publish its response and lay the supporting Regulations for a scheme to be in place from winter 2022/23.

CABINET OFFICE**■ 10 Downing Street: Taxis****Emily Thornberry:****[114]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what total cost to the public purse was of vehicles ordered on Downing Street's travel account for mini-cabs in each month of (a) 2019-20, (b) 2020-21 and (c) 2021-22.

Michael Ellis:

This information is not centrally held in the form requested, and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

■ Civil Service: Surveys**Rachel Hopkins:****[1013]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will publish the (a) engagement, (b) inclusion, (c) discrimination and (d) bullying scores by ethnicity of civil servants' responses to the (i) 2020 and (ii) 2021 Civil Service People Surveys.

Rachel Hopkins:**[1014]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will publish the (a) engagement, (b) inclusion, (c) discrimination and (d) bullying scores by disability status of civil servants' responses to the (i) 2020 and (ii) 2021 Civil Service People Surveys.

Rachel Hopkins: [1015]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will publish the (a) engagement, (b) inclusion, (c) discrimination and (d) bullying scores of civil servants' responses by gender to the (i) 2020 and (ii) 2021 Civil Service People Surveys.

Rachel Hopkins: [1016]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will publish the (a) engagement, (b) inclusion, (c) discrimination and (d) bullying scores of civil servants' responses by sexual orientation to the (i) 2020 and (ii) 2021 Civil Service People Surveys.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

The Cabinet Office publishes results from the Civil Service People Survey on GOV.UK. In addition to the overall results, demographic breakdowns are published.

The demographic scores for the [2020 Civil Service People Survey](#) were published on 31 March. This publication included scores for (a) engagement, (b) inclusion, (c) discrimination, and (d) bullying by ethnicity, disability status, gender and sexual orientation of civil servants' responses.

Publication of the demographic scores of the 2021 Civil Service People Survey is scheduled for 30 June 2022 on GOV.UK. This will also include scores for (a) engagement, (b) inclusion, (c) discrimination, and (d) bullying by ethnicity, disability status, gender and sexual orientation of civil servants' responses.

Independent Adviser on Ministers' Interests**Caroline Lucas:** [163]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, for what reasons the annual report from Lord Geidt, the Independent Adviser on Ministers' Interests has been delayed and when it will be published.

Michael Ellis:

The Independent Adviser publishes a report annually. The previous report was published at the end of May 2021.

Senior Civil Servants: Free School Meals**Emily Thornberry:** [116]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to the Answer of 27 April to Question 155612 on Senior Civil Servants: Free School Meals, when information from the finalised annual Senior Civil Service Database for 1 April 2022 will be available; and whether the response rates to questions relating to socioeconomic background in that database are expected to reach acceptable quality thresholds.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

At this time we are unable to confirm when information on Free School Meals will be available from the April 2022 SCS Database, and whether declaration rates for broader SEB measures will reach acceptable quality thresholds.

The Cabinet Office continues to work with departments to increase response rates across socio-economic background measures.

■ **UK Commission on Covid Commemoration**

Alex Sobel:

[442]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, when the background work is expected to commence to establish the Commission on Covid Commemoration; and when he plans to publish a detailed timetable for setting up the Commission on Covid Commemoration.

Michael Ellis:

As the Prime Minister previously announced, the Government will set out the Commission membership and terms of reference in due course.

■ **United Kingdom Security Vetting: Applications**

Ian Murray:

[176]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment he has made of the financial impact on UK Security Vetting applicants of waiting periods for security clearance.

Michael Ellis:

No assessment has been made of the financial impact on applicants to UK Security Vetting of waiting periods for security clearance.

The purpose of National Security Vetting is to help safeguard National Security. Waiting periods for security clearance are driven by the time required to gather information from a range of sources on an applicant and the subsequent analysis of this information. Waiting times therefore vary accordingly.

Advice is provided to applicants that this process can take some time to complete. I am unable to comment further on the financial impact that this essential security control may have.

Work is ongoing within Cabinet Office to modernise and improve the effectiveness of vetting overall, in line with the Government's wider modernisation agenda and to keep pace with the threats faced by the UK today. The modernisation aims to improve the end to end user experience for the applicant and sponsoring department and improve the speed of applications.

DEFENCE

■ **Air Force: Unmanned Air Vehicles**

Mr Kevan Jones:

[76]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what estimate he has made of the (a) adequacy of the number of Protector drones in the RAF and (b) number of Remotely Piloted Air Systems required for RAF operations.

James Heappey:

Remotely Piloted Air Systems (RPAS) such as Protector and Reaper are taking an increasingly important place in the Defence capability of the UK in a rapidly changing technological and international environment. As such, we keep the size and capability of our RPAS fleet under constant review. The UK has ordered 16 Protector RPAS to replace its existing Reaper Fleet.

■ Armed Forces: Private Education**Emily Thornberry:** [\[118\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the maximum level of Continuity of Education Allowance payments provided by his Department were for (a) primary and (b) secondary pupils in the UK in 2021-22.

Emily Thornberry: [\[119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much funding his Department allocated to the Continuity of Education Allowance to fund school places in the UK in 2021-22; and how many children were covered by that funding.

Emily Thornberry: [\[120\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much funding his Department allocated to the Continuity of Education Allowance to fund places at (a) Winchester College, (b) Eton College, (c) Rugby School, (d) Stowe School, (e) Ampleforth College, (f) Millfield School, (g) Charterhouse School, (h) Gordonstoun School, (i) The King's School, Canterbury, and (j) Harrow School in 2021-22.

Leo Docherty:

Continuity of Education Allowance (CEA) assists Service personnel to achieve continuity of education for their children that would otherwise be denied in the state-maintained day school sector due to the mobility of their family because of consecutive assignments. CEA is available to all Service personnel, irrespective of rank, subject to them satisfying the qualifying criteria. Service personnel may select from a wide variety of schools across the UK from within the independent and state-maintained sectors that meet set criteria. Each claimant is required to contribute at least 10 per cent of the fees at independent schools.

Financial Year (FY) 2021-22 straddled two Academic Years (2020-21 and 2021-22) so the maximum level of CEA provided for a) primary and (b) secondary pupils in the UK was:

o Academic Year 2020-21: Primary £5,969 and Secondary £7,828;

o Academic Year 2021-22 : Primary £6,096 and Secondary £7,847;

During FY 2021-22, the cost to defence of CEA was £81.3 million, for which 4,700 children benefited.

During FY 2021-22, the cost to Defence of CEA in respect of the stipulated schools was as follows:

SCHOOL	£ MILLION
Ampleforth College	0.164
Charterhouse School, Godalming	0.016
Eton College - Windsor	0.172
Gordonstoun School - Elgin	0.098
Harrow School - Harrow on the Hill	0.118
Millfield School - Street	0.668
Rugby School - Rugby	0.125
Stowe School - Buckingham	0.047
Winchester College - Winchester	0.078
King's School - Canterbury	0

■ **Armed Forces: Training**

Kenny MacAskill: [\[485\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, which countries the UK armed forces provided training for in each year between 2011 and 2021; which armed service provided the training for each of those training programmes; and what the names of those courses the personnel attended were.

James Heapey:

The requested information will take time to collate. I will write to the hon. Member when it is available.

■ **AWACS: Procurement**

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[631\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether a formal contract has been signed with Boeing for three E-7 Wedgetail.

Jeremy Quin:

In March 2019 the Ministry of Defence signed a contract with Boeing Defence UK to deliver five Wedgetail aircraft to the Royal Air Force (RAF). Following the Integrated Review decision to reduce the number of Wedgetail aircraft that would enter RAF service, elements of that contract were renegotiated and formal agreement on the associated change has been reached; the contract amendment is in the process of being enacted.

■ Commonwealth: Armed Forces**Dan Jarvis:** [\[259\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the (a) British Army, (b) Royal Air Force, and (c) Royal Navy will (i) recruit or (ii) accept applications from Commonwealth candidates this year.

Leo Docherty:

All three Services are continuing to recruit personnel from the Commonwealth who meet the necessary criteria. However, due to the numbers of applications already in the recruiting pipelines, no new applications are currently being accepted while those are processed. If new applications can be accepted in the future, candidates will be informed either through messaging on the Army and Royal Air Force recruiting websites or from Royal Navy recruiters. It is not possible at this point however to state when new applications might be accepted.

■ Defence Equipment**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[637\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the accuracy of messages published by the MOD's Official Press Office Twitter Account in relation to the Public Accounts Committee Report entitled Ministry of Defence Equipment Plan 2021–31.

Jeremy Quin:

I agree with the tweet that the Public Accounts Committee Report (PAC) contained numerous inaccuracies. The Ministry of Defence will be writing to the PAC to outline these in detail in due course.

■ Defence Equipment: Sales**Jamie Stone:** [\[917\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the document MOD surplus inventory for sale, published online, to whom and where his Department sells the surplus equipment; and what happens to the income from those sales.

Jeremy Quin:

The Defence Equipment Sales Authority (DESA) has a range of supply options for what is a wide variety of surplus equipment not all of which represents military capability, routes are principally Government to Government sales as well as wider to UK industry. In addition, DESA coordinates several specialist contractors (selected through open competition) for the sale of defence equipment to the public and industry, both in the UK and overseas.

All revenue is returned directly back to each of the Front Line Commands.

■ Defence: Procurement

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[84\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to recommendation 6.37 of his Department's publication, entitled Growing the contribution of defence to UK prosperity: a report for the Secretary of State for Defence by Philip Dunne MP, published on 09 July 2018, if his Department has commissioned academic work on the treatment in procurement decisions of additional tax revenues arising from procurement spend in the UK.

Jeremy Quin:

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) has not commissioned academic work on the treatment in procurement decisions of additional tax revenues arising from procurement spend in the UK.

Each year, the MOD awards a significant number of contracts, taking into consideration many elements to determine what is the most economically advantageous tender. However, we do not use tax revenues as an award criterion as this would be inconsistent with demonstration of value for money as set out in the HM Treasury Green Book.

■ European Fighter Aircraft: Radar

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[632\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he expects to complete the integration of AESA radars on Typhoon.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[633\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether AESA radars will be fitted to tranche 2 Typhoons.

Jeremy Quin:

The Active Electronically Scanned Array (AESA), or the European Common Radar System Mark 2 (ECRS Mk2), is planned to be delivered and integrated onto Typhoon by end of this decade. Our current planning assumption is that ECRS Mk2 hardware will be installed on UK Tranche 3 Typhoon aircraft, although this is being kept under review.

■ Kenya: Army

Kenny MacAskill: [\[968\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what live munitions the British Army has used in the Lolldaiga training area of Kenya since 2010; and what quantity of those live munitions has been used.

James Heappey:

The British Army Training Unit Kenya (BATUK) does not conduct live firing exercises on Loldai Training area (LTA). BATUK only use the LTA to conduct blank firing and dry exercises.

Kenny MacAskill:[\[969\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the inventory is of white phosphorus munitions held by the British Army Training Unit Kenya.

James Heappey:

The British Army Training Unit Kenya does hold stock of white phosphorus ammunition in Kenya.

For obvious security reasons, the Ministry of Defence does not, however, release details of where and in what numbers, ammunition stockpiles are stored.

Kenny MacAskill:[\[970\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many physical files were destroyed by British Army Training Unit Kenya during the move to its new headquarters; and what years those files covered.

James Heappey:

It is taking longer than anticipated to collate the information to answer the right hon. Members question and I will write to him shortly.

■ Ministry of Defence: NATO**John Healey:**[\[41\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what his Department's priorities are for the NATO Summit in June 2022 in respect of finalising the next Strategic Concept.

James Heappey:

NATO leaders will adopt as planned a new Strategic Concept at the Madrid summit. We want the next Concept to reflect how NATO is accelerating its transformation for a more dangerous strategic reality, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine and considering challenges posed by China.

It will reaffirm our commitment to freedom, openness and the rules-based order. It must also embed UK-led work to ensure the Alliance is fit for future challenges, in line with the NATO 2030 agenda. This includes modernising and adapting to advanced technologies; competing and integrating across domains using military and non-military tools; and improving national resilience.

■ Ministry of Defence: Staff**John Healey:**[\[39\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to Answer of 27 April 2022 to Question 156382 on Ministry of Defence: Staff, what the (a) roles and (b) pay bands are of the 63,070 projected civilian staff to be employed in 2022-23.

John Healey:[\[40\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the Answer of 27 April 2022 to Question 156382 on Ministry of Defence: Staff, how many of the projected 63,070 projected civilian staff for 2022-3 will hold media relations and communications roles.

Leo Docherty:

The breakdown of pay bands (PB) of Ministry of Defence (MOD) civilian staff projected for 2022-23 can be found in the table below. It should be noted that these figures are indicative and intended for planning purposes, they are not a target, and are subject to updated iterations as change programmes mature

GRADE	2022-23 STAFF
SCS PB4	2
SCS PB3	13
SCS PB2	65
SCS PB1/B1A	442
G6	1,990
G7	5,169
SEO	10,343
HEO	12,435
EO	9,084
AO	9,334
AA	3,725
LEC	4,195
RFA	1,822
Other	4,451
Total	63,070

The MOD does not hold the level of detail requested by roles.

■ **Poland: Challenger Tanks**

John Healey:[\[610\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether plans to send Challenger II tanks to Poland will affect plans to retire one third of the Challenger II tank fleet.

Jeremy Quin:

Deployment of Challenger 2 tanks to Poland will not affect the decision to retire elements of the CR2 fleet.

■ RAF Lakenheath: Nuclear Weapons

Alex Sobel: [\[934\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether there are plans for US nuclear weapons to be stored at RAF Lakenheath.

Alex Sobel: [\[935\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what discussions he has had with (a) ministers and (b) hon Members regarding the planned storage of US nuclear weapons at USAF Lakenheath in Suffolk.

Alex Sobel: [\[936\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what discussions his Department has had with Emergency Contingency Planning Departments or Emergency Planning Officers regarding the planned storage of US nuclear weapons at USAF Lakenheath in Suffolk.

Alex Sobel: [\[937\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what discussions he his Department has had with (a) Local Accident and Emergency Departments (b) Police, Fire and Ambulance Services and (c) the police regarding the planned storage of US nuclear weapons at USAF Lakenheath in Suffolk.

Alex Sobel: [\[938\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, who will make the final decision on storage of US Nuclear Weapons at USAF Lakenheath.

Alex Sobel: [\[939\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what estimate his Department has made of the potential cost to the public purse of storing US nuclear weapons at USAF Lakenheath; and from which budget heading that funding would be drawn.

Jeremy Quin:

The Ministry of Defence is unable to comment on US spending decisions and capabilities, which are a matter for the US Government. It remains longstanding UK and NATO policy to neither confirm nor deny the presence of nuclear weapons at a given location.

■ Russia: Defence Equipment

John Healey: [\[611\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the Answer of 27 April 2022 to Question 156379 on Russia: Defence Equipment, what steps his Department is taking

to help ensure that UK-manufactured dual-use equipment is not used by the Russian military.

Jeremy Quin:

The Government reviews all licence applications for the export of UK-manufactured military and dual-use equipment against the Strategic Export Licensing Criteria, including an assessment of risk that the items will be diverted to an undesirable end-user or for an undesirable end-use. In addition, the UK ensures its arms exports are compliant with the Arms Trade Treaty, and international trade sanctions. Additional sanctions on the export of dual-use goods to Russia came into force on 1 March 2022.

John Healey:

[\[612\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the Answer of 27 April 2022 to Question 156379 on Russia: Defence Equipment, what assessment his Department has made of which UK-manufactured dual-use items may have been used by the Russian military during its invasion of Ukraine.

Jeremy Quin:

I refer the Rt Hon. Member to the response provided by my hon. Friend the Minister for the Armed Forces (James Heapey) on 27 April 2022 to Question 156379 to which I have nothing further to add.

■ **Ukraine: Humanitarian Aid**

John Healey:

[\[42\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many requests his Department has received for support with the humanitarian situation in Ukraine from bordering countries; and how many of the 1000 UK troops who are on readiness to provide that support have been deployed.

James Heapey:

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) leads on a humanitarian response. To date no formal requests for humanitarian assistance have been received, however the situation remains fluid and could quickly change.

Defence has reduced the forward presence of the Humanitarian Task Force (HATF). However we have a prompt and scalable response to any emergent humanitarian need with approximately 100 personnel deployed in Poland on other operations. The remaining 900 personnel are held at graduated readiness in the UK, with 40 vehicles forward based in Germany.

■ **Ukraine: Ranger Regiment**

John Healey:

[\[56\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the Ranger regiment has been deployed to Ukraine since Russia's invasion of that country in February 2022.

James Heapey:

As the Secretary of State for Defence said in his statement of 17 January 2022, we deployed UK personnel, including from the Ranger Regiment, to Ukraine to provide training on anti-tank weapons before the Russian invasion. They left Ukraine in early February after delivering this training.

For operational reasons, we will not comment on the exact number of UK military personnel in Ukraine or their whereabouts.

■ Veterans: Identity Cards

Justin Madders: [\[815\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the Answer of 23 February 2022 to Question 125263, whether a timescale for final delivery on Veterans ID cards has been agreed.

Leo Docherty:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the Minister of State for Defence, Baroness Goldie DL, on 24 March 2022 to Question HL6901 to the noble Lord, Lord West of Spithead GCB DSC in the House of Lords.

Attachments:

1. Veterans Identity Cards [HL6901.docx]

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ Data Protection**

Chi Onwurah: [\[755\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, which data rights will be clarified by the Data Reform Bill, as announced in the Queen's Speech 2022.

Julia Lopez:

Now that we have left the EU, we have an opportunity to simplify the clunky parts of GDPR and create a world class data rights framework that will allow us to realise the benefits of data use while maintaining the UK's high data protection standards.

The bill will contain measures from the 'Data: A New Direction' consultation document, and we will publish our response shortly. The bill will also make good on the government's commitment to legislate for other policies in similar subject areas, such as increasing industry participation in Smart Data schemes and enabling digital identity-verification services.

■ Internet: Safety

Chi Onwurah: [\[241\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Online Safety Bill in ensuring that content

moderators working for social media companies have adequate mental health support, regardless of their location.

Chris Philp:

The Online Safety Bill will require social media companies to put in place appropriate content moderation systems to comply with their new statutory duties. It does not replace or duplicate existing employment or health and safety laws that may be relevant to companies' obligations in regards to the health and wellbeing of their employees.

■ **Musicians**

Kevin Brennan:

[\[65\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment she has made of the (a) economic and (b) cultural impact of songwriters and composers in the UK.

Julia Lopez:

The music industry is vital to the economy and culture of the UK. In 2019, the music, performing and visual arts sector contributed an estimated £10.5bn in GVA to the UK economy. PRS for Music, the organisation that pays royalties to over 160,000 songwriters, composers, and music publishers, saw overall revenues in 2021 reach £777.1m, a 22.4% increase on 2020.

The cultural impact of music is also invaluable. According to UK Music's 2021 'This is Music' Report, the UK public listens to an estimated 60 billion hours of music a year. Songwriters and composers form the bedrock on which the overall success of the music sector is built. Despite the challenges of Covid-19, songwriters and composers continued to have significant impact; UK Music's 2021 'This is Music' Report states that over 5 million songs and compositions were registered with PRS for Music, nearly one third more than in 2019. The Government wants to ensure this success continues.

■ **Pornography: Internet**

John Howell:

[\[148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the debate entitled For an assessment of the means and provisions to combat children's exposure to pornographic content, which took place at the Council of Europe on 25 April 2022.

Chris Philp:

The Government shares the concerns raised by the Council of Europe about the impact of children's exposure to pornography online.

The Online Safety Bill provides protection for children from online pornography. Services in scope of the Bill that host or publish pornography, including pornography sites, social media, video sharing platforms and forums will be required to protect children from this content.

The Government continues to engage with international partners, including through multilateral organisations such as the Council of Europe, to lead global discussions and build consensus around our approaches to tackling online harms.

■ Staff: Surveillance

Chi Onwurah:

[240]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on protecting workers from intrusive monitoring, including monitoring eye movements and toilet breaks; and what protections employees have in respect of that monitoring.

Julia Lopez:

Employers are neither expressly permitted to monitor, nor are they prohibited from doing so. Monitoring by employers must not breach the duty of trust and confidence implied into an employee's contract of employment and must comply with the European Convention of Human Rights, Data Protection legislation and Equality Act 2010.

Organisations that process workers' personal data for the purposes of monitoring their activities or surveillance must comply with the requirements of the UK General Data Protection Regulation ('UK GDPR') and the Data Protection Act 2018 ('DPA'). This means that the data processing must be fair, lawful and transparent.

Any adverse impact of monitoring on individuals must be necessary, proportionate and justified by the benefits to the organisation and others. A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) would usually be required, particularly where the processing involves the use of new technologies, or the novel application of existing technologies. Where organisations are operating behavioural biometric identification techniques such as through keystroke analysis or gaze analysis (eye tracking) they would generally need to conduct a DPIA.

The UK GDPR and the DPA are administered and enforced independently of the government by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). The ICO publishes a range of advice and guidance for organisations on their data protection obligations including specific guidance for employers [here](#).

The ICO ran a call for views seeking stakeholder and public input into future guidance on data protection and employment practices and has published a summary of responses [here](#). The ICO is now acting on the feedback received and creating products that they will be consulting on and publishing on an iterative basis. The products will form a new, more user friendly hub of employment guidance.

Regular discussions are held across the government on all aspects of data protection.

EDUCATION

■ Adoption

Alex Davies-Jones:

[\[1010\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Answer of 8 March 2021 to Question 162716 on Adoption, what recent steps his Department has taken to make the Houghton Report publicly available; and what his planned timetable is for making that report available.

Will Quince:

The department commits to making the Houghton Report publicly available within the next six weeks.

■ Department for Education: Verbal Dyspraxia Awareness Day

Geraint Davies:

[\[577\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans his Department has to mark Verbal Dyspraxia Awareness Day on 14 May 2022.

Will Quince:

Verbal Dyspraxia Awareness Day on 14 May 2022 was an important opportunity to raise awareness of this condition.

The department is committed to ensuring that all children and young people with special education needs and disabilities (SEND), including those with speech and language needs, receive the support they need to succeed in their education.

On 29 March 2022, we published the SEND and AP green paper, which sets out our plans to create a coherent education, health and care system that works for all children and young people with SEND in England. We have launched a full, accessible consultation on these proposals so that everyone can have their say.

■ Foster Care

Sir Charles Walker:

[\[649\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will review the financial support provided to foster carers in the context of the increases to the cost of living; and if he will make a statement.

Will Quince:

The 'Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards', issued by my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, under the Care Standards Act 2000, set out the expectations that are placed on foster parents and their agencies. We are clear that no one should be 'out of pocket' because of their fostering role and we expect all foster parents to receive at least the national minimum allowance (NMA) plus any agreed expenses to cover the full cost of caring for each child placed with them (standard 28).

The NMA is updated annually, most recently in April 2022.

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

■ Free School Meals

Lilian Greenwood:

[722]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will extend the Free School Meal entitlement to children whose families earn less than £20,000 per annum, as recommended in the National Food Strategy's final report.

Will Quince:

The provision of free school meals (FSM) to children from out of work families or those on low incomes is of the utmost importance to this government. Under the benefits related criteria the department provides a free healthy meal to around 1.7 million children, ensuring they are well nourished and can concentrate, learn and achieve in the classroom.

Under this government, eligibility for FSM has been extended several times and to more groups of children than any other government over the past half a century, including the introduction of universal infant FSM, and further education FSM. Generous protections in place ensure that no child will lose their eligibility during the roll out of universal credit

In addition to this, the temporary extension of FSM eligibility to some groups with no recourse to public funds that has been in place since 2020 was extended to all groups and made permanent, subject to income thresholds.

The government will fully consider all the evidence and recommendations of the National Food Strategy review and will respond formally in due course.

■ Higher Education: Care Leavers

Siobhan Baillie:

[1008]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many care leavers were accepted onto courses at high tariff Higher Education providers broken down by individual institution.

Michelle Donelan:

The attached table contains the department's analysis of the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record showing the number of care leavers who entered courses at English higher education providers in academic year 2020/21. Coverage refers to entrants domiciled in England prior to study and care leavers are defined as codes 01 and 04 in the HESA care leaver collection documentation.

Further information can be found here:

<https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c20051/a/careleaver>.

This shows that in academic year 2020/21, there were 4,290 care leavers who entered courses at English higher education providers in academic year 2020/21. Of

these, 580 entered courses across 27 high tariff providers. A full breakdown by institution can be found in the attachment.

Attachments:

1. 1008_table [1008_table_showing_ number of care leavers who entered courses at English higher education providers in academic year 2020-21.pdf]

■ **Primary Education: Free School Meals**

Lilian Greenwood: [\[220\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, for what reason funding for universal infant free school meals (USIM) of £2.34 per meal is no longer in line with funding for free school meals (FSM) of £2.47 per meal; and whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of increasing the UIFSM funding rate to match that of FSM.

Lilian Greenwood: [\[221\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when he plans to increase funding for universal infant free school meals in line with free school meals; and whether he plans to increase that funding in line with inflation.

Lilian Greenwood: [\[222\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the impact of cost and supply challenges on the school food industry; and if he will take steps to increase funding for universal infant free school meals.

Lilian Greenwood: [\[223\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has had discussions with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on increasing funding for universal infant free school meals in the context of the cost and supply pressures facing the school food industry.

Lilian Greenwood: [\[224\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has plans to provide support to the school food industry for the increasing costs of food, energy and labour.

Will Quince:

The department spends around £600 million per year ensuring around 1.3 million infants enjoy a free, healthy, and nutritious meal at lunchtime following the introduction of the universal infant free school meal policy in 2014. The per meal rate of £2.34 per child was increased in the 2020/21 financial year. The funding rate for the 2022/23 financial year will be published with the funding allocations in June.

The department holds regular meetings with other government departments and with food industry representatives, covering a variety of issues including public sector food supplies. Schools are responsible for the provision of school meals and may enter individual contracts with suppliers and caterers to meet this duty. We are confident that schools will continue providing pupils with nutritious school meals as required by the school food standards.

The department routinely considers contingency arrangements and expect schools and catering companies supplying them to do the same.

■ **Primary Education: Physical Education and Sports**

Sir Roger Gale: [569]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when he plans to announce details of the Primary PE and Sport Premium for the 2022-23 academic year.

Will Quince:

The department is considering arrangements for the primary PE and sport premium for the 2022/23 academic year and beyond and will confirm the position in due course.

■ **Schools: Catering**

Lilian Greenwood: [721]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department has made an assessment of the level of alternative provision in the event that a school catering company collapses as a result of food, labour and energy cost increases.

Will Quince:

The department holds regular meetings with other government departments and with food industry representatives, covering a variety of issues including public sector food supplies.

We routinely consider contingency arrangements and expect schools and catering companies supplying them to do the same.

Schools are responsible for the provision of school meals and may enter individual contracts with suppliers and caterers to meet this duty. We are confident that schools will continue providing pupils with nutritious school meals as required by the School Food Standards.

There is no evidence to suggest widespread disruption to education as a result of issues with food supply but in the event of any disruption to supply, we will work with councils and the sector to ensure nutritious meals can continue to be provided.

■ **Schools: Coronavirus**

Dan Carden: [420]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with the Department for Health and Social Care about reducing the risk of covid-19 disruption and absences in the run up to the upcoming assessment and exams period in schools and colleges; and if he will (a) communicate to schools that they can use any stocks of lateral flow tests held locally and (b) make free testing available for all pupils, staff and exam invigilators to cover this period.

Mr Robin Walker:

Candidates and centres should adhere to the guidance on living with COVID-19.

Candidates are expected to attend their exams wherever possible, and school and college staff should encourage them to do so. However, where that is not possible, exam boards have taken measures to support students to access a grade, including spacing the exam timetable with at least ten days between the first and last exam in each subject. They have also confirmed that eligible students completing one assessment (exam or non-exam assessment) will be able to receive a grade through special consideration, provided they have an acceptable reason for missing the other assessments.

A candidate who is staying at home and avoiding contact with others, in line with UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) guidance, would be eligible to apply for special consideration to receive a grade based on the other assessments they complete. This includes candidates with the symptoms described in the UKHSA guidance, and those with a positive COVID-19 test result.

Public health advice continues to be that testing in education and childcare settings is no longer needed. Most infectious diseases in education and childcare settings can be managed by following the advice in UKHSA's updated health protection in education and childcare settings guidance. Students and staff should follow UKHSA's advice for those who have symptoms.

Although schools and colleges may still have some unused test kits in stock, they should not continue to hand out test kits to staff or students. The department is working with UKHSA to explore options for removal of testing resources no longer required.

■ Schools: Energy

Munira Wilson: [\[495\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the average cost of energy bills per school was in (a) 2018, (b) 2019, (c) 2020 and (d) 2021.

Munira Wilson: [\[496\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the average cost of energy bills for schools in 2022.

Munira Wilson: [\[497\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the average increase in energy bill costs for schools in 2022.

Mr Robin Walker:

The department pays close attention to the financial health of the sector, and the cost pressures it faces. The department knows that the vast majority of school expenditure is devoted to staff costs, with only about a quarter attributed to non-staff costs, including those related to energy bills. Table 1 shows the proportion of schools' income spent on energy costs in recent years.

Table 1: proportion of schools' income spent on energy

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Academy trusts (academic year)	1.5%	1.3%	1.3%
Maintained schools (financial year)	1.2%	1.3%	1.1%

These proportions can be calculated using data found on the schools financial benchmarking website, and is based on schools' consistent financial reporting returns for local authority maintained schools and academies' accounting returns. Further information can be found here: <https://schools-financial-benchmarking.service.gov.uk/Help/DataSources>.

The department does not yet have comprehensive data on schools' expenditure in financial year 2021/22, or 2022/23 and is therefore not able to provide information on schools' expenditure on energy costs over this period. However, the department is working to understand recent changes in energy costs, and how these have impacted schools differently. To support this, the department has commissioned a survey requesting more detailed information from schools on their energy contracts, we have encouraged all schools to complete this survey, which can be found here: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc5rlq_Bd8KjktfdvfvncCFu8kh8vf16_P3dJzy68W2GWXfzw/viewform. From this work, the department will consider what additional support it can offer.

■ Special Educational Needs

Stephen Morgan: [429]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate his Department has made of the average proximity of children with Education, Health and Care plans to their school in each local authority.

Will Quince:

The information is not readily available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

■ Special Educational Needs: Coronavirus

Rachael Maskell: [326]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to help ensure that school pupils with SEND are receiving sufficient catch-up support to achieve their full potential following the covid-19 outbreak.

Will Quince:

In total the department has announced almost £5 billion for an ambitious, multi-year education recovery plan to support young people to catch up on education lost.

The department has consistently prioritised children who attend specialist educational settings by providing additional uplifts both in the catch-up premium in the 2020/21 academic year and the recovery premium in the 2021/22 academic year, in recognition of the significantly higher per pupil costs they face. We are also providing £1 billion to extend the recovery premium funding for academic years 2022/23 and 2023/24. Alongside this, in Summer 2021, specialist educational settings were given an uplift to deliver summer schools, where they wanted to, at three times the normal rate.

The school-led tutoring element of the National Tutoring Programme (NTP) also gives schools flexibility, enabling them to select those tutors most suitable to support pupils with SEND. On 31 March 2022, the department announced that we will allocate all tutoring funding through the NTP directly to schools next year, which will give them the freedom and flexibility to develop a tutoring offer that works best for their pupils.

The 16-19 Tuition Fund also continues to support students with SEND as well as 19-24 year olds with an education, health and care (EHC) plan through the provision of one to one and small group tuition. To ensure 16 to 19 year old students with high needs, and those up to age 25 with an EHC plan can benefit, institutions have greater flexibility in how they deliver additional hours for these students.

The Schools White Paper published on 28 March 2022 sets out our vision for a school system that helps every child to fulfil their potential, including SEND pupils. The Parent Pledge included in the White Paper will be an essential part of this, promising that any child who falls behind in English or maths will receive the right evidence-based targeted support, appropriate to their needs, to help them get back on track.

■ Special Educational Needs: Standards**Rachael Maskell:**[\[327\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to ensure that young people with a (a) sensory impairment or (b) physical disability can reach the same attainment as their peers in the education system.

Will Quince:

The department is as ambitious for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) as for every other child.

Through the SEND and AP Green Paper, published on 29 March 2022, along with the Schools White Paper, and wider reforms to health and social care, the department will create a coherent education, health, and care system. This aims to work in the interests of all children and young people with SEND in England, including those with sensory and physical impairments.

The department has launched a full and accessible 13-week consultation so that everyone can have their say. We are making sure that children and young people with SEND and their parents can respond, as well as people working in education, health, and care, and charities and other experts.

■ Teachers: Veterans

Mr Kevan Jones: [66]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many bursaries have been awarded under the Troops to Teachers scheme since January 2021.

Mr Kevan Jones: [67]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the cost to the public purse has been of the Troops to Teachers scheme since January 2021.

Mr Kevan Jones: [68]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many people have completed initial teacher training through the Troops to Teachers scheme since January 2021.

Mr Robin Walker:

Since January 2021, one trainee has been awarded a bursary under the Troops to Teachers undergraduate bursary scheme. As they commenced their course in the 2021/22 academic year, the bursary will be paid in the 2022/23 and 2023/24 academic years.

A further two trainees were in receipt of the bursary in the 2020/21 academic year, with one of these trainees receiving the remainder of their bursary in the 2021/22 academic year. The combined cost to the public purse of these two trainees since the 2020/21 academic year is £60,000. The department cannot disaggregate the exact amount paid since January 2021 because it makes payments to initial teacher training (ITT) providers as a proportion of their total funding spread from September to July, rather than an amount per trainee each month.

The department is currently planning to publish information on outcomes for ITT trainees in the 2020/21 academic year in July 2022 which will be available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-teacher-training>. However, data is not routinely published on Troops to Teachers.

Veterans who have a degree can and do undertake postgraduate ITT courses, where they can access the bursaries and scholarships of up to £26,000 available on these routes into teaching.

The department is committed to further promoting opportunities for service leavers to get into teaching. Many veterans already utilise department services to support service leavers into ITT each year. As part of the cross-government Veterans' Strategy Action Plan: 2022-2024, the department has committed to increase collaboration with the Ministry of Defence to promote opportunities for service leavers to get into teaching, increasing signposting, events and communications tailored to veterans. The department also encourages them to take up services we offer such as

'get school experience' and our 'teacher training advisers' service that will help them towards a career in teaching.

■ University of Oxford: Overseas Students

Layla Moran:

[933]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with the (a) Office for Students and (b) the University of Oxford on the 50 per cent reduction in the number of EU citizens studying at the University of Oxford since the UK's exit from the EU; and if he will make a statement.

Alex Burghart:

Departmental officials and I meet regularly with the Office for Students to discuss a wide range of issues.

The government recognises how important international students, including those from the EU are, both culturally and economically. We are proud that for the 2020/21 academic year, we saw positive increases in the number of EU domiciled entrants by 4% compared to 2019/20.

We have demonstrated our commitment to international students through our International Education Strategy which was updated in February 2021 and can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/international-education-strategy-2021-update/international-education-strategy-2021-update-supporting-recovery-driving-growth>. Through this strategy, we committed to hosting at least 600,000 international higher education students studying in the UK per year. The latest data shows international enrolments increased by 9% in the 2020/21 academic year with a total of 605,130 compared with 556,625 for the previous academic year. This means we have met our international student's ambition for the first time, around 10 years early.

In addition, the Student Route coupled with the Graduate Route means we now have a world-class student visa offer befitting our world-class higher education sector. This provides an opportunity for international students, including EU nationals, who have been awarded their degree to live and work or look for work in the UK at any skill level for two years, three for PhDs.

Through this globally competitive offer, we fully anticipate the UK continuing to be an attractive destination for students, not only for EU students but students from across the globe.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**■ Fish Farming: Animal Welfare****Sir Roger Gale:****[570]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the current animal welfare arrangements for the 77 million fish farmed annually in the United Kingdom.

Jo Churchill:

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 makes it an offence to cause unnecessary suffering to any protected animal, or to fail to provide for the welfare needs of an animal, including fish, for which that person is responsible.

Regulations also require that farmed fish are spared avoidable pain, distress or suffering during their killing and related operations.

As part of the Government's Action Plan for Animal Welfare, we are currently considering a number of improvements that could be made to the welfare of farmed fish at the time of killing and have asked the Animal Welfare Committee to update its 2014 Opinion on the welfare of farmed fish at the time of killing.

Any allegations of welfare or health issues will be investigated by the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and Cefas, and where there are non-compliances with the regulations, appropriate action is taken against anyone who breaks the law when non-compliances are disclosed.

■ Flood Control: Housing**Tulip Siddiq:****[894]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether the Build Back Better scheme to provide up to £10,000 for properties to install flood prevention measures will be available only to properties covered by the Flood Re scheme or to all flooded properties.

Tulip Siddiq:**[895]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will take steps to help improve access to Flood Re Build Back Better scheme for homes at risk of flooding.

Rebecca Pow:

Flood Re is a joint government and industry reinsurance scheme designed to help UK households at high risk of flooding to access affordable insurance. New regulations came into force on 1 April to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the scheme and promote uptake of Property Flood Resilience measures.

Flood Re can now pay claims from insurers which include an amount for resilient repair (Build-Back-Better) up to a value of £10,000 over and above the cost of like-for-like reinstatement for actual flood damage. This will help flooded households

become more resilient and allow homeowners to return more quickly after any future flooding

Build-Back-Better will be available through a range of major insurance brands. To ensure consistency and fairness for all customers, insurers who choose to participate in Build-Back-Better are required to offer it on all policies across their home insurance offerings and not just on policies ceded to Flood Re.

■ Food: UK Trade with EU

Daniel Zeichner: [\[275\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent estimate he has made of his Department's expenditure on preparations for the implementation of proposed sanitary and phytosanitary checks on food imports from the EU as of 10 May 2022.

Daniel Zeichner: [\[276\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent estimate he has made of the Government's expenditure on preparations for implementing proposed sanitary and phytosanitary checks on food imports from the EU as of 10 May 2022.

Daniel Zeichner: [\[277\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent estimate he has made of the public expenditure on border control posts in preparation for implementing proposed sanitary and phytosanitary checks on agri-food and plant imports from the EU as of 10 May 2022.

Daniel Zeichner: [\[783\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much has been spent on border control points in preparation for sanitary and phytosanitary checks on agri-food and plant imports coming into the UK from the EU.

Victoria Prentis:

Over the last two years Defra has worked with stakeholders and delivery partners to develop the capability to deliver new SPS border controls on goods arriving in England from the EU. The figures below cover IT delivery, staffing costs and infrastructure.

PQ 275 / 276		IMPLEMENTATION PREPARATIONS		
Activity	21/22	22/23	Total	
Digital Delivery	£10.77m	£0.00m	£10.77m	Includes IPAFFS and proportion of overheads
Imports Policy	£11.17m	£0.15m	£11.32m	Includes Plants and Animals
PHA Fund	£17.56m	£2.50m	£20.06m	
£39.50m	£2.65m	£42.15m		Includes funds for PHA staff to end of April 2022
PQ 277/783		BCP Spend to date		
Activity	21/22	22/23	Total	
Infrastructure	£30.98m	£0.37m	£31.35m	Includes Sevington and Dover construction only, which are DEFRA funded.

■ Nitrous Oxide: Misuse

Janet Daby:

[\[954\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to help local authorities tackle litter created as a result of the recreational use of nitrous oxide.

Jo Churchill:

Littering is a criminal offence and in recent years we have bolstered councils' enforcement powers, such as by almost doubling the maximum fixed penalty for littering from £80 to £150. We have also published guidance for local authorities on the design and placement of bins. Alongside this guidance, we provided nearly £1

million across 44 councils to help them purchase new bins to keep litter off the streets.

Councils also have powers to issue Public Spaces Protection Orders. These are a wide-ranging tool which councils can use to prohibit specified activity in a public place where it has a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality, such as the recreational use of nitrous oxide.

Where nitrous oxide is supplied either knowingly or recklessly for its psychoactive effect, the maximum offence under the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 is seven years' imprisonment.

■ Outdoor Recreation

Caroline Lucas:

[164]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the Answer of 19 April 2022 to Question 148359 on Outdoor Recreation which stated that there are no plans to release the Agnew Review in a consolidated way, if he will place a copy of the (a) final report and (b) recommendations of that review, otherwise known as the Access to the Outdoors Commission, in the Library.

Rebecca Pow:

As set out in my answer of 19 April, no formal report was produced by the Access to the Outdoors commission. The outcomes of the commission include £30 million provided through the Spending Review to improve public access to green spaces and better joined up working across government in taking forward a number of policy measures.

These include the development of the UK-wide Levelling Up Parks Fund which will create parks and green spaces on urban land which has become unused, undeveloped or neglected. This Government is investing an unprecedented £2 billion in walking and cycling over this Parliament, building hundreds of miles of high-quality cycle lanes and increasing access to a range of places including green spaces. We have also launched the Department for Education's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy, which includes a commitment to increase opportunities for all children and young people to spend time in nature, learn more about it, and get involved in improving their environment.

The 'Preventing and Tackling Mental Ill Health through Green Social Prescribing' cross-governmental project is testing nature-based social prescribing in seven test and learn sites. The project is working in both rural and urban locations and is helping connect those living in cities with nature.

We are working to complete the England Coast Path, to support our network of National Trails and intend to create a new National Trail across the North of England.

■ Pet Travel Scheme

Afzal Khan:

[445]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent progress has been made on discussions with the EU on changing the status of the UK to a Part 1 country for the purposes of the EU pet travel scheme so that animal health certificates would no longer be required.

Victoria Prentis:

The UK has been formally 'listed' as a 'Part 2' third country for the purposes of the EU pet travel scheme, which means that new rules apply to pet movements from Great Britain to the EU and to Northern Ireland. The pet health and documentary requirements for such pet travel are set out under the EU Pet Travel Regulations.

Defra recognises the impact that these changes are having on pet owners and assistance dog users. We are continuing to seek agreement from the European Commission on awarding GB 'Part 1' listed status and recognition of the UK's tapeworm-free status, and we see no valid animal health reason for these not to be granted.

We have one of the most rigorous pet checking regimes in Europe to protect our biosecurity and we are currently planning for further engagement with the EU to progress both of these issues. Achieving these would alleviate a number of pet travel rules for all travellers, including the need for an Animal Health Certificate.

■ Plastics: Litter

Fleur Anderson:

[979]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when he will publish the findings of the Consultation on Commonly Littered Single Use Plastic Items.

Jo Churchill:

The call for evidence on commonly littered and problematic plastic items closed on 12 February 2022. We are currently analysing responses and will provide a further update in due course.

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

■ Afghanistan: Diplomatic Service

Seema Malhotra:

[266]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she has plans to establish the UK's consular presence in Afghanistan again; and whether she has plans to evacuate vulnerable Afghans without having a consular presence in that country.

James Cleverly:

We intend to establish a diplomatic presence in Kabul when the security and political situation in the country allows and are coordinating this effort with allies. Where Afghan nationals have been approved for relocation, we are continuing to support them to come to the UK.

■ **Alaa Abd el-Fattah****Mr David Jones:**[\[92\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she has made representations to her Egyptian counterpart authorities on the detention of Alaa Abd el-Fattah.

Mr David Jones:[\[93\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether her Department has been able to obtain consular access to Alaa Abd el-Fattah, who is imprisoned in Egypt.

James Cleverly:

The UK Government is in contact with the Egyptian authorities and urgently seeking consular access. We continue to support the family of Alaa Abdel Fattah. The UK Government regularly raises human rights concerns with the Egyptian authorities, including with regard to political prisoners in the Egyptian system, both privately and in forums such as the UN Human Rights Council. This includes raising the implementation of the rights guaranteed by Egypt's constitution.

■ **British Council: Finance****Fabian Hamilton:**[\[59\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what funding allocation the British Council received in the 2021 Spending Review.

Amanda Milling:

The FCDO agreed to provide the British Council with £511 million total grant funding across the 2022-25 spending review period. This will comprise £396 million Official Development Assistance (ODA) and £115 million non-ODA, and includes restructuring funds. The non-ODA portion includes an increase on the provisional allocation, contingent on there being no further closures of British Council offices across the three-year period, and further funding to retain the British Council's offices in Australia and New Zealand.

■ **Cameroon: Human Rights****Dame Diana Johnson:**[\[113\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the need for independent human rights monitoring in Cameroon, particularly in areas of on-going armed conflict.

Vicky Ford:

Reports of human rights abuses and violations within Cameroon are disturbing. At the UN Human Rights Council in March 2022, the UK called for impartial investigations to hold the perpetrators of human rights violations and abuses to account.

We welcome that the findings from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)'s visit to Cameroon in 2019 have finally been published. The recommendations on independent investigations into human rights violations, and ensuring access to healthcare are particularly important. We encourage the OHCHR and Government of Cameroon to continue their engagement to follow-up on their visit findings.

Cameroon: Sexual Offences**Dame Diana Johnson:** [\[111\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she or her officials have raised concerns with the Cameroonian Government about reports of sexual violence in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon, including rapes allegedly carried out during an attack involving Cameroonian Government soldiers on the village of Ebam in the South West region on 1 March 2020, as documented in a Human Rights Watch report of 26 February 2021.

Dame Diana Johnson: [\[112\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps her Department has taken to assist survivors of sexual violence allegedly carried out by Cameroonian Government forces or armed separatist groups in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon; and what steps her Department has taken to help ensure the perpetrators of those crimes are held to account.

Vicky Ford:

We are appalled by reports of sexual and gender-based violence in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon by both armed separatists and the security forces. The Foreign Secretary has made sexual violence in conflict one of her top priorities. We are working to promote justice for survivors of sexual violence, to provide support to survivors and to prevent sexual violence from occurring.

The UK continues to call for a peaceful resolution to the crisis and for the violence to end. We work with international partners, including France and the United States, to raise the crisis in multilateral fora. At the UN Human Rights Council in March 2022, the UK called for impartial investigations to hold the perpetrators of human rights violations and abuses to account. We continue to raise human rights concerns with the Government of Cameroon.

Developing Countries: Sanitation and Water**Patrick Grady:** [\[303\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what commitments she plans to secure at the upcoming meeting of G7 foreign ministers to

help achieve universal access to water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in health centres in developing countries.

Amanda Milling:

Improving access to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) services, including in healthcare facilities, is a key global health priority for the FCDO. It forms a core part of the UK's new Ending Preventable Deaths of mothers, babies and children strategy published in December 2021, and is critical to our wider global health objectives.

The UK will continue to work with our international partners, including through the G7, to ensure WASH is included in efforts to prevent the spread of infections including COVID-19, to prevent future pandemics, and to reduce the threat of anti-microbial resistance. We will also continue to pursue these objectives through our membership of the "WASH In Healthcare Facilities" international taskforce, through our bilateral programming such as our innovative hand hygiene partnership with Unilever, and through our core multilateral funding including to the World Bank and the World Health Organisation.

■ **Developing Countries: Tree Planting**

Sarah Champion:

[\[767\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much funding her Department has allocated to tree planting programmes or projects in developing countries in the financial years (a) 2020-21 and (b) 2021-22; how much such funding her Department plans to allocate in the 2022-23 financial year; and if she will publish a breakdown of that funding in each of those financial years by programme or project.

Vicky Ford:

Forests and land use are an important focus of the UK's International Climate Finance. The Government supports a broad range of actions to protect forests; tackle underlying causes of forest loss, such as illegal logging and unsustainable agricultural practices; and restore degraded land. The UK does not directly fund tree planting and does not track expenditure on that basis, but does provide significant support to forest restoration.

UK support for restoration includes funding to the Africa Forest Restoration (AFR100) Initiative, a commitment by 32 African countries to restore 128m hectares of forest by 2030. This funding is helping to build capacity in the secretariat to support countries to implement national commitments. Through the Partnerships for Forests (P4F) programme, the UK also works with businesses to catalyse investment into forest restoration and provide communities with incentives and benefits to livelihoods through protecting and restoring forests.

■ Development Aid: Health Services

Preet Kaur Gill: [393]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to support global health systems and maintain access to critical routine immunisations.

Amanda Milling:

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) is working to deliver the objectives set out in our recently published Health Systems Strengthening Position Paper - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-systems-strengthening-for-global-health-security-and-universal-health-coverage> This includes the mainstreaming of a health systems strengthening approach across all the UK's health influencing activities and investments through country programmes, research and multilaterals such as the World Health Organisation, Global Fund and Gavi. The UK's £1.65 billion commitment to Gavi's core immunisation programme 2021-25 is the largest of any donor, and will support Gavi to immunise 300 million children and save up to 8 million lives, and enable countries to restore immunisation services during and after the pandemic.

Preet Kaur Gill: [394]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what plans she has to commit new resources at the upcoming global covid-19 summit to help end the covid-19 pandemic and build better global health systems.

Amanda Milling:

The UK is joining the US and other partners in reaffirming our support to the global response to COVID-19 and renewing our commitment to ending the acute phase of the pandemic in vulnerable countries, as we agreed under the UK G7 Presidency last year. In total the UK committed £2.1 billion in 2020-21 to help end the pandemic and manage its impacts. Since December 2021, the UK has committed £265 million to expand COVID-19 testing capacity globally, boost oxygen supplies, and invest in the next generation of vaccines.

■ Great Green Wall: Deserts

Sarah Champion: [768]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Great Green Wall initiative in tackling desertification.

Sarah Champion: [769]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much her Department has spent on the Great Green Wall initiative (a) via the Global Environment Facility and (b) by other means in each year since 2018.

Vicky Ford:

Desertification is one of the most significant global environmental challenges facing some of the world's poorest communities. It has devastating impacts on lives and livelihoods.

With regards to the Great Green Wall (GGW), the FCDO supports the initiative through multilateral funds: the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF). In 2020, an independent evaluation found that only 4 per cent of the 100 million hectare goal for restoration had been achieved in the core GGW geographical implementation area. When considering lands restored in the wider GGW region, the figure was 18 million hectares. Countries reported a range of challenges to implementation, including leveraging investment, technical capacity and governance.

Through the GCF and GEF, the UK is supporting countries, donors and other partners to address these challenges. Between 2018 and 2022, the GEF endorsed US\$147.8 million of projects that advance the GGW objectives. The UK pledged £250 million to GEF over this period. Over the same period, the GCF spent US\$89.9 million on projects supporting GGW countries. The UK contributed £720 million to GCF for 2015-19 and has committed £1.44 billion for 2020-2023.

■ Jim Fitton

Fleur Anderson: [\[978\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps she is taking to ensure the safe return of Jim Fitton from detention in Iraq.

Amanda Milling:

Consular officials in Iraq and the UK are providing assistance to Mr Fitton and his family. The British Ambassador in Baghdad has and will continue to, raise Mr Fitton's case with the Iraqi Government. This includes raising with the authorities the UK's strong opposition to the death penalty - both the possibility of it being applied in Mr Fitton's case and in all circumstances as a matter of principle.

■ Kenya: Diplomatic Service

Kenny MacAskill: [\[971\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, on what occasions the current British High Commissioner to Kenya has met representatives of (a) Unilever, (b) PG Tips, (c) Finlays and (d) Williamson Tea.

Vicky Ford:

The current UK High Commissioner regularly meets with British businesses in Kenya, individually, in small groups or as part of wider events. There are an estimated 150 British enterprises in Kenya and over 250,000 Kenyans are directly employed by British organisations. She last met representatives from Finlays, Williamson Tea and Unilever (which in Kenya includes PG Tips) in May 2021, during an International Tea Event she hosted at her residence.

■ **Malaria: Disease Control**

Sir Greg Knight:

[\[625\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policy of the findings of the World Health Organisation's World Malaria Report 2021 in respect of progress towards eliminating malaria cases; what research has been undertaken into improving access to new malaria treatments; and if she will make a statement.

Amanda Milling:

Despite the fact that malaria is preventable, the World Health Organisation's 2021 World Malaria Report notes a significant increase in malaria cases and deaths for the first time in over two decades. This is primarily due to the impact of COVID-19 on health systems.

The UK is committed to tackling malaria, which is closely linked to our ambition to end the preventable deaths of mothers, babies and newborns. The majority of our malaria investments are through the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria. We also invest in research to develop new tools to prevent, diagnose and treat malaria and support countries to strengthen their health systems. For instance, our support to Medicines for Malaria Venture has helped to develop eleven new medicines, including the world's first child friendly formulation. Taken together these antimalarials are estimated to have saved over an estimated 2.7 million lives.

■ **Rwanda: Asylum**

Preet Kaur Gill:

[\[395\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will make an assessment of the accuracy of reports that the Government has agreed to pay a set amount of funding to Rwanda to cover case workers, legal advice, translators, accommodation, food and healthcare for the offshoring of asylum seekers; and whether she plans for that funding to come from the 0.5 per cent GNI ODA budget.

Amanda Milling:

Funding for the Migration and Economic Development Partnership has been agreed as part of Home Office settlement with HMT. It is not from the GNI ODA budget.

Under this Partnership all processing costs will be met by the UK, including to support the delivery of asylum operations, accommodation and integration. Individuals' needs will be met by Rwanda. This will involve creating a safe environment for them to start a new life, with education, employment and accommodation. The UK is also investing an initial £120 million into the economic development and growth of Rwanda.

■ Shireen Abu Akleh

Mr David Jones:

[\[651\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what representations she has made to her counterpart in the Israeli Government on the death of Shireen Abu Akleh.

Amanda Milling:

On 11 May, I publicly expressed my sadness upon hearing news of the tragic death of veteran Palestinian Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Aqleh, and called for a thorough investigation. The Foreign Secretary also made this clear in a statement on 12 May. Officials from the British Embassy Tel Aviv have reiterated the importance of an investigation with the Israeli authorities. The safety of journalists across the globe is vital and they must be protected when carrying out their critical work.

■ Syria: Refugees

Preet Kaur Gill:

[\[404\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of the adequacy of humanitarian assistance provided to Syrian refugees living in Lebanon given the overlapping economic, health, and political crises in that country.

Amanda Milling:

The UK is committed to supporting Lebanon to meet the humanitarian needs of both refugees and vulnerable Lebanese communities, and to provide quality education to all children. The UK has been one of the leading donors in supporting Lebanon to host Syrian refugees and ensures our implementing partners target support on the basis of comprehensive needs assessments. Since 2011, the UK has allocated over £787 million in humanitarian and development funding to Lebanon. Our humanitarian assistance will continue to promote access to education and provide those most in need with timely, flexible assistance to cover their basic survival needs, saving lives and reducing suffering.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]

Peter Gibson:

[\[452\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the findings of new research from the National Literacy Trust and Audible of the effect that listening to audiobooks has on the mental health and wellbeing of adults.

Gillian Keegan:

No such assessment has been made.

■ Aortic Aneurysm: Screening

Bell Ribeiro-Addy: [461]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department plans to introduce routine abdominal aortic aneurysm screenings for women.

Maria Caulfield:

There are no specific plans to do so. Evidence suggests that women are six times less likely to experience abdominal aortic aneurysm than men. The potential risks of surgery are the same, therefore inviting women for screening outweighs the benefits. The UK National Screening Committee will consider any new evidence on this topic should it emerge.

■ Bicalutamide

Sir Charles Walker: [87]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the therapeutic benefits of bicalutamide in halting the growth of prostate cancer; and if he will make a statement.

Maria Caulfield:

We have made no specific assessment. However, bicalutamide (casodex) has been licensed in the United Kingdom for the treatment of advanced prostate cancer since 2000. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence has made recommendations on use of bicalutamide in its guideline on the diagnosis and management of prostate cancer, which is available at the following link:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng131/chapter/Recommendations>

■ Cancer: Children

Munira Wilson: [494]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of increasing research funding to improve (a) the diagnosis and (b) the treatment of childhood cancers as part of the Government's 10-Year Cancer Plan for England.

Maria Caulfield:

No specific assessment has been made. The Department invests in health research through the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). In 2020/21, the NIHR's total expenditure on cancer research was £73.5 million.

Officials are currently analysing the responses to the call for evidence to develop the 10 Year Cancer Plan. The Plan will set out ambitions for cancer care, including diagnosis and treatments provided to patients, including children.

■ Clinical Trials

Chris Green:

[\[294\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people were recruited into National Institute for Health and Care Research supported phase 3 trials for (a) dementia, (b) cancer, (c) stroke and (d) coronary heart disease in each of the last 10 years.

Maria Caulfield:

The information requested is shown in the attached table.

The numbers of participants recruited declined in 2020/21 and 2021/22. While the exact reasons for this decline are unknown, it is likely that the reduction is related to the impact of the pandemic and a focus on recruiting participants to urgent studies related to COVID-19 in these years.

Attachments:

1. table [FORMATTED TABLE FOR MINISTERIAL CLEARANCE PQ294 attachment.docx]

■ Coronavirus

Rachael Maskell:

[\[314\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what parameters he is continuing to measure to assess the (a) prevalence and (b) pattern of covid-19 infections.

Maggie Throup:

The Government continues monitoring the virus through surveillance studies such as the Office for National Statistics' (ONS) COVID-19 Infection Survey and other data sources, including genomic sequencing. The ONS' Survey weekly bulletin provides estimates of the number of positive cases among the population living in private households in the United Kingdom, including by region and age group. This includes the number of new cases and the change in positive cases over time.

Rachael Maskell:

[\[315\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the SARS-CoV-2 virus has been purified and isolated.

Maggie Throup:

The virus has been purified and isolated.

Daisy Cooper:

[\[482\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what advice (a) he and (b) officials in his Department have (i) requested and (ii) received from the Government's Chief Scientific Advisor and Chief Medical Officer on the Government's Living with covid strategy in the context of daily recorded deaths from covid-19 since 21 February 2022.

Maggie Throup:

We are unable to provide the information requested as it would be prejudicial to the effective conduct of public affairs by inhibiting the free and frank provision of advice.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[98\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if his Department will publish the equalities impact assessment for the Government's Living with covid strategy.

Maggie Throup:

The COVID-19 Taskforce has advised that the Government is unable to provide the information requested as it relates to the formulation of Government policy.

■ **Coronavirus: Disease Control**

Andrew Gwynne: [\[94\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish risk assessments undertaken by SAGE and the UK Health Security Agency on the potential impact of the removal of covid-19 measures announced on 19 January 2022 on people who (a) are severely immunosuppressed and therefore less or not protected by vaccines and (b) were classed as clinically extremely vulnerable.

Maggie Throup:

The COVID-19 Taskforce has advised that we are unable to provide further information requested as this relates to the formulation of Government policy.

■ **Coronavirus: Medical Treatments**

Dr Luke Evans: [\[504\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that immunosuppressed individuals who test positive for covid-19 are able to urgently access monoclonal antibody and antiviral treatments in (a) Leicestershire and (b) England.

Maggie Throup:

In all regions in England, including Leicestershire, eligible patients who test positive for COVID-19 will be contacted by a clinician from a COVID Medicines Delivery Unit (CMDU) to discuss treatment suitability. The clinician will be responsible for assessing the patient and deciding which treatment option is most appropriate for them and their existing condition/s.

If a CMDU clinician has not contacted the patient within 24 hours, they can seek further advice and information from their general practitioner (GP), hospital specialist or NHS 111 and arrange an urgent referral to a CMDU for assessment, where appropriate. Guidance has been provided to GPs, NHS 111 and hospital doctors to ensure information is available to support patients.

■ **Defibrillators: Finance**

Sir Geoffrey Cox: [\[103\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of funding the construction of defibrillator networks from the NHS central budget.

Maria Caulfield:

No specific assessment has been made. However, in partnership with The British Heart Foundation, the Resuscitation Council UK and the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives, NHS England and NHS Improvement have developed 'The Circuit'; a database to register defibrillators in the United Kingdom. This will assist ambulance services to identify the nearest defibrillator at the time of an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest.

■ Dental Services: Finance

Judith Cummins: [\[279\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much and what proportion of the £50 million NHS dentistry catch up fund announced by the Government in January 2022 has been spent in (a) total and (b) each region.

Judith Cummins: [\[280\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many additional urgent care appointments have been delivered in (a) total and (b) each region through the £50 million catch up funding for NHS dentistry announced by the Government in January 2022.

Judith Cummins: [\[281\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many additional urgent care appointments have been delivered in Bradford South through the £50 million catch up funding for NHS dentistry announced by the Government in January 2022.

Judith Cummins: [\[282\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many dentists have provided NHS care funded by the additional £50 million for NHS dentistry announced by the Government in January 2022.

Judith Cummins: [\[283\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many additional units of NHS dental activity have been provided by the additional £50 million of funding for NHS dentistry announced by the Government in January 2022.

Maria Caulfield:

The information requested is not currently held centrally. National Health Service dentists submit claims for payment within two months following the completion of a course of treatment. We anticipate this information will be available from June 2022.

■ Dental Services: Greater Manchester

Navendu Mishra: [\[997\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people are on NHS dentist waiting lists in (a) Stockport and (b) Greater Manchester.

Maria Caulfield:

The information requested is not held centrally, as appointments for National Health Service treatment are managed locally by dental practices.

■ **Eating Disorders****Wera Hobhouse:**[\[916\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential impact of calorie labelling on people with eating disorders.

Maggie Throup:

The Department published an impact assessment and an equalities impact assessment on the likely effect of calorie labelling for out of home food sold in large businesses, including restaurants, cafes and takeaways. As part of these assessments, we have considered the available evidence around eating disorders and displaying calorie information. The Department will continue to evaluate the impact of the out of home calorie labelling Regulations, including on people living with eating disorders. We will review the Regulations and publish a post-implementation review within three to five years.

■ **Health and Care Act 2022****Margaret Greenwood:**[\[795\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has plans to amend the NHS Constitution and Handbook to the NHS Constitution to reflect changes in policy and legislation as a result of the Health and Care Act 2022.

Edward Argar:

In line with statutory requirements, the NHS Constitution in England will be updated every 10 years, with the involvement of the public, patients and staff. The accompanying Handbook to the NHS Constitution is updated every three years. The next scheduled updates are due for publication in January 2025 to reflect changes in policy and legislation as a result of the Health and Care Act 2022.

■ **Healthy Start Scheme****Conor McGinn:**[\[840\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to reduce the time taken to register online for Healthy Start cards following that scheme's move from paper vouchers to digital cards.

Maggie Throup:

The Healthy Start scheme has been digitised to ensure it is easier for families to apply for, receive and use the benefits. Applicants can now complete the online application form and receive a decision in less than five minutes.

Conor McGinn:[\[841\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many and what proportion of Healthy Start voucher users have been (a) successfully contacted about the new digital scheme and (b) transferred to the replacement prepaid card system as of 11 May 2022.

Maggie Throup:

Each household receiving the Healthy Start vouchers who remained eligible was contacted during the transition to the new card service. The total number of households contacted was 248,204. Beneficiaries were not directly transferred from the paper scheme to the digital scheme, as all applicants are required to accept the terms and conditions of the digital scheme before an application can be submitted. As of 11 May 2022, 358,783 households have applied to the digital scheme, of which 243,641 households were previously on the paper voucher scheme.

■ Healthy Start Scheme: North West**Conor McGinn:**[\[839\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many participants are on the Healthy Start scheme in (a) St Helens North constituency, (b) Liverpool City Region and (c) the North West as of 11 May 2022.

Maggie Throup:

The following table shows the number of beneficiaries in the Health Start Scheme as of 2 May 2022, the most recent information available. Information is not held at constituency level, therefore data for the local authority area has been provided.

ST HELENS LOCAL AUTHORITY	1,654
Liverpool City Region	13,058
North West	53,963

Source: NHS Business Service Authority

Notes:

1. Liverpool City Region shows combined data from the following local authorities: Halton; Knowsley; Liverpool; Sefton; St. Helens; and Wirral.
2. Data is based on the Office for National Statistics' regional data for the North West.

■ HIV Infection: Drugs**Florence Eshalomi:**[\[545\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of access to HIV prevention drug, PrEP, by population group.

Maggie Throup:

Routine pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for the prevention of HIV began in England in autumn 2020. The UK Health Security Agency's Sexually Transmitted Infections Surveillance System collects data from sexual health services on PrEP eligibility, offer and use and the number of tablets prescribed. This data is due to be published later in 2022, after a full year of data for 2021 has been reported. Where possible, this will be presented by key population group and geographical region.

Immensa Health Clinic: Wolverhampton

Andrew Gwynne: [\[95\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department plans to publish the full independent quality audit carried out at the Wolverhampton site of Immensa laboratories; who conducted that audit; and when that audit was conducted.

Maggie Throup:

We are unable to provide the information requested as it is currently subject to legal professional privilege.

Independent Review on Tobacco Control

Adam Afriyie: [\[142\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to publish the recommendations of the Independent Review on Tobacco Control; and whether he plans to hold a consultation on those recommendations.

Adam Afriyie: [\[143\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his policies of the recommendations set out in the Independent Review on Tobacco Control.

Maggie Throup:

The Independent Review is due to be published shortly and we will consider its findings following publication. We will assess which recommendations will inform the forthcoming health disparities white paper and the new Tobacco Control Plan to be published later this year. This will include an assessment on any potential consultation.

Long Covid

Daisy Cooper: [\[484\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of (a) funding and (b) other resources allocated to (i) research, (ii) diagnosis and (iii) treatment of Long Covid.

Maria Caulfield:

No formal assessment has been made. However, we have invested £50 million for research projects into the long-term impacts of COVID-19 infection. The National

Institute for Health and Care Research continues to welcome funding applications for research into any aspect of human health, including post-COVID-19 syndrome.

NHS England has invested £224 million to support the assessment, treatment and rehabilitation of people with post-COVID-19 syndrome, including £90 million in 2022/23. There are over 90 assessment services to support adults, children and young people with the long term effects of COVID-19 and to direct them to appropriate care pathways.

■ **Members: Correspondence**

John Penrose: [\[140\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he will respond to the correspondence of 3 March and 7 April 2022 from the hon. Member for Weston-super-Mare on behalf of constituent Tracey Henderson on the matter of covid-19 vaccinations.

Edward Argar:

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

Robert Largan: [\[535\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he will respond to the correspondence of 28 February 2022 from the hon. Member for High Peak, reference RL31443.

Edward Argar:

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

Robert Largan: [\[536\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he will respond to the correspondence of 28 February 2022 from the hon. Member for High Peak, reference RL31444.

Edward Argar:

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

Robert Largan: [\[537\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he will respond to the correspondence of 28 February 2022 from the hon. Member for High Peak, reference RL31496.

Edward Argar:

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

Robert Largan: [\[540\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he will respond to the correspondence of 7 March 2022 from the hon. Member for High Peak, reference RL35574.

Edward Argar:

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

■ Neurology: Staff**Peter Aldous:** [\[734\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of the neuroscience workforce in England.

Peter Aldous: [\[735\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to increase the neuroscience workforce in England.

Edward Argar:

No specific assessment has been made. However, from August 2022 we are expanding the number of postgraduate neurology training posts in England. As of January 2022, there are 1,638 full time equivalent (FTE) doctors working in the specialty of neurology, an increase of 4.9% since January 2021. There were also 951 FTE doctors working in the specialty of neurosurgery in January 2022, including 375 consultants - an increase of 5.6% since January 2021.

■ NHS 111**Bell Ribeiro-Addy:** [\[462\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the NHS 111 service.

Edward Argar:

The latest available data as of March 2022 shows that 1.40 million calls were answered by NHS 111, an average of 45,200 per day. Of these calls, 44.5% were answered in 60 seconds or less and the average time taken to answer calls was 396 seconds. Clinical advisors contributed to 51.5% of calls triaged.

The National Health Service continues to increase the capacity of NHS 111 through arranging clinical advice directly from healthcare professionals, making urgent appointments at a range of health services or offering a timed slot at a local accident and emergency department, where appropriate. We are also providing an additional £50 million in 2022/23 to support increased call-taking capacity.

■ Nutrition**Ian Byrne:** [\[518\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate his Department has made of the daily cost for (a) an adult and (b) a child to eat in line with the dietary advice contained in the Community Eatwell Guide in 2022.

Ian Byrne: [\[519\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate his Department has made of the daily cost for (a) an adult and (b) a child to eat in line with the dietary advice contained in the Community Eatwell Guide in 2019.

Ian Byrne: [\[520\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate his Department has made of the daily cost for (a) an adult and (b) a child to eat in line with the dietary advice contained in the Community Eatwell Guide in 2018.

Ian Byrne: [\[521\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate his Department has made of the daily cost for (a) an adult and (b) a child to eat in line with the dietary advice contained in the Community Eatwell Guide in 2017.

Maggie Throup:

The United Kingdom's national food model, the Eatwell Guide, provides a visual representation of the types and proportions of foods needed for a healthy balanced diet.

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities has not made a specific assessment.

■ Obesity: Health Services

Andrew Gwynne: [\[100\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the suspension of funding for weight management services, announced on 4 March 2022, whether that suspension is in respect of the £35 million additional funding provided to local authorities as part of the £100 million announced in 2021 or the entire £100 million that was announced.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[97\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the suspension of the £100 million of funding for weight management services announced on 4 March 2021, whether the Government has plans to reinstate that funding at a future date.

Maggie Throup:

While some healthy weight programmes will continue, the reduction will include £35 million which was to be provided to local authorities for weight management services. Future funding will be subject to the normal business planning processes.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[96\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department undertook an impact assessment prior to the suspension of the £100 million of funding for weight management services, announced on 4 March 2021.

Maggie Throup:

[Holding answer 16 May 2022]: While no formal impact assessment has been undertaken, the Department considered the impact of the suspension of this funding alongside the costs of 'COVID-19 Response: Living with COVID-19' within existing

budgets. We remain committed to addressing the causes of poor diet, obesity and inactivity and supporting people living with obesity to achieve a healthier weight.

■ Poverty: Health

Rachael Maskell: [\[864\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the relationship between poverty and health inequality; and what steps he is taking in response to the findings of the report by Professor Sir Michael Marmot entitled Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 years on.

Maggie Throup:

[Holding answer 16 May 2022]:

We have made no recent assessment. However, we have established the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities and in summer 2022, we will publish a health disparities white paper which will set out plans to tackle health inequalities.

■ Prescriptions: Fees and Charges

Justin Madders: [\[1190\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what his planned timetable is for responding to the consultation on Aligning the upper age for NHS prescription charge exemptions with the State Pension age, which closed on the 3 September 2021.

Edward Argar:

No decisions on the proposals have yet been made. We will respond to the consultation and announce our next steps in due course.

■ Protective Clothing

Martyn Day: [\[353\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if his Department will make an assessment of the potential merits in terms of (a) safety, (b) compliance and (c) product quality of requiring suppliers of category II and III personal protective equipment to be formally registered.

Edward Argar:

We have no current plans to make a specific assessment. All personal protective equipment must adhere to standards set by the Market Surveillance Authorities. All items are assessed against technical standards and useability before release to health and social care services.

■ Surgery

Daisy Cooper: [\[483\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many elective surgeries have been cancelled in England as a result of (a) patients and (b) clinicians having covid-19 since 21 February 2022.

Edward Argar:

The data is not held in the format requested.

■ **Usher Syndrome****Virginia Crosbie:**[\[543\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will increase funding for research into (a) Usher Syndrome and (b) other similar genetic conditions; and what steps he is taking to meet the additional needs of people living with Usher Syndrome.

Maria Caulfield:

The Department funds research into rare genetic conditions, such as Usher Syndrome, through the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR). Funding is not usually ring-fenced for specific topics, with applications are subject to peer review and judged in open competition and awards made based on the importance of the topic to patients and health and care services, value for money and scientific quality. The UK Rare Diseases Framework aims to meet the needs of patients with rare diseases, including Usher Syndrome. Each United Kingdom nation has committed to publish an action plan by the end of 2022, outlining how the Framework will be implemented. England and Northern Ireland have recently published action plans, with those from Scotland and Wales to follow later this year.

HOME OFFICE■ **Asylum: RAF Linton-on-Ouse****Anne McLaughlin:**[\[305\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the proposed new asylum accommodation centre at RAF Linton-on-Ouse will be used to accommodate only those asylum seekers who have been deemed eligible to be sent to Rwanda under the UK and Rwanda Migration and Economic Development Partnership agreement.

Anne McLaughlin:[\[306\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether flights to Rwanda or other destinations will be operated from the proposed new asylum accommodation centre at RAF Linton-on-Ouse while it is used as asylum accommodation.

Anne McLaughlin:[\[307\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what safeguards will be in place at the proposed new asylum accommodation centre at RAF Linton-on-Ouse to protect people with vulnerabilities.

Anne McLaughlin:[\[308\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what criteria and process will be used to determine whether a person is suitable to be accommodated at the proposed new asylum accommodation centre at RAF Linton-on-Ouse; and whether those are the

same as the criteria and process for Napier Barracks, as set out in her Department's Allocation of Accommodation policy.

Kevin Foster:

307 - Prior to an individual being allocated accommodation at Linton-on-Ouse, an assessment will take place by the Home Office using a suitability criteria.

Should an individual be allocated accommodation at Linton-on-Ouse and information comes to light meaning they are no longer suitable, their case will be reviewed, and alternative suitable accommodation will be allocated under existing arrangements.

The Service Provider has responsibility to notify the Home Office of any change in circumstances of those allocated accommodation at Linton-on-Ouse. As part of the individual's induction on site, they will be given Migrant Help's number to report any issues or concerns, including the suitability of the accommodation.

306 - Those housed in asylum accommodation at Linton-on-Ouse will not be considered for relocation to Rwanda. There are no plans to use the Air strip for flights.

308 - To ensure the safety and wellbeing of those allocated accommodation at Linton-on-Ouse, an assessment will take place by the Home Office prior to allocation using suitability criteria. The factors which are currently considered when assessing the suitability of individual asylum seekers to particular accommodation is set out in the policy guidance 'Allocation of Accommodation'.

This policy guidance will be reviewed as part of any preparations to open asylum accommodation in Linton-on-Ouse.

305 - Those housed in asylum accommodation at Linton-on-Ouse will not be considered for relocation to Rwanda.

Bell Ribeiro-Addy:

[\[464\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether planning permission is required to convert the site at RAF Linton-on-Ouse into an asylum accommodation centre.

Bell Ribeiro-Addy:

[\[465\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the new asylum accommodation centre at RAF Linton-on-Ouse will be operated under an existing Asylum Accommodation and Support Contract.

Kevin Foster:

Planning permission is required for the carrying out of development and/or the making of a material change of use in the land as defined under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 grants planning permission for specific classes of development without the need for an express application and a grant of planning permission from the local authority.

To the extent converting the site into asylum accommodation involves development and/or makes a material change of use in the land, which is expected to be the case, the position will be regularised under the applicable planning laws at the appropriate time

In relation to the AASC contract, the Home Office intends to operate the new asylum accommodation centre at RAF Linton-on-Ouse using an existing contract for Asylum Accommodation and Support Services.

■ **Asylum: Rwanda**

Preet Kaur Gill:

[396]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the accuracy of reports that the Government has agreed to pay a set amount of funding to Rwanda to cover case workers, legal advice, translators, accommodation, food and healthcare for the offshoring of asylum seekers; and whether she plans for that funding to come from the 0.5 per cent GNI ODA budget.

Tom Pursglove:

Funding for Migration and Economic Development Partnership has been agreed as part of Home Office settlement with HMT. It is not from the GNI ODA budget.

Under this partnership the UK is investing an initial £120 million into the economic development and growth of Rwanda. Funding will also be provided to support the delivery of asylum operations, accommodation, and integration.

Every person's needs are different, but we anticipate the amount would be comparable to processing costs incurred in the UK.

Preet Kaur Gill:

[397]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will confirm the amount of funding that the Government has agreed with the Rwandan Government to cover the cost of case workers, legal advice, translators, accommodation, food and healthcare for the offshoring of asylum seekers in that country.

Preet Kaur Gill:

[398]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the cost (a) per head and (b) in total for case workers, legal advice, translators, accommodation, food and healthcare in respect of the offshoring of asylum seekers in Rwanda.

Tom Pursglove:

Funding for Migration and Economic Development Partnership has been agreed as part of Home Office settlement with HMT. It is not from the GNI ODA budget.

Under this partnership the UK is investing an initial £120 million into the economic development and growth of Rwanda. Funding will also be provided to support the delivery of asylum operations, accommodation, and integration.

Every person's needs are different, but we anticipate the amount would be comparable to processing costs incurred in the UK.

Stephen Kinnock: [\[780\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish details of the (a) procurement process for awarding the contract to transfer asylum seekers to Rwanda under the UK-Rwanda Migration and Economic Development Partnership and (b) company that has been awarded that contract.

Tom Pursglove:

The Migration and Economic Development Partnership intends to deter dangerous journeys and illegal entry to the UK, break the business model of people smugglers and protect the lives of those they endanger.

The use of charter flights is a standard part of Immigration Enforcement activity; we work with an independent commercial broker to ensure we get best value for money. Every week the Home Office removes to different countries people who have no right to be in the UK. During the COVID-19 pandemic we have continued to deport foreign national offenders and return other immigration offenders where flight routes have been available to us, both on scheduled and charter flights.

The Government's efforts to facilitate entirely legitimate and legal returns of people who have entered the UK illegally are too often frustrated by late challenges submitted hours before the flight. These claims are very often baseless and entirely without merit, but are given full legal consideration which can lead to removal being rescheduled.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[921\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department plans to take to help safeguard the (a) mental and (b) physical wellbeing of asylum seekers and migrants relocated to Rwanda.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[922\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what guarantees her Department has had from her counterparts in the Rwandan Government regarding the fair treatment and suitable conditions for asylum seekers that are sent to Rwanda while their cases are considered.

Kevin Foster:

Under this agreement, Rwanda will process claims in accordance with the UN Refugee Convention, national and international laws, and will ensure individuals protection from inhuman and degrading treatment. Under the Migration and Economic Development Partnership Rwanda has also undertaken to provide support that is adequate to ensure the health, security and wellbeing of each relocated person.

Rwanda is a fundamentally safe and secure country with respect for the rule of law. However, everyone considered for relocation will be screened and have access to

legal advice. Decisions will be taken on a case-by-case basis, and nobody will be relocated if it is unsafe or inappropriate for them.

■ **Deportation: Jamaica**

Caroline Lucas:

[\[173\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will cancel the deportation flight to Jamaica scheduled for 18 May 2022; make it her policy to halt any further mass deportation flights from the UK; and if she will make a statement.

Tom Pursglove:

No.

■ **Domestic Abuse: Males**

Henry Smith:

[\[175\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, following the publication of her Department's report, Supporting male victims of crimes considered violence against women and girls, on 5 May 2022, what plans she has to support male victims of crimes considered violence against men and boys.

Rachel Maclean:

This Government is absolutely committed to supporting all victims of crimes, such as rape, domestic abuse, stalking and so called 'honour'-based abuse. These crimes have absolutely no place in our society, and we are determined to work with the police and other key partners to confront them wherever they appear.

Both the Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy and the Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan are clear that they apply to all victims of these crimes, and male victims will benefit from the support and provisions that they contain.

However, we recognise that there are some specific challenges that men and boys may face. Therefore, in 2019 we published the first ever statement focused on male victims of these crimes. In March, we published a refreshed policy paper "Supporting male victims", an informational resource on the male victims' landscape, including the specific challenges male victims face; an outline to the support services outlook; and a guide to developing best practice.

In addition, the Government funds a range of organisations that provide specialist support to male victims – this includes, from 2019-2022, £168,000 a year for the Men's Advice Line, a national helpline for male victims of domestic abuse, run by the charity Respect.

■ **Hate Crime**

Adam Afriyie:

[\[144\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many non-crime hate incidents the police have recorded in 2022.

Rachel Maclean:

I refer the Hon member to the previous answer given to UIN 153861 on 26 April 2022.

■ HM Passport Office: Durham**Mary Kelly Foy:**[\[957\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to increase resources in HM Passport Office Durham to improve the speed of processing passport applications.

Kevin Foster:

To support the processing of an unprecedented demand of passport applications, Her Majesty's Passport Office has increased its staffing numbers across the UK, including the Durham office.

500 new staff have joined HM Passport Office since April 2021, with plans for a further 700 to have joined by the summer.

■ HM Passport Office: Standards**Virginia Crosbie:**[\[542\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to speed up the processing of passport renewals and applications; and what assessment she has made of the potential merits of setting a target for the time taken to process an application once it arrives at the Passport Office.

Kevin Foster:

Due to COVID-19, over 5 million people delayed applying for a British passport throughout 2020 and 2021.

As unrestricted international travel has returned, HM Passport Office has prepared extensively to serve an unprecedented number of customers, with 9.5 million British passport applications forecasted throughout 2022. This is up from the pre-pandemic average of seven million. Alongside technical solutions, such as the latest application system which means more passport applications are securely processed with fewer manual interventions, staffing numbers have been increased by more than 500 since last April. Plans are also in place to increase staffing numbers by a further 700.

These preparations have ensured passport applications can be processed in higher numbers than ever before. This was demonstrated in March 2022 when HM Passport Office achieved a record monthly high by completing the processing of over one million applications.

In April 2021 guidance was changed to advise customers to allow up to ten weeks to get their passport. Latest figures show 98.6% of passports are processed in this timeframe.

Steve McCabe:

[586]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to improve turnaround time and service at HM Passport Office.

Kevin Foster:

Ahead of unrestricted international travel returning, HM Passport Office prepared extensively to serve an unprecedented number of customers, with 9.5 million British passport applications forecasted throughout 2022.

These preparations have ensured passport applications can be processed in higher numbers than ever before. This was demonstrated in March 2022 when HM Passport Office achieved a record monthly high by completing the processing of over one million applications, and 98.6% of applications completed within the 10 week standard timeframe according to most recent stats.

Ministers continue to meet regularly with officials to monitor performance, and to explore further options which will help to ensure people receive their passports in good time.

■ Home Office: Correspondence

Steve McCabe:

[587]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to improve her Department's response times to enquiries from hon. Members.

Kevin Foster:

Performance has been impacted by a very significant increase in the volume of correspondence received, including the unprecedented amount of correspondence about the situation in Afghanistan and more recently in Ukraine.

The Department recognises it has not been able to meet service standard in some cases, but has implemented an action plan to clear backlogs and drive-up performance.

Data about intake and performance in answering Hon. Members correspondence are published quarterly with the latest Quarter available at: [Customer service operations data: Q4 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/data-and-statistics/customer-service-operations-data-q4-2021)

Mr Nicholas Brown:

[62]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many cases have been handled by the MP Account Manager team in the last 6 months; and what proportion of these cases received a substantial response within 20 working days.

Kevin Foster:

The Department works to a target of responding to 95% of Hon. Members written correspondence within 20 working days.

Performance has been impacted by a very significant increase in the volume of correspondence received, including the unprecedented amount of correspondence about the situation in Afghanistan and more recently in Ukraine. Ministers and

officials also had to instigate a remote process for drafting and signing correspondence during the period of COVID-19 restrictions.

The Department recognises it has not been able to meet service standard in some cases, but has implemented an action plan to clear backlogs and drive up performance.

Data about intake and performance in answering Hon. Members correspondence are published quarterly with the latest Quarter available at: [Customer service operations data: Q4 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/customer-service-operations-data) and this includes data up to and including the end of quarter 4 - 2021.

■ Immigration

Sir Christopher Chope: [583]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when a decision will be made on the application dated 5 May 2021 under application number 1212-0001-1547-0495/00 in respect of indefinite leave to remain in the UK, about which the hon Member for Christchurch wrote to her Department on 17 January 2022; and if she will make a statement.

Kevin Foster:

Given the question relates to an individual application, there are significant GDPR and safeguarding constraints which prevent a detailed response being given in an answer which is publicly accessible.

■ Immigration Controls: Airports

Bell Ribeiro-Addy: [466]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate her Department has made of the number of new blue British passports that are rejected at eGates in UK airports.

Kevin Foster:

Passengers may be referred from the eGates to an officer at PCP desks for a variety of reasons, including for safeguarding and security purposes.

There are well defined processes for updating UK border systems when new documents are introduced and the performance of new British passports through UK border controls is being monitored.

Bell Ribeiro-Addy: [467]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate her Department has made of the number of burgundy British passports that are rejected at eGates in UK airports.

Kevin Foster:

This is impossible to quantify as the UK/EU passports (burgundy) have been in circulation for over 20 years.

Bell Ribeiro-Addy: [\[468\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the average waiting time at eGates in UK airports (a) before and (b) after the introduction of new blue British passports.

Kevin Foster:

Performance against our passenger wait time SLA can be found in Border Force Transparency data available at:

Border Force transparency data: Q4 2021 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)(opens in a new tab)

There has been no impact to average waiting times due to the introduction of the new British passports.

Bell Ribeiro-Addy: [\[469\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate her Department has made of the cost of maintaining eGates at UK airports each year.

Kevin Foster:

The cost of maintaining e-Gates at UK airports in the 2021-22 Financial Year was £4,753,126, excluding VAT.

Bell Ribeiro-Addy: [\[472\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate her Department has made of the average number of IT faults experienced at eGates in UK airports each week.

Kevin Foster:

In the interests of border security, we are unable to share details of technology incidents. However, we continue to work with our technology users and partners to address the root causes of any interruptions to service.

Members: Correspondence**Mr David Lammy:** [\[34\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she will respond to the correspondence of 14 February 2022 from the Rt. hon. Member for Tottenham, reference DL55426.

Kevin Foster:

A substantive response to the correspondence will be sent shortly.

Afzal Khan: [\[447\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the correspondence from the hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, dated 3 December 2021, concerning Mohammed Bargzei.

Kevin Foster:

The Home Office responded to the correspondence on 11 May 2022.

Ruth Cadbury:[\[789\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department plans to respond to the email of 17 March 2022 from the office of the hon. Member for Brentford and Isleworth regarding an outstanding extended spousal visa application, reference ZA63951.

Kevin Foster:

The Home Office responded to the correspondence on 12 May 2022.

■ Migrant Workers: Football**Chi Onwurah:**[\[245\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reason her Department's policy considers football academies as places of work for children; and if she will take steps to ensure that children who are talented football players and who have limited Leave to Remain can join football academies and register in academy leagues.

Kevin Foster:

Football academies are established with the aim of participants finding opportunities as a sportsperson, and/ or developing a current or future career as a sportsperson, therefore enrolment in professional or semi-professional sports teams, including all academy and development team age groups, is covered by the relevant immigration rules.

The International Sportspeople route is the single work route for overseas sportspeople in the UK and is underpinned by a governing body endorsement (GBE) process. Each sport's governing body's GBE criteria are set in consultation with the Home Office and involve a skills assessment against which migrants are endorsed for a visa application, ensuring they are elite and internationally established sportspeople.

The restriction on work as a professional sportspeople seeks to protect the integrity of the GBE process, in turn encouraging investment in resident sportspeople and protecting opportunities for home-grown talent

Individuals in the UK with a form of limited leave, including children, who wish to undertake activities as a sportsperson, should check the conditions of their leave to ensure they have the necessary permission to do so.

■ Passport Office: Telephone Services**Mr Kevan Jones:**[\[74\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average waiting time is for telephone calls made from 1 May 2022 to the dedicated advice line for hon. Members at HM Passport Office.

Kevin Foster:

Average wait times for the dedicated HM Passport queries on the MP enquiry line have been unacceptable.

From 9 May, a new additional team of dedicated HMPO staff began operating the helpline. As a result, we have seen wait times halve and we expect to see much lower wait times in the coming weeks.

MPs can also contact the Home Office via the MPs Urgent Enquiries inbox and request a call back .

■ Passports: Applications

Charlotte Nichols: [\[509\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she plans to take to ensure the (a) availability and (b) adequacy of the 1 week Fast Track passport service.

Kevin Foster:

Appointments for urgent services are released three weeks in advance, with new appointments available on a daily basis.

These will be booked quickly in busy periods. While Her Majesty's Passport Office has maximised the appointment capacity at its seven public counters, it continues to explore options to increase appointment capacity to further support customers with urgent travel needs.

Mary Kelly Foy: [\[956\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the adequacy of the online passport application booking system in light of the current backlogs.

Kevin Foster:

Appointments for urgent services are released three weeks in advance, with new appointments available on a daily basis.

These will be booked quickly in busy periods. While Her Majesty's Passport Office has maximised the appointment capacity at its seven public counters, it continues to explore options to further increase appointment capacity to further support its customers with urgent travel needs.

Around 2 million passport applications were processed in March and April alone, with 98.6% of applications processed within the 10 week standalone time frame.

■ Passports: Educational Visits

Dr Rupa Huq: [\[372\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what support she is providing for tour operators and other businesses impacted by new travel document requirements for European school parties visiting the UK.

Dr Rupa Huq: [\[373\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the impact on the number of European school parties visiting the UK of changes to

travel document requirements which mean that a full passport is now required for each student.

Kevin Foster:

As with all other nationalities, we no longer accept national identity cards as a valid travel document from EU, EEA and Swiss visitors to the UK.

An impact assessment was undertaken of this change and almost a year's notice was provided for this change to allow people and groups to plan ahead and obtain passports where they do not already have them before they travel. Officials also worked with key stakeholders, including carriers and others in the travel industry, to ensure the successful implementation of the change on 1 October 2021.

The experience at the UK border since 1 October 2021 has been positive, with EU, EEA and Swiss nationals recognising the need to switch to using their passports for travel to the UK. By using a biometric passport most EU nationals, aged 12 or over, making a short visit can also use e-gates, where available, for a quicker and easier arrival experience, especially if travelling as part of a large group.

■ **Refugees: Afghanistan**

Seema Malhotra:

[264]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her Department's press release entitled, Support for British and non-British nationals in Afghanistan, published on 22 August 2021, how many calls have been made to the support helpline; of those calls, how many were answered; whether that helpline is still open; and what the average waiting time is for calls made to that helpline to be answered.

Kevin Foster:

The Afghanistan Support Helpline is open and available to non-British nationals in Afghanistan, or family members of a non-British nationals in Afghanistan, in need of assistance and is open 9am to 5pm UK time, Monday to Friday.

From the 4 January, we have been offered 7326 calls and answered 6964 which is 95% calls answered. Average wait time was 1 minute 38 seconds.

The helpline received a large proportion of calls in the initial 2 weeks of opening which saw longer wait times. This impacted the overall waiting time and number of calls answered.

The department continues to closely monitor and review the volume of calls being made to the helpline, with a significant reduction in the number of calls since opening.

■ **Refugees: Housing**

Rachael Maskell:

[320]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make a comparative estimate of the cost of (a) providing a homes for refugees scheme, whereby UK residents are able to open their homes to refugees irrespective of their country of origin, and (b) accommodating a person in a bridging hotel according to costs as of 10 May 2022.

Rachael Maskell:**[321]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has had discussions with Cabinet colleagues on the potential merits of introducing a homes for refugees programme whereby UK residents are able to open their homes to refugees irrespective of their country of origin.

Kevin Foster:

The existing Community Sponsorship Scheme provides the opportunity for friends and neighbours, charities and faith groups to play a direct role in supporting families resettled to the UK as they restart their lives here.

Further details on the Community Sponsorship Scheme can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-full-community-sponsorship>

There are currently no plans to establish a broader Homes for Refugees programme and it is not possible to undertake a cost comparison as suggested.

■ Sexual Harassment: Public Places**Sir George Howarth:****[61]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans she has to make public sexual harassment a criminal offence.

Rachel Maclean:

This Government is committed to taking action to tackle public sexual harassment, that is why in March we announced we will launch a public consultation by the summer recess on whether there should be a new offence of public sexual harassment.

We are also taking several non-legislative actions to address this issue. In September 2021 we launched the pilot of the new StreetSafe tool, which allows people to show on a map places where they have felt unsafe, enabling the police to take action to improve safety. More than 15,000 reports have been submitted through this.

Last December, the College of Policing published new guidance for police showing what they can do when they receive a report of public sexual harassment: the criminal offences available and other protective tools which can be used.

Furthermore, the Home Office launched the 'Enough' communications campaign in March, which challenges public attitudes and tolerance towards crimes such as public sexual harassment and aims to ensure victims know how and where to report it.

■ Travel Requirements**Stephen Kinnock:****[782]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of allowing visa applicants to receive a digital permission to travel documentation.

Kevin Foster:

We have already outlined our ambitions to develop a border and immigration system which is “digital by default”, which means we will increasingly replace physical and paper-based products and services with accessible, easy to use online and digital services.

Our ambition is to have physical documents replaced by eVisas (whereby individuals have access to online evidence of their immigration status information) by the end of 2024. This change is being rolled out incrementally and we will continue to take into consideration the characteristics of each cohort as we do so, to ensure no one is left behind as we move to a digital system.

UK Visas and Immigration: Telephone Services**Gill Furniss:** [\[904\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average waiting time to speak to an agent on the MPs' Enquiry Line was for each week in April 2022.

Gill Furniss: [\[905\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many calls made to the MPs' enquiry line had a waiting time of greater than (a) one hour, (b) two hours, (c) three hours and (d) four hours for a caller to speak to an agent in April 2022.

Kevin Foster:

905 - We do not collect data in this format.

904 - Calls have been longer than we would wish, but we have brought in an additional 16 dedicated passport staff to support the MP hotline, reducing wait times significantly.

Gill Furniss: [\[906\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many callers spoke to an agent on the MPs' enquiry line in April 2022.

Kevin Foster:

1967 callers spoke to an agent on the MP enquiry line in April 2022.

Visas: Russia**Layla Moran:** [\[438\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Russian nationals designated under any UK sanctions regime have been issued Tier 1 Investor visas since Crimea was annexed by Russia in March 2014.

Layla Moran: [\[439\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Tier 1 visas issued to Russian nationals since 2008 her Department has found may pose a national security risk.

Layla Moran:[\[440\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish the names of the eight Russian citizens who were granted Tier 1 Investor visas and who are now subject to sanctions following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Kevin Foster:

We do not comment on national security matters, nor do we comment on individual cases.

■ **Visas: South Africa****Peter Grant:**[\[311\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the availability of priority applications for spousal visas for applicants in South Africa.

Kevin Foster:

From mid-March 2022, UKVI temporarily suspended Priority and Super Priority visa services for new marriage applications in order to redeploy resource to process applications made under the in response to the humanitarian crisis arising from the invasion of Ukraine.

We will keep this under review and reintroduce the priority service when possible.

■ **Whetstone Synagogue: Security****Theresa Villiers:**[\[88\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will include a grant for Whetstone Synagogue in Friern Barnet Lane in her funding for security for places of worship.

Rachel Maclean:

Protective security measures for synagogues are available through the Jewish Community Protective Security Grant, which is managed on behalf of the Home Office by the Community Security Trust.

We cannot comment on whether specific places of worship receive grant funding.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE■ **Trade Agreements: Gulf States****Ruth Cadbury:**[\[787\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to the Answer of 28 April 2022 to Question 158971 on Trade Agreements: Gulf States, what the value in pounds is of the research conducted by Ipsos Mori between February and May 2022 in relation to members states of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

£88,525.

JUSTICE

■ COE Commissioner for Human Rights

John Howell:

[\[151\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the presentation by the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights on Annual activity report 2021 by the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, which took place at the Council of Europe on 26 April 2022.

James Cartlidge:

We have taken note of the activities undertaken by Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights during 2021. These activities of course have taken place across the different member States of the Council of Europe, and on many topics in a human rights context.

■ Prisons: Education

Liz Saville Roberts:

[\[381\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Answer of 28 March 2022 to Question 144980, Prisons: Education, how many meetings his officials in his Department has held with representatives of relevant trade unions on the Prisoner Education Service.

Victoria Atkins:

We are delivering a Prisoner Education Service within this Parliament to raise prisoners' levels of numeracy, literacy, skills and qualifications with the aim of helping them secure jobs or apprenticeships on their release. To do this, we must give prisons the tools they need to succeed. We will invest in digital infrastructure, more training that delivers the skills employers need, more education experts to support Governors and improved support for prisoners with additional learning needs.

To deliver this vision, we are currently running a series of engagement events, drawing on the expertise of stakeholders across the education and justice sectors.

HMPPS holds regular meetings with its recognised trade unions to share information and invite feedback on operational developments and proposals. As prison education staff are not employed by HMPPS, their union representatives are not part of these regular consultations. We have engaged with these representatives, however, as part of our wider engagement activity.

Liz Saville Roberts:

[\[382\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether Prison Education Framework contracts include an annual uplift in payments to prison education providers.

Victoria Atkins:

Contractual clauses are in place setting a mechanism for potential adjustments to charges. This information was published as part of the tender process, the supporting documents for which can be accessed via the following link:

<https://ted.europa.eu/udl?uri=TED:NOTICE:61049-2018:HTML:EN:HTML&tabId=1&tabLang=en>.

■ Prisons: Labour Turnover

Liz Saville Roberts:

[379]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Answer of 28 March 2022 to Question 144981 on Prisons: Labour Turnover, what the relevant leaving rates are for non-directly employed prison staff.

Victoria Atkins:

This information is not held centrally. All staffing matters for contractors working in prisons, including leaving rates, are the responsibility of those contract providers. There is no requirement in the contracts to agree such matters with the Ministry of Justice.

Providers of contracted services play an important role in the prison estate and we continue to monitor them to ensure they maintain safe, decent and secure prisons.

Liz Saville Roberts:

[380]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Answer of 28 March 2022 to Question 144981, Prisons: Labour Turnover, what the leaving rates for (a) Band 2, and (b) Band 3 to 4 operational prison staff are in each of the past five years, broken down by region.

Victoria Atkins:

Leaving Rates by Grade are given in the HMPPS Workforce Bulletin – latest version is here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/her-majestys-prison-and-probation-service-workforce-quarterly-december-2021>.

Information on leaving rates by grades is published in Table 11. Information on leaving rates by region is published in table 10, however this is only for “main” grades (band 3-5 officers, OSG, probation officers).

■ Reoffenders

Steve Reed:

[773]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether his Department holds data on the reoffending rate of prisoners by the day of the week that the prisoner is released.

Kit Malthouse:

The proven reoffending rates of adult offenders released from custody between April to June 2020 by day of release are presented in the table below:

Proportion of adult offenders who reoffended following release from custody, by day of release and custodial sentence length, England and Wales (April to June 2020 offender cohort)

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
All custody					
Proportion of offenders who reoffend (%)	34.6	38.5	38.4	40.7	39.8
Number of reoffenders	725	810	752	1,068	1,401
Number of offenders in cohort	2,096	2,102	1,958	2,622	3,524

Notes:

1. Users of these statistics should exercise caution when comparing figures by day of the week as the presented proven reoffending rates do not control for any differences in offender characteristics.
2. Proven reoffences are measured over a one-year follow-up period and a further six-month waiting period to allow for offences to be proven in court. It is worth noting that the April to June 2020 offender cohort overlaps entirely with the first national lockdown due to the COVID19 pandemic, and as a result of this the overall offender cohort size for this period has decreased sharply compared to previous cohorts. The reoffending follow-up and waiting periods for this cohort also overlap with both the second and third national lockdowns. Due to these factors, figures relating to this cohort period should be interpreted with caution.
3. Indeterminate sentences include indeterminate sentences for public protection, mandatory life prisoners, and those sentenced to discretionary and automatic life sentences.
4. Proportions based on less than 30 offenders are removed as they make data unreliable for interpretation. In these instances, proportions will be marked as *.

■ Robbery

Steve Reed:

[\[268\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the (a) mean and (b) median time was from offence to completion for cases of robbery in each crown court in England and Wales in the past three years.

James Cartlidge:

Timeliness estimates from offence to completion for defendants dealt with at the Crown Court for robbery offences can be found in the attached tables by Crown Court.

Estimates of timeliness from offence to completion are taken from the point of offence committal through to the eventual completion of a case at court.

Caution should be taken when drawing conclusions from granular breakdowns – for example in the case of courts such as Salisbury and Newport (Isle of Wight) – as

there is potential for marked variations based on small volumes and even single cases.

The Government is committed to supporting the recovery of the courts and we continue to take action to tackle the impact the pandemic has had on the system. We have extended 30 Nightingale courtrooms beyond the end of March 2022 and have again removed the limit on the number of days the Crown Court can sit this financial year. To secure enough capacity to sit at the required levels in 2022/23 and beyond we are expanding our plans for judicial recruitment.

Attachments:

1. PQ268_table [2022-05-16 PQ 268.xlsx]

■ **Secure Schools: Medway**

Steve Reed: [\[774\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how much has been spent on costs associated with the new secure school in Medway as of 11 May 2022.

Steve Reed: [\[775\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when his Department plans to have the first children resident at the Medway secure school.

Steve Reed: [\[777\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when his Department plans to begin work on the second planned secure school.

Victoria Atkins:

Our priority is the safe and successful delivery of the first secure school in Medway. As of the end of April, the last period we can confirm with certainty, the total costs associated with the opening of the school were £8.4m.

Our aim is for the school to open for placements in late 2023. It is important that placements are made on a case-by-case basis and we ensure a smooth and safe increase, so this will be reviewed regularly after school opening.

■ **Trial of Lunatics Act 1883**

Theresa Villiers: [\[89\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make it his policy to change the title of the Trial of Lunatics Act 1883 to the Criminal Procedure (Special Verdict) Act.

James Cartlidge:

The Trial of Lunatics Act 1883 uses outdated terms, and I am sympathetic to the request to change these.

It is not possible to formally amend the title of an existing Act, but it is possible to change the way to which the existing Act is referred. This requires primary legislation, so until a suitable legislative vehicle has been identified we are unable to look at this further.

■ Youth Custody

Steve Reed: [\[776\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate his Department has made of the potential number of (a) filled and (b) vacant places in each youth custody setting in each of the next five years.

Victoria Atkins:

Although it is difficult to predict demand in the forthcoming years, overall demand in the Youth Secure Estate has fallen in the past two years, largely due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Following the removal of restrictions and with the Government's commitment to recruit 20,000 additional police officers by 2023, we expect to see demand steadily rise, although there is significant uncertainty associated with this. Despite this anticipated higher demand for places, we are confident there will still be capacity to place the increased numbers of children and young people into custody in the next five years with children placed according to their individual needs.

■ Youth Services: Contracts

Liz Saville Roberts: [\[383\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the contract notice of 31 August 2021 for Youth Education Service Provision, on what date she plans to announce the new supplier of that provision.

Victoria Atkins:

The department is completing a competitive tender exercise for the education contracts in public Young Offender Institutions in England. Once confirmed we will announce the new suppliers of the provision.

LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]

Grahame Morris: [\[900039\]](#)

If he will review the Levelling Up Fund criteria to assess the potential merits of using competitive funding rounds to reduce economic inequalities in the UK.

Neil O'Brien:

The application criteria for Round 2 of the Levelling Up Fund have been published.

In Great Britain, the Index of Priority Places is used to target funding towards places most in need of this type of investment. The index metrics include productivity, unemployment, skills, transport and commercial vacancy rates.

We will evaluate existing rounds of the fund before committing to the timing, format and criteria of future rounds.

■ Council Tax: Homes for Ukraine Scheme

Navendu Mishra:

[\[999\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether single person households will retain the single occupancy charge in respect of council tax in the event that they provide accommodation to a Ukrainian family under the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

Eddie Hughes:

Entitlement to the single person discount will remain unchanged. The Council Tax (Discount Disregards and Exempt Dwellings) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2022 were laid before Parliament on 11 April 2022.

■ COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund

Sarah Olney:

[\[909\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment his Department has made of the proportion of local authorities that have distributed funds to businesses through the COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund.

Sarah Olney:

[\[910\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how much funding has been distributed to businesses through the COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund to date.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Government has awarded councils £1.5 billion to be distributed through the COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund. Reporting arrangements have been put in place to monitor council's progress in implementing their local schemes and delivering support to businesses. Councils have now provided initial monitoring information and the Government's intention is that this will be published in due course.

■ Devolution

Douglas Chapman:

[\[900028\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what recent discussions he has had with elected members in the devolved Administrations on the effectiveness of intergovernmental relations.

Michael Gove:

I last met with the First Ministers of Scotland and Wales on 27 April. We discussed the superb intergovernmental collaboration which has underpinned the success of the Homes for Ukraine scheme and possible approaches to mitigate the rising cost of living.

This forms part of a regular rhythm of engagement with First Ministers in my role as Minister for Intergovernmental Relations.

■ Homes for Ukraine Scheme

Grahame Morris: [185]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, in the context of the UNHCR's statement of 13 April 2022, what steps he has taken to ensure appropriate vetting and safeguarding measures are in place for the Homes for Ukraine scheme to help protect women and children from potential exploitation.

Eddie Hughes:

In addition to the checks completed on all adults in a sponsor household prior to issuing a visa, guidance about security and local authority checks designed to safeguard individuals can be found via <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homes-for-ukraine-scheme-frequently-asked-questions#sponsors> and www.gov.uk/guidance/homes-for-ukraine-guidance-for-councils#role-of-councils.

Daisy Cooper: [481]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, when he plans to publish guidance to local authorities to enable Ukrainian nationals to be reassigned to new UK sponsors if initial placements break down.

Eddie Hughes:

We plan to enable re-matching through the Homes for Ukraine Scheme shortly, and are working closely with local government on this.

Stephen Timms: [900029]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment his Department has made of potential data protection risks for applicants to the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

Michael Gove:

A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) is being undertaken by DLUHC, as part of its due diligence work.

This assesses privacy risks to applicants and sponsors under UK data protection law.

A Privacy Notice has been published, which informs data subjects how their personal data will be used.

Mike Amesbury: [940]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the Homes for Ukraine scheme, what steps his Department is taking to (a) support refugees and (b) find new accommodation in the event that the relationship between the sponsor and the refugee breaks down after their arrival.

Mike Amesbury: [945]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the Homes for Ukraine scheme, what advice his Department provides to local authorities who have individuals that have not taken up the offer from a sponsor that and remain matched on their system; and what assessment his Department has made of the

potential risk of that circumstance in respect of willing sponsors who may not get re-matched with new guests.

Mike Amesbury:

[946]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the Homes for Ukraine scheme, what advice his Department provides to sponsors who subsequently have withdrawn their offer of accommodation but may still be matched to people in the system; and what assessment his Department has made of the potential risk of that circumstance in respect of Ukrainians (a) arriving in the UK without a host and (b) presenting as homeless.

Eddie Hughes:

Government has written to local authorities to set out plans which introduce a mechanism for local authorities to rematch Homes for Ukraine guests with new sponsors in certain circumstances.

■ **Housing: Disability and Older People**

Olivia Blake:

[544]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what recent assessment he has made of the role of (a) maintenance and (b) continued supply of single-story homes in the ability of the housing market to meet national policy and guidance requirements on the provision of sufficient accessible housing suitable for the disabled and elderly; and what recent steps he has taken to help ensure that the housing needs of the disabled and elderly are taken into account in national planning decision-making.

Stuart Andrew:

This Government believes that offering older people a better choice of accommodation to suit their changing needs can help them to live independently for longer and feel more connected to their communities.

In 2020, we consulted on options to raise or make accessibility standards of new homes mandatory, recognising the importance of suitable homes for older and disabled people. We are currently considering responses to our consultation and next steps will be set out in due course.

As set out in our National Planning Policy Framework, local authorities should already assess the types of homes needed for different groups within in their community and reflect this in their local planning policies.

We continue to drive up the supply of new homes, by diversifying the market; investing in affordable housing; and increasing land supply for new homes by investing in infrastructure.

■ Local Government Finance

Tim Farron: [\[145\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether his Department has made an assessment of the impact of inflation and the rise in the National Living Wage on local authority budgets.

Mr Clive Betts: [\[607\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment his Department has made of the impact of (a) inflation and (b) the rise in the National Living Wage on local authority budgets.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Spending Review settlement for local government takes account of a wide range of unit cost pressures, including increases in the National Living Wage and public sector pay. The Local Government Finance Settlement for 2022/23 makes available an additional £3.7 billion to councils in England, including funding for adult social care reform.

The Department will continue to work closely with the local government sector and other government departments to understand the impact of emerging challenges such as energy price rises and the impacts of the war in Ukraine on local authorities. Local government pay is negotiated between the National Joint Councils employer and union representatives. Pay is ultimately a decision for local councils.

Cat Smith: [\[900036\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the potential impact of reductions in local authority funding on levelling up.

Kemi Badenoch:

We have not reduced local government funding. We are making available £54.1 billion to local government in England through this year's Settlement, an increase of up to £3.7 billion from last year, including over £1 billion specifically for adult social care pressures.

Through this year's settlement, the most relatively deprived areas of England will receive 14% more per dwelling in available resource than the least deprived areas.

For Lancashire County Council, this represents a cash-terms increase in Core Spending Power of up to 8.2% compared to last year, worth £71.8 million.

For Lancaster City Council, this is a cash-terms increase of up to 3.9% and for Wyre Council, this represents a cash-terms increase in Core Spending Power of up to 6.8%.

■ Private Rented Housing: Tenants' Rights

Catherine West:

[900031]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps he has taken to enhance private renter security in the context of increases in the cost of living.

Eddie Hughes:

This Government is committed to easing cost of living pressures and increasing security and stability for tenants.

I was very pleased to announce last week that we are bringing forward legislation to scrap Section 21 evictions.

This will prevent tenants from being unfairly evicted and empower them to challenge unreasonable rent rises - as well as saving money on the costs of frequent house moves.

■ Refugees: Children

Preet Kaur Gill:

[401]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what plans he has to provide (a) mental health, (b) language and (c) other support for local schools and communities that host child refugees.

Eddie Hughes:

Government is providing local authorities with funding to provide the wrap around services Ukrainians arriving under Homes for Ukraine need to access, with additional funding for school placements. Details of the funding provided to local authorities has been published online at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homes-for-ukraine-guidance-for-councils> .

■ Refugees: Ukraine

Stuart C McDonald:

[284]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of implementing a mechanism for refugees from Ukraine to transfer to the Homes for Ukraine scheme in the event that they arrive via the Ukraine Family Scheme and subsequently find themselves homeless.

Eddie Hughes:

The Family Scheme is a Home Office visa route and once an individual is in the United Kingdom they will have entered on that visa.

Anne Marie Morris:

[766]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will provide further funding to help local authorities with additional emergency accommodation costs in addition to the funding announced under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme.

Eddie Hughes:

Funding of £10,500 per person is provided to local authorities under the Homes for Ukraine scheme which includes funding for homelessness. Further details are set out in the published guidance for local authorities.

Stephen Kinnock:[\[778\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how many people who have arrived in the UK under (a) the Ukraine Family Scheme and (b) Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme have since declared themselves to be homeless.

Eddie Hughes:

The data will be published in due course.

Regional Planning and Development: Devolution**Margaret Ferrier:**[\[900038\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what recent assessment he has made of the progress of delivering the levelling up agenda in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Michael Gove:

Our White Paper set out a comprehensive, UK-wide analysis of spatial disparities, and committed to publish annual progress reports.

Our commitment to levelling up the whole UK is illustrated by significant investments through the Levelling Up Fund, Community Renewal Fund and UK Shared Prosperity Fund, and partnerships with the devolved governments to deliver Freeports in Scotland and Wales.

Social Rented Housing: Standards**Florence Eshalomi:**[\[900035\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps he is taking to help improve standards in the social rental sector.

Eddie Hughes:

This Government has set an ambitious mission to halve the number of non-decent homes and drive up standards in all rented sectors by 2030 - with the biggest improvements in the lowest-performing areas.

I was delighted that the Queen's Speech confirmed we will bring forward a Social Housing Regulation Bill.

The Bill will create a strong and proactive consumer regulation regime that will drive up standards in social housing and help tenants and the Regulator hold landlords to account.

■ Urban Areas: Housing

John Penrose:

[\[900027\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps his Department is taking to increase housing in urban areas using local authority-approved building codes that pre-approve buildings.

Stuart Andrew:

My Honourable Friend has been a strong advocate for delivering more housing in urban areas and protecting our precious green spaces.

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill includes new powers for “Street Votes”, allowing residents on a street to bring forward proposals to extend or redevelop their properties in line with their design preferences, and hold a vote on whether they should be given planning permission.

This measure will incentivise communities to consider the potential for development, particularly in the urban areas where new homes are most needed.

PRIME MINISTER

■ Energy Supply

Caroline Lucas:

[\[171\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, with reference to Question 149219 and to the Press Release dated 1 April 2022 on the PM roundtable with industry leaders from the wind sector: 31 March 2022, when details of that meeting will be published under the Collection of Cabinet Office: ministers' transparency publications; if he will publish details of all attendees and minutes of that meeting; and if he will make a statement.

Boris Johnson:

Ministerial meetings with external organisations will be published in the usual way on gov.uk as part of the government's transparency agenda. A summary of that meeting is available in the press release.

■ Government Departments: Coronavirus

Caroline Lucas:

[\[172\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, whether he has been provided with information from the Metropolitan Police on their estimated completion date for their investigation into alleged gatherings on Government premises during covid-19 restrictions; if he will publish the Sue Gray report in full without redactions other than any specific HR action against individuals; and if he will make a statement.

Michael Ellis:

I have been asked to reply. The investigations by the Metropolitan Police are rightly a matter for the police, not the Government. At the end of the process, the Prime

Minister will ask the Second Permanent Secretary to update her findings, which will be published in line with the terms of reference.

SCOTLAND

■ Lord Advocate

Kenny MacAskill: [\[488\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, whether he has received representations on the potential merits of varying the role of the Lord Advocate and the consequent necessary changes to the Scotland Act since the Scottish Parliamentary elections in 2021.

Mr Alister Jack:

I have not received any representations from the Scottish Government, Parliamentary or legal bodies, or other bodies on this matter since the Scottish Parliamentary elections in 2021. I note that the hon Gentleman has asked a number of Parliamentary questions on this matter.

TRANSPORT

■ Aviation: Accidents

Sarah Olney: [\[908\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many incidents have been reported of (a) material falling from planes and (b) landing on property under flight paths in (i) the Heathrow area and (ii) nationwide in each of the last 5 years.

Robert Courts:

The DfT does not maintain a log of such incidents, however the CAA may hold some information pertaining to this which is available upon direct request from them.

■ Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency: Staff

Gill Furniss: [\[386\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many full time equivalent staff were employed by DVLA as at the latest date for which data is available.

Trudy Harrison:

On 30 April 2022 the number of full time equivalent staff employed by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency was 5601.42.

■ Driving Tests

Anna McMorrin:

[\[410\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to reduce the backlog of practical driving tests; and whether he has plans to extend the validity of theory test certificates to over two years in response to that backlog.

Trudy Harrison:

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) operates a 24-week booking window for car tests and there are test slots available within this window.

The DVSA recognises the high demand for learners wanting to take their practical driving test following the suspension of routine driver training and testing during the pandemic. It is committed to increasing the availability of practical driving tests by recruiting more than 300 driving examiners, asking all those qualified to conduct tests, but who do not do so as part of their current day job, to return to conducting tests, conducting out of hours testing, and asking recently retired driving examiners to return.

The DVSA has resumed the number of driving tests per day to seven for each full-time examiner. This was reduced to six a day during the pandemic.

It is important road safety knowledge and hazard perception skills are up to date at the critical point a person drives unsupervised for the first time.

The maximum duration of two years between passing the theory test and a subsequent practical test is in place to ensure a candidate's road safety knowledge and ability to identify developing hazards is current. This validity period is set in legislation and the Government has no current plans to lay further legislation to extend it.

Ensuring new drivers have current relevant knowledge and skills is a vital part of the preparation of new drivers, who are disproportionality represented in casualty statistics. Learners will therefore need to pass another theory test if their certificate expires.

■ East Coast Main Line

Kenny MacAskill:

[\[486\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has with the Scottish Government on the East Coast Main Line following the publication of the Union Connectivity Review.

Kenny MacAskill:

[\[487\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with the Scottish Government on the upgrading of the A1 following publication of the Union Connectivity Review.

Trudy Harrison:

The Union Connectivity Review (UCR) was published on 26 November 2021. The UK Government is grateful to Sir Peter Hendy for his work and is considering his recommendations carefully, to identify the solutions that work best for the people of the UK.

Baroness Vere discussed the UCR recommendations with Graeme Dey MSP, the former Scottish Government Transport Minister, and discussions continue at official level. Baroness Vere has invited the Scottish Government Transport Minister, Jenny Gilruth MSP, to discuss the UCR recommendations.

■ Electric Scooters**Gill Furniss:**[\[384\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when the STATS19 data collection system will be amended so that e-scooters can be identified as a vehicle type.

Trudy Harrison:

The STATS19 data collection was recently reviewed, and as result of this it was recommended that a vehicle type category for 'powered personal transporter' be added to allow e-scooters to be more easily identified within STATS19.

The review recommendations are currently being implemented.

■ Electric Scooters: Accidents**Gill Furniss:**[\[385\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether the Reported road casualties Great Britain, provisional results: 2021, due to be released on 25 May 2022, will include e-scooters.

Trudy Harrison:

The statistics on Reported road casualties Great Britain, provisional results: 2021, due to be released on 25 May 2022, will include an update of the previously published statistics on e-scooters based on provisional data.

■ Ferries: Safety**Karl Turner:**[\[228\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when the Maritime and Coastguard Agency last discussed safety compliance in the ferry sector with the (a) Cypriot, (b) Bahamian and (c) Bermudan ship registers.

Robert Courts:

Officials from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) have been in regular contact with their counterparts in the Cypriot, Bahamian and Bermudan registers since 21 March in relation to P&O Ferries and safety compliance.

The Cyprus flag authorised Lloyds Register to act on their behalf and MCA Port State Control Inspectors have been continuously liaising with Lloyds Register during the MCA's Port State Control inspections on board the Cypriot-flagged vessels.

Maritime Inspectors from Bahamas and Bermuda have been on board their respective flagged vessels during the MCA's Port State Control inspections and liaising with the MCA during these inspections.

The MCA discussed any concerns related to safety and seafarers working and living conditions with the Cypriot, Bahamian and Bermudan representatives as part of the Port State Control inspection.

■ Govia Thameslink Railway

Theresa Villiers: [\[90\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he expects rail services on the GTR Great Northern line to return to the level they were at prior to the covid-19 outbreak.

Wendy Morton:

The Secretary of State has requested that Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) prioritise its services in the most efficient way, adapting to what passengers need for the future. All service offers will be kept under review and, where appropriate, adjusted to reflect fluctuations in demand. Where evidence supports the (re)introduction of services, the Department will work with GTR to consider what action is needed.

■ Highway Code

Dan Jarvis: [\[260\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to inform road users of changes made to The Highway Code.

Trudy Harrison:

The changes to The Highway Code to help improve road safety for people walking, cycling and horse riding are being communicated in two phases:

- A factual awareness raising campaign ran in February and March, alerting road users to the changes as they came into effect.
- A broader behaviour change campaign will launch later this year, to align with seasonal increases in active travel, to help embed the changes and encourage understanding and uptake of the new guidance.

Both phases of the campaign include a significant media spend, utilising channels such as radio, digital audio and social media advertising.

■ Kosovo: Driving Licences

Jim Shannon: [\[254\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if his Department will bring forward proposals to enable Kosovan citizens to use Kosovo drivers licences in the UK.

Trudy Harrison:

Holders of driving licences issued in Kosovo who become resident in or are visiting Great Britain can drive cars and motorcycles for up to one year from the date they arrive. To continue driving after this period Kosovan drivers must apply for a provisional driving licence and pass both a theory and practical driving test.

The UK does exchange driving licences with certain countries but Kosovo is not currently a designated country. The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) has received a request from the Embassy of Kosovo to consider a possible reciprocal driving licence exchange agreement and will provide the necessary information to progress this.

Driver licensing is devolved in Northern Ireland. The DVLA will keep the Department for Infrastructure informed of progress with the exchange agreement.

Large Goods Vehicles: Concrete**Gill Furniss:**[\[387\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the environmental impact of reducing the maximum operational weight of volumetric concrete mobile plants to 32 tonnes from 2028.

Trudy Harrison:

Following regulatory changes in 2017, a temporary regime was put in place to allow a limited number of volumetric concrete mixers (VCMs) to temporarily operate at higher than standard weights until 2028 at the latest. An impact assessment was undertaken at the time of the regulatory changes in 2017 .

Merchant Shipping: Discrimination**Karl Turner:**[\[227\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether it is his policy to prohibit all forms of discrimination against all seafarers working in the merchant shipping industry.

Robert Courts:

This government believes all seafarers should be treated fairly, regardless of nationality. While we can only act directly in respect of UK vessels and within UK waters, we continue to work through international forums to try to secure agreement on the fair treatment of all seafarers.

Motor Vehicles: Safety Measures**Gill Furniss:**[\[388\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when a decision will be made on whether to implement the European Union's General Safety Regulation (GSR) on new vehicles in the UK.

Trudy Harrison:

The UK's departure from the EU provides the platform to capitalise on regulatory freedoms and make decisions that are right for Great Britain and benefit road safety.

An assessment is being undertaken on the relevant technologies and a decision will be taken in due course as to whether to introduce any of those in Great Britain.

Gill Furniss:[\[903\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential impact the European Union's General Safety Regulation (GSR) would have on road fatalities were they to be implemented in the UK.

Trudy Harrison:

The UK's departure from the EU provides the platform to capitalise on regulatory freedoms and make decisions that are right for Great Britain (GB) and benefit road safety.

Not all parts of the EU's General Safety Regulation may be right for Britain. Further analysis of the potential benefits for GB will be needed before a decision on whether to mandate any of the technologies.

■ Network Rail: Social Media**Ian Mearns:**[\[198\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether Network Rail has engaged consultancy services to provide surveillance and data collection on the social media activities of Network Rail workplace union representatives and wider Network Rail workforce.

Wendy Morton:

Network Rail has not engaged consultancy services to provide surveillance or data collection on the social media activities of Network Rail workplace union representatives or wider Network Rail workforce.

■ P&O Ferries**Karl Turner:**[\[229\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many times (a) Ministers and (b) officials from his Department have met representatives from P&O Ferries Ltd since 17 March 2022.

Robert Courts:

Since P&O Ferries took the decision to make nearly 800 staff redundant, DfT Ministers have met with their representatives once, on the day of the announcement.

This was to make clear our anger with the disgraceful actions they had taken, and that we will do everything we can to protect workers' rights and to ensure vessels are safe for staff and passengers.

■ P&O Ferries: Fleet Management

Grahame Morris: [\[696\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will take steps to assess whether P&O Ferries' contract with International Fleet Management is compliant with section 8 of the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Recruitment and Placement) Regulations 2014.

Robert Courts:

The Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Recruitment and Placement) Regulations 2014 are only applicable to recruitment services operating out of UK.

The responsibility of verifying compliance with Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) for International Ferry Management lies with Malta, where the company is based.

During the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's Port State Control inspections of the P&O ferries, their inspectors were presented with a Certificate of Compliance issued by RINA on behalf of the Maltese administration that demonstrated compliance with the requirements of the MLC.

■ P&O Ferries: Inspections

Grahame Morris: [\[697\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will list the number of Port State Control inspections that the Maritime and Coastguard Agency has carried out on the P&O Ferries vessels (a) Pride of Canterbury, (b) Pride of Kent, (c) Pride of Hull, (d) Spirit of Britain, (e) Spirit of France, (f) Norbay, (g) European Causeway, (h) European Highlander from 1 January 2019 to date.

Robert Courts:

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) has conducted the following number of Port State Control inspections since 1 January 2019 on the P&O ferries: Pride of Canterbury – one; Pride of Kent – two; Pride of Hull – two; Spirit of Britain – two; Spirit of France – one; Norbay – none; European Causeway – eight; and European Highlander – five.

There have not been any Port State Control inspections on the Norbay as it is registered in Bermuda which is part of the Red Ensign Group which includes the UK; the UK is considered the Flag State.

The second inspection on the Pride of Kent included four visits by MCA inspectors between 28 March and 9 May 2022.

■ P&O Ferries: Redundancy

Karl Turner: [\[226\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will publish the dates of any discussions his Department has had with the (a) Cypriot, (b) Bahamian and (c) Bermudan ship registers on P&O Ferries Ltd.'s dismissal of UK seafarers on 17 March 2022.

Robert Courts:

Officials contacted the authorities in each state following notification of the redundancies by P&O Ferries. Initial responses were received from Cyprus on 23rd March, Bermuda on 24th March, and The Bahamas on 31st March.

Sir John Hayes:[\[36\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to support customers affected by (a) cancellations and (b) safety concerns in the context of dismissals of employees by P&O Ferries.

Robert Courts:

P&O Ferries customers are fully protected when a sailing is cancelled by regulation EU1177/2010 that has been adopted into UK law under the EU Exit Regulations of 2019. Refunds must be made within seven days. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) enforce these regulations within the UK. Other operators continue to sail across Channel routes, so passengers and goods are flowing.

The MCA surveyors continue to carry out port state control inspections on P&O Ferries vessels prior to them commencing passenger services. This is to ensure crew safety and training, and that all vessels' safety requirements are met.

■ Pedestrian Areas: Visual Impairment**Sarah Olney:**[\[911\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the conclusion of the inquest jury that a lack of tactile paving contributed to the death of Cleveland Gervais, what plans his Department has to increase the (a) provision of and (b) funding for tactile paving.

Wendy Morton:

In FY2021/22, Network Rail received an initial £10 million funding and have installed tactile paving at priority stations. Announcements on future rounds of funding and on the provision of tactile paving across GB stations will be made in due course.

■ Railways: Concessions**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[\[919\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the percentage of rail journeys eligible for discounts through the Great British Rail Sale.

Wendy Morton:

The number of discounted tickets sold currently stands at over 1.3 million. By saving passengers over £7million, this has helped many people reconnect with friends and family and is a step towards getting people back on the railways.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:[\[920\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the cost to his Department of the Great British Rail Sale.

Wendy Morton:

The Great British Rail Sale was run on a commercial basis by the rail industry and participating train operating companies, and backed by the Government. Discounted fares were offered where spare capacity on existing routes had been identified, to avoid overcrowding on busier routes.

■ Railways: Tickets**Ian Mearns:**[\[197\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether any changes to the Ticketing and Settlement Agreement Ticket Office Guidance (a) have been and (b) will be subject to a full public consultation.

Wendy Morton:

The Ticketing and Settlement Agreement (TSA) Ticket Office Guidance is not subject to a public consultation.

■ Seafarers (Insolvency, Collective Redundancies and Information and Consultation Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2018**Karl Turner:**[\[225\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has had recent discussions with Cabinet colleagues on the Seafarers (Insolvency, Collective Redundancies and Information and Consultation Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2018 following P&O Ferries Ltd.'s dismissal of UK seafarers on 17 March 2022.

Robert Courts:

The Insolvency Service have initiated both criminal and civil investigations into the circumstances surrounding the recent redundancies made by P&O Ferries. Until these investigations are concluded, the government will not be commenting further.

■ South Western Railway**Munira Wilson:**[\[974\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he expects South Western Railway to announce the timetable changes scheduled for December 2022.

Wendy Morton:

The Department has been working closely with South Western Railway (SWR) as it develops future timetable plans. The industry standard is to publish details of timetable changes 12 weeks before they come into effect and the Department expects the operator to keep its stakeholders updated.

■ Train Operating Companies: Fines

Jessica Morden: [\[134\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of current penalties issued to train operating companies in instances of short-forming on services.

Wendy Morton:

The operational performance regime, including the approach to short formations, seeks to improve the alignment of operator performance and outputs with government priorities. It focuses the performance-based element of the contract on aspects that include the operational performance of the railway, the passenger experience, financial performance and collaborative behaviours; it encourages operators to minimise cancellations and short-formations, and only resort to such practices when they are in passengers' and the industry's best interests.

■ Underground Railways: Noise

Kevin Brennan: [\[627\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has made an assessment of the level of noise exposure for passengers travelling on the London Underground.

Trudy Harrison:

The Department does not hold this information as transport in London is devolved and is the responsibility of the Mayor of London and Transport for London.

TREASURY

■ Apprentices: Taxation

Munira Wilson: [\[975\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the amount of money raised from the apprenticeship levy from apprenticeships within Multi-Academy Trusts as of 11 May 2022.

Mr Simon Clarke:

We do not hold the information requested.

■ Bank Services

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[207\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate his Department has made of the number of people in the UK who do not have an active bank account.

John Glen:

The Government does not make direct assessments of the number of bank accounts. The Financial Conduct Authority conducts a biennial Financial Lives Survey, which provides a comprehensive insight into the finances of the adult UK population. The

latest findings showed that in February 2020, 97.7% of UK adults had a current account or e-money account, with 1.2 million UK adults being 'unbanked'.

The Government is committed to improving access to financial services and recognises that access to a transactional bank account is key to enabling people to manage their money on a day-to-day basis effectively, securely and confidently. That's why the nine largest personal current account providers in the UK are legally required to offer basic bank accounts to customers who do not have a bank account or who are not eligible for a bank's standard current account. As of June 2021, there were 7.2 million basic bank accounts open in the UK. The Government continues to work with the banking sector and other key stakeholders to identify and address any potential barriers to accessing bank accounts.

Adam Afriyie: [\[678\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps the Government is taking to help ensure that open banking is able to benefit as many consumers as possible.

John Glen:

Open Banking is a great UK success story that has brought significant benefits to the 5.5 million UK consumers and businesses who now use products and services enabled by this technology.

The government recently set out its plan for the future of UK Open Banking in a joint statement with the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), and the Payment Systems Regulator (PSR), including a cross-authority committee for oversight of a new entity to succeed the Open Banking Implementation Entity. Through this Joint Authority Oversight Committee the government and regulators will work closely together to maintain the UK's leadership in Open Banking. The government is seeking to build on the initial success of UK Open Banking to help unlock and realise further benefits for consumers, businesses, and the wider economy. Open Banking should continue to support innovation and greater competition for consumers and businesses.

■ Bank Services: Charities

Stephen Morgan: [\[435\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential difficulties charities experience opening new bank accounts.

Stephen Morgan: [\[436\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment he has made of the impact of charges banks have applied to the accounts of charities.

John Glen:

Decisions concerning the provision and pricing of products, including account charges, are commercial decisions for banks. Therefore, while the Government recognises and values the important role of the charitable sector, it would be inappropriate for it to intervene in these decisions.

However, I do recognise the challenges some charitable organisations have been facing. That's why I hosted a roundtable event on 22 March, bringing together lenders and charity representatives to discuss this important issue. This allowed lenders to hear first-hand the problems many charities have experienced, as well as to set out the products they offer, and what charities need to consider in relation to banking requirements.

Following the meeting, UK Finance committed to working with banks and charity representatives to produce guidance aimed at helping charities access and understand banking requirements. In the meantime, charities may find it useful to explore the Business Current Account finder tool developed by UK Finance. This was designed to help businesses compare the full range of available accounts, including fees charged by providers, to find products that best suit their needs. It can be found online at: <https://www.betterbusinessfinance.co.uk/account-opening>

■ Beer: Excise Duties

Owen Thompson: [340]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the impact of the new small producer relief on small brewers that also produce spirits above 8.5% ABV.

Owen Thompson: [342]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the (a) number and (b) percentage of cider producers that qualify for the small cidermakers exemption.

Owen Thompson: [343]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the average Alcohol By Volume is of each product produced by (a) small brewers and (b) small cider producers.

Helen Whately:

The Government will introduce a new Small Producer Relief, building on the success of Small Brewers Relief, for cidermakers and other producers of lower alcohol by volume (ABV) drinks, to encourage innovation and remove barriers to growth for small producers.

Small brewers and cidermakers produce at a range of ABVs. The strength of the products of small producers will vary according to their individual business model.

Small cidermakers producing 70 hectolitres or less in a 12-month consecutive period are exempted from the requirement to register with HMRC for duty purposes. The Government therefore holds no records on the numbers of these businesses.

Under the proposals published at Budget, brewers that also produce spirits will be required to attribute spirits production to their total production amount.

We will be publishing the Government's response to the consultation on the alcohol duty review, including Small Producer's Relief, later in the year.

■ Business: Coronavirus**Justin Madders:**[\[814\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many prosecutions there have been for fraudulent covid-19 business support claims in the last two years.

John Glen:

At the Spring Budget 2021 the Government announced a £100m investment into a Taxpayer Protection Taskforce to significantly extend Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) work to tackle fraud and error in the COVID-19 support schemes that HMRC administered (Self Employment Income Support Scheme, Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and Eat Out to Help Out). HMRC designed these schemes to prevent fraud, both in the eligibility criteria and the claim process itself. HMRC also put in place a series of checks on claims before they were paid, so they blocked those that were highly indicative of criminal activity. The Government and HMRC always knew they could be attractive to fraudsters and are taking tough action to tackle fraudulent behaviour. Anyone who keeps grant money despite knowing they were not entitled to it, faces having to repay up to double the amount they received, plus interest and potentially criminal prosecution. To date there have been no prosecutions on the HMRC administered COVID-19 support schemes. However, HMRC has 21 active criminal investigations and the final decision on whether to prosecute in these cases will be made by independent prosecution partners.

■ Business: Red Diesel**Grahame Morris:**[\[184\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the number of businesses financially impacted by the tax reforms to red diesel that took effect on 1 April 2022.

Helen Whately:

At Budget 2020, the Chancellor announced that he would remove the entitlement to use red diesel from most sectors from April 2022. These tax changes mean that most businesses in the UK which used red diesel prior to April 2022 no longer get a significant tax break compared with ordinary motorists; they instead now need to use diesel fuel taxed at the standard rate for diesel, which more fairly reflects the harmful impact of the emissions produced. These reforms are also designed to ensure that the tax system incentivises users of polluting fuels like diesel to improve the energy efficiency of their vehicles and machinery, invest in cleaner alternatives or use less fuel.

The Government recognised that this would be a significant change for some businesses and ran a consultation to gather information from affected users on the expected impact of these tax changes and make sure it had not overlooked any exceptional reasons why affected sectors should be allowed to continue to use red diesel beyond April 2022. During the consultation period, the Government engaged directly with a wide variety of organisations from all parts of the UK.

Following the consultation, the Chancellor announced at Spring Budget 2021 that the Government will grant further entitlements to use red diesel after April 2022 for a limited number of users. However, the Government did not believe that the case made by sectors that have not retained their red diesel entitlement outweighed the need to ensure fairness between the different users of diesel fuels and the Government's environmental objectives.

Further details on the impact of the reforms has been published as part of the Tax Impact and Information Note: www.gov.uk/government/publications/changes-to-rebated-diesel-and-biofuels-from-1-april-2022

■ Cryptocurrencies

Dr Matthew Offord:

[701]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what progress he has made towards making the UK an attractive place for cryptocurrency companies to operate.

John Glen:

The government set out at Fintech Week our firm ambition to make Britain a global hub for cryptoasset technology and investment. We want to ensure firms can invest, innovate and scale up in this country. And we have announced a number of reforms which will see the regulation and aspects of tax treatment of cryptoassets evolve – our clear message to cryptoasset firms is that the UK is open for business.

These include committing to consult on a future regulatory regime later this year; legislating to bring stablecoins into payments regulation; setting up a ministerial-chaired Cryptoasset Engagement Group, bringing together key figures in industry; working with the Royal Mint to create a Non-Fungible Token; and exploring ways of enhancing the competitiveness of the UK tax system to encourage further development of the cryptoasset market in the UK.

These commitments are in line with our objectives to create a regulatory environment in which firms can innovate, while crucially ensuring financial stability and high regulatory standards so that people can use new technologies both reliably and safely.

■ Debts: Coventry

Colleen Fletcher:

[269]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent estimate his Department has made of trends in the level of household debt in (a) Coventry North East constituency and (b) Coventry in each of the last two years.

Colleen Fletcher:

[273]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment he has made of trends in the regional spread of household debt in each of the last three years.

John Glen:

The Government is committed to monitoring and understanding households' personal finances in order to inform policy making to help people manage their money well, encourage them to save and access appropriate guidance and support if they need help to get their finances back on track. To do so, the Government monitors personal debt levels by working closely with the [Money and Pensions Service](#) (MaPS), the Financial Conduct Authority ([FCA](#)) and by engaging regularly with many other stakeholders on their research and findings.

The FCA conducts a biennial Financial Lives Survey which provides a comprehensive insight into the finances of the UK population. MaPS monitors financial difficulty through an annual survey of 22,000 people. The results of MaPS' latest Debt Need Survey were published on 23 February 2022. This includes a regional breakdown of how the need for debt advice changed since 2019 across the UK. The summary of their findings can be found in the link below

[Who needs debt advice in 2022? | The Money and Pensions Service \(maps.org.uk\)](#)

MaPS also intends to publish constituency-level results later this year.

■ Debts: Developing Countries**Preet Kaur Gill:****[402]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much his Department has spent on the OECD debt transparency initiative to date; how many banks have disclosed information through that initiative; and what steps he plans to take to ensure that banks disclose the existence and details of loans to lower income country governments.

John Glen:

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office provided a £460,594 grant for the pilot phase of the OECD's debt transparency initiative (DTI), as reported on the [UK's Development Tracker website](#).

As an OECD-led initiative, it is not appropriate for the UK to disclose details of how many banks have submitted details of their lending. However, the UK remains fully supportive of the initiative and chairs the Advisory Board on the DTI to help progress its objectives. We also work through the G7 and G20 to build support for the DTI, as referenced in the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors communique in February 2022, which encouraged private sector lenders to submit data to this initiative.

■ Economic Growth: Hendon**Dr Matthew Offord:****[200]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to support economic growth in Hendon constituency.

John Glen:

The Government published its Levelling Up White Paper in February. It sets out our missions as part of a decade long plan to see the potential of every corner of the United Kingdom fulfilled.

In London, Transport for London will receive £1bn annually to invest in the capital's transport network through Business Rates Retention. London will also benefit from its share of national programmes, including the recently announced Strategic Partnerships, forming part of the Affordable Homes Programme, which will build over 29,000 affordable homes in London with £3.4bn funding.

Over 80,000 retail, hospitality and leisure properties in London could be among the c.400,000 eligible for almost £1.7bn of business rates relief in England this year, supporting the businesses that make our high streets successful to evolve and adapt to changing consumer demands, until the next revaluation.

The Government is also Levelling Up London's digital infrastructure. The £5bn national programme, Project Gigabit, will support the rollout of gigabit capable broadband to ensure no area will be left behind. This includes places in Greater London, which is currently in scope of the programme.

■ Energy: Housing**Siobhan Baillie:****[1006]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether people who purchase energy saving products not through an installer will be covered by the VAT reduction.

Lucy Frazer:

At Spring Statement 2022, the Chancellor announced the expansion of the VAT relief for the installation of energy saving materials (ESMs) in Great Britain from 1 April 2022.

This relief will continue to apply to the installation of ESMs, rather than the direct purchase of the materials themselves. However, complex eligibility conditions, introduced in 2019 following an EU Court of Justice ruling, have been removed.

Further to this, wind and water turbines have been reinstated as materials which qualify for the relief, and all qualifying installations will also benefit from a VAT zero-rate until April 2027. Overall, this represents an additional £280 million of support for investment in ESMs over the next 5 years, building on the £9.7 billion that the Government has committed to invest since March 2021 to increase the energy efficiency and decarbonisation of our homes and buildings.

Targeting the VAT relief on professional installations ensures that the Government supports best practice in the choice and installation of ESMs. Going further would impose additional pressure on the public finances, to which VAT makes a significant contribution. VAT raised around £130 billion in 2019-20 and helps to fund key spending priorities. As you will know, any reduction in tax paid is a reduction in the money available to support important public services, including the NHS and policing.

Given this, although the Government keeps all taxes under review, there are no plans to further extend the VAT relief to direct purchases of ESMs.

■ Financial Services: Competition

Dr Matthew Offord: [703]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to support the financial sector to increase its competitiveness.

John Glen:

In his Mansion House statement last July, the Chancellor set out the Government's vision an open, competitive, green, and technologically advanced financial services.

A sweeping set of reforms to sharpen the UK's competitive advantage in financial services is already underway. As set out in the Queen's Speech, the upcoming Financial Services and Markets Bill will deliver on these commitments by implementing the outcomes of the Future Regulatory Framework (FRF) Review as well as a series of important initiatives underpinning the Government's ambitious vision for the financial services sector.

■ Insurance: Investment

Dr Matthew Offord: [203]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the impact of reforms to insurance sector regulation on the creation of investment opportunities for UK businesses.

John Glen:

The Treasury has published a consultation on the prudential regulatory regime for insurers known as Solvency II. That consultation, which closes on 21 July 2022, includes questions seeking evidence of the impact the reforms would have on investment decisions. The Government will set out its assessment of this evidence when it publishes a response to the consultation in due course.

The Solvency II consultation document can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/solvency-ii-review-consultation>

■ Money Lenders

Sir Iain Duncan Smith: [R] [574]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the report by the Centre for Social Justice entitled Swimming with Sharks, what steps his Department is taking to address the risk of illegal money lending.

Sir Iain Duncan Smith: [575]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment the Government has made of the scale of illegal money lending in England.

John Glen:

HM Treasury regularly monitors developments in the consumer credit market, including those regarding illegal money lending, as part of its normal process of policy development.

However, it does not conduct research regarding the scale of illegal money lending in England. Instead, HMT draws on the research of various stakeholders, including the England Illegal Money Lending (IMLT) team, consumer groups and thinktanks, to inform policy development.

HM Treasury recognises the risks posed by illegal lenders and the harmful impacts they cause to their victims and communities.

That is why, in financial year 2022/23, the Government will provide over £6.7 million of funding to IMLTs across the UK, an increase of over 5% compared to 2021/22. This funding enables IMLTs to investigate and prosecute loan sharks and use their legal powers to tackle the wider criminality they inflict on communities, such as violence and blackmail.

■ Motor Vehicles: Excise Duties**Emily Thornberry:**[\[117\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Answer of 25 April 2022 to Question 153825 on Motor Vehicles: Excise Duties, what the estimated nominal revenue yield is in 2022-23 from raising Vehicle Excise Duty rates for cars, vans and motorcycles in line with inflation from 1 April 2022.

Helen Whately:

The Chancellor confirmed at Autumn Budget 2021 that, in 2022-23, Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) rates for cars, vans and motorcycles would increase in line with RPI only.

Since 2010, VED rates have increased in line with inflation, meaning that VED liabilities have not increased in real terms.

Raising VED in line with inflation helps to maintain the sustainability of the public finances over the longer term.

The Treasury does not publish disaggregated figures on the impact of increasing VED rates in line with inflation.

■ Motor Vehicles: Insurance**Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[704\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to help reduce insurance premiums for motorists.

John Glen:

Insurers use their claims experience and other industry-wide statistics to assess the risks posed by an individual and set the terms and price at which they will offer

insurance cover. The Government does not generally intervene in these commercial decisions by insurers.

However, the Government has made reforms to the whiplash claims process which came into force on 31 May 2021. This has reduced the financial burden on consumers. Further, motorists will be spared a possible £50 annual insurance hike, as the government continues to assist with cost-of-living pressures and uses post-Brexit freedoms to scrap the EU's Vnuk motor insurance law.

The FCA rules also now require insurers for motor insurance to offer renewing customers a price that is no higher than they would pay as a new customer.

In the first quarter of 2022, the average cost to motorists for their insurance fell to the lowest level in over six years, according to the Association of British Insurers latest Motor Insurance Premium Tracker.

We continue to monitor this closely.

■ Revenue and Customs: ICT

Clive Lewis:

[\[889\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether HMRC is aware of any data lost in the most recent program upgrade of the Digital Tax Program.

Lucy Frazer:

HMRC is not currently aware of any data loss that has occurred within, or as a result of, any of HMRC's programmes to digitalise tax.

HMRC take security matters very seriously and maintain strict protocols in terms of cyber-security and the security, storage, management, and processing of customer data.

■ Safe Hands Plans: Insolvency

Dan Jarvis:

[\[262\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what financial support his Department is providing to people who paid money to the Safe Hands Funeral Plan.

John Glen:

In January 2021, the government legislated to bring all pre-paid funeral plan providers and intermediaries within the regulatory remit of the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). This means that by 29 July 2022 all funeral plan providers must be authorised by the FCA.

Safe Hands Plans has recently gone into administration. The government understands that this development will be concerning for customers of Safe Hands and continues to monitor the implementation of regulation in this sector closely.

I was very pleased to see Dignity's recent commitment to provide ongoing support to Safe Hands' customers for the next six months. This will ensure that any planholders who die during this time will receive a funeral without any additional charge.

It is unfortunate but unavoidable that bringing a previously unregulated sector into regulation – whatever form that may take – creates a possibility that some providers are not able to meet the threshold for authorisation. However, a well-regulated market should promote effective competition and drive better outcomes for consumers in the long-term.

Where a provider is unable to obtain FCA authorisation because of underlying issues, it is important to understand that this is not an issue created by bringing the sector into regulation. Rather, bringing the sector into regulation exposes these unsustainable business models and prevents these problems from getting worse.

■ Treasury: Aviation

Emily Thornberry:

[\[115\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to his Department's publication on 14 February 2022 of data for expenditure over £25,000 in December 2021, for what overseas air travel was an amount of £28,884.08 paid by his office to Corporate Travel Management North on 6 December 2021; and in which quarterly declaration of ministerial travel were details of that visit published.

Helen Whately:

The £28,884.08 was the cost for travel for the Chancellor's official delegation for the trip to San Francisco on 14th December 2021. Only the travel cost for the Chancellor is reflected in transparency returns, as the delegation took a scheduled flight.

■ Treasury: Hotels

Emily Thornberry:

[\[132\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much his Department spent on the provision of hotel accommodation for ministers, advisers and officials staying away from home overnight (a) within the United Kingdom and (b) overseas in (i) 2018-19, (ii) 2019-20, (iii) 2020-21, and (iv) 2021-22.

Helen Whately:

Treasury Ministers and Senior Officials travel and costs are published regularly at the following links

[HMT ministers' meetings, hospitality, gifts and overseas travel - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/hmt-ministers-meetings-hospitality-gifts-and-overseas-travel)

[HMT senior officials' business expenses, hospitality and meetings with external organisations - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/hmt-senior-officials-business-expenses-hospitality-and-meetings-with-external-organisations)

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

■ Discrimination

John Howell:

[\[154\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the debate entitled Tackling discrimination based on social origin, which took place at the Council of Europe on 26 April 2022.

Kemi Badenoch:

This debate underlines this Government's belief that the circumstances of one's birth should not determine life outcomes. We are taking a new approach to equality, which goes beyond the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010 to address socio-economic and geographic disparities too. As part of this new approach, we are delivering the Equality Data Programme, which examines the different barriers that hold people back and will encourage evidence-based action to tackle them.

Through our levelling up agenda, we will create a society where everyone, wherever they live and regardless of background, has the opportunity to succeed. The Government published its landmark Levelling Up White Paper in February, which sets out ambitious plans to address regional disparities across the UK, put more money in the pockets of those who need it most, and transform the UK economy by generating higher paid jobs and new investment.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Access to Work Programme

Kirsten Oswald:

[\[297\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Answer of 31 March 2022 to Question 148243, what interim support is available to applicants when the processing of a renewal of Access to Work payments is significantly delayed.

Chloe Smith:

DWP regularly reviews business processes within the AtW scheme. As part of this, we are now treating applications that are classified as renewal applications for on-going support as a priority group. For all renewal applications, cases will be prioritised and contact will be made as soon as possible.

■ Department For Work and Pensions: Seaham

Grahame Morris:

[\[179\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will publish her Department's (a) equality impact assessment and (b) socio-economic impact assessment of the closure of the Department for Work and Pensions office in Seaham.

Mims Davies:

An overarching Equality Assessment has been completed which considers the impact on colleagues. This has been made available in the House Library. Individual site Assessments have also been prepared. The planning of an office closure includes consideration of factors including the 'Index of Multiple Deprivation' for each location, which considers many factors, including:

- Income Deprivation
- Employment Deprivation
- Education, Skills and Training Deprivation
- Health Deprivation and Disability
- Crime
- Barriers to Housing and Services
- Living Environment Deprivation

Grahame Morris:[\[181\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether additional travel support will be provided to civil servants at the Department for Work and Pensions office in Seaham who have been identified for consolidation.

Mims Davies:

Should the move mean additional travel costs, colleagues may qualify for an Excess Fares payment to cover those costs. These costs will be paid for up to three years.

Grahame Morris:[\[182\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the profile is of the civil servants affected by the closure of the Department for Work and Pensions office in Seaham by (a) age, (b) race, (c) gender and (d) disability.

Mims Davies:

The following depicts the profile of colleagues based at Seaham Lighthouse View

Age – 3.4% aged 16-24, 14% aged 25-34, 19.4% aged 35-44, 28.2% aged 45-54, 31.6% aged 55-64, 3.4% aged 65+.

Race – 1.1% of colleagues are of an ethnic minority

Gender – 26.5% male, 73.5% female

Disability – 14.2% of colleagues have declared a disability

Local Housing Allowance**Navendu Mishra:**[\[996\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much and what proportion of local housing allowance was paid to private landlords in (a) England, (b) Greater Manchester and (c) Stockport in each of the last three years.

David Rutley:

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

■ **Medical Certificates****Bell Ribeiro-Addy:****[463]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of amending legislation to allow (a) midwives, (b) allied health professionals, (c) nurse practitioners and (d) other health care professionals to complete fit notes for patients.

Chloe Smith:

In July 2021, the government set out plans to deliver transformation of the fit note including removing the requirement to sign in ink (from April 2022) and committing to amending regulations to allow a wider range of eligible professionals to sign fit notes (planned for Summer 2022).

In order to assess which healthcare professions are in scope to complete fit notes we have engaged, and will continue to engage, with DHSC and clinical experts.

Additionally, as part of the planned policy changes, we will subsequently undertake relevant monitoring.

■ **Poverty: Children****Rachael Maskell:****[865]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent estimate she has made of the number of children living in (a) relative poverty and (b) absolute poverty (i) nationally and (ii) in York.

David Rutley:

National statistics on the number and percentage of children in low income are published annually in the "Households Below Average Income" publication, and can be found at: [Households below average income: for financial years ending 1995 to 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/households-below-average-income-for-financial-years-ending-1995-to-2021)

In the UK in 2020/21, there were 2.3m children living in absolute poverty, before housing costs (BHC). There were 2.8m children living in relative poverty BHC.

Latest statistics for the levels of children who are in low income in York are published in "Children in Low Income Families", and can be found at: [Children in low income families: local area statistics 2014 to 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics-2014-to-2021)

In York in 2020/21, there were 3,000 children living in absolute poverty BHC. There were 4,000 children living in relative poverty BHC.

Due to methodological differences, the figures in these two publications are not comparable

■ Universal Credit

Rachael Maskell:

[\[867\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent estimate she has made of the average change in income per person that transfers from legacy benefits to university credit.

David Rutley:

Around 1.4 million people currently on older 'legacy' benefits would see their entitlement increase by an average of £220 a month on moving to Universal Credit and another 300,000 see no change. For the minority of eligible claimants who have a higher entitlement on legacy benefits than on Universal Credit, transitional protection will top up their Universal Credit when they move over.

■ Way to Work Scheme

Katherine Fletcher:

[\[1002\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate her Department has made of the number of people who have started a new job as a result of the Way to Work campaign.

Mims Davies:

As of the end of April, we estimate that at least 283,300 unemployed Universal Credit claimants have moved into work during the Way to Work Campaign between 31 January and the end of April 2022. Furthermore, during March 2022 we have seen the highest number of into work movements on record for any March – over 99,800.

This total figure is composed of our into work measure to the end of March (over 192,600) and our internal management information for April (90,700). Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.

The management information presented here has not been subjected to the usual standard of quality assurance associated with official statistics but is provided in the interests of transparency and timeliness

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

EDUCATION

■ Condition Improvement Fund Update

The Minister of State for School Standards (Mr Robin Walker): [\[HCWS28\]](#)

My Noble Friend the Parliamentary Undersecretary of State for the School System (Baroness Barran) has made the following statement.

Today, I am announcing the allocation of £498 million for 1,405 Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) projects across 1,129 academies, sixth-form colleges and voluntary aided schools to maintain and improve the condition of the education estate.

This funding is provided to enable schools to provide well maintained facilities and give students safe environments that support a high-quality education. Since March 2015 CIF has delivered 9,148 projects and continues to deliver 1,905 projects across the school estate with essential maintenance projects.

Details of this announcement have been sent to all CIF applicants and a list of successful projects has been published on GOV.UK. I will also place copies in the House Library.

■ Education Update

The Minister of State for School Standards (Mr Robin Walker): [\[HCWS27\]](#)

Today, the Department for Education (DfE) informed applicants of the outcomes of the first accreditation round of the Initial Teacher Training (ITT) reform programme. 80 applicants have been awarded accreditation so far, and a second round will open for applications on 23 May and close on 27 June. We will announce the successful applicants of both rounds when the process is complete in the autumn.

In December 2021, the government announced [a set of reforms to ITT that leads to qualified teacher status](#). The reforms, which centre around a new set of 'Quality Requirements', aim to ensure greater quality, consistency and coherence in ITT, building on earlier reforms to teacher development.

To deliver ITT from September 2024, both existing and prospective providers of ITT must pass a new accreditation process. This process has been designed to assess applicants' capability and capacity to deliver the highest quality ITT in line with the new Quality Requirements, which will become part of the ITT criteria from the 2024/25 academic year.

From the autumn, accredited providers will proceed to the quality assurance stage. In this stage, providers will work with the DfE to ensure that all ITT courses are fully developed in line with the new 2024/25 ITT criteria. The DfE will also work with accredited providers ahead of 2024 delivery to ensure that they have strong partnerships in place to provide sufficient training places in the subjects, phases and geographies that they are needed. Further details will be published in due course.

The accreditation process was designed to be rigorous but proportionate, and I am confident that the evaluation of applications for accreditation has been thorough, undertaken jointly by trained DfE and Ofsted assessors.

Applicants who were not awarded accreditation in round one have been given feedback on their application to help them understand the areas they need to address, should they wish to re-apply in round two. Both existing and prospective providers who did not apply in round one are being encouraged to do so in round two.

If an applicant decides not to re-apply, we are encouraging them to consider partnering with newly accredited providers to build strong families of providers ready for 2024 delivery and ensure a high quality and sufficient ITT market.

I am confident that these reforms will help create a truly world-class teacher development system that makes England the best place in the world to become a great teacher.

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

■ International Development Strategy

Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs (Elizabeth Truss): [\[HCWS25\]](#)

Today we have laid out our vision for the future of UK international development. Development will be at the heart of the UK's foreign policy, which uses all the levers available – including development, diplomacy, investment, trade, defence and intelligence – to deliver on our foreign policy objectives.

[The strategy](#) will help address increasing global challenges, delivering investment, supporting women and girls, getting humanitarian assistance to those who need it most, and continuing our work on climate change, nature and global health.

The strategy, which builds on a proud record of global leadership on development, will challenge dependency on malign actors, offering choice and bringing more countries into the orbit of free-market economies.

We will use British International Investment and other tools to provide honest and reliable finance to help low- and middle-income countries take control of their futures, giving them an alternative so they are not burdened with unsustainable debt with strings attached. This approach will help deliver the Clean Green Initiative, supporting countries to grow their economies sustainably.

The strategy will rebalance the aid budget towards bilateral programmes. This will give the Government greater control over how money is spent, allowing a focus on priorities and improving lives around the world.

The International Development Strategy sets out four priorities where the UK can meet the needs of partner countries around the world:

- o **Delivering honest, reliable investment** through British Investment Partnerships, building on the UK's financial expertise and the strengths of the City of London, and

delivering the Prime Minister's vision for the Clean Green Initiative – supporting countries to grow their economies sustainably.

o **Providing women and girls with the freedom they need to succeed.** We intend to restore the bilateral budget to help unlock their potential, educate girls, support their empowerment and protect them against violence.

o **Stepping-up our life-saving humanitarian work** to prevent the worst forms of human suffering around the world. We will prioritise humanitarian funding levels at around £3bn over the next three years, to remain a leader in crisis response.

o **Taking forward our work on climate change, nature and global health.** We are putting the commitments of our Presidency of G7 and COP26, and our COVID-19 response, at the core of our international development offer.

Our new approach will:

o Spend more on country and bilateral programmes rather than through multilateral organisations, empowering the UK to deliver more aid directly to where it is needed. By 2025, the FCDO intends to spend around three-quarters of its aid budget allocated at the 2021 Spending Review bilaterally.

o Use world-class British expertise to support partner countries by providing advice, exchanging lessons and evidence of what works, and building partnerships across government, research, business and civil society.

o Cut back red tape and excessive bureaucracy around delivering aid and give Ambassadors and High Commissioners greater authority to get programmes delivering on the ground quickly.

o Sustain our commitment to Africa and ensure our development programmes in the Indo Pacific remain a critical part of our ambition to increase our focus on the region.

This strategy sets the direction for all of the UK's development work. The FCDO will oversee cross-government efforts to deliver the strategy and draw upon the expertise of the private sector, civil society and academia to advise and challenge us on implementation.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ Health Update

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Vaccines and Public Health) (Maggie Throup): [\[HCWS29\]](#)

The Government is delaying the implementation of the volume price promotion restrictions and the introduction of further advertising restrictions on TV and online for high fat, sugar or salt (HFSS) products by 12 months.

We are clear that the delay to volume price promotions does not impact the locations measures which will still come into force on 1 October 2022. Under these measures, less healthy products in scope will no longer be promoted in key locations, such as checkouts,

store entrances, aisle ends and their online equivalents. We expect these location restrictions to be the single most impactful obesity policy at reducing children's calorie consumption and are expected to accrue health benefits of over £57 billion and provide NHS savings of over £4 billion, over the next 25 years.

The delay to restrictions on multibuy deals will allow the Government to review and monitor the impact of the restrictions on the cost of living in light of an unprecedented global economic situation.

A delay to the advertising restrictions is necessary because a delay in the Health and Care Act 2022 receiving Royal Assent has had a consequential impact on the timetable for the regulators' subsequent consultations and publication of final guidance, meaning it was unlikely this would be ready with sufficient time before implementation.

We have also considered the ongoing concerns from industry about having time to fully implement the final guidance, by restructuring their funding and revenue streams appropriately, and ensuring robust compliance from implementation. We therefore believe this is the best approach to balance tackling childhood obesity in a timely way, managing the unprecedented economic situation and ensuring the smooth and effective implementation of these restrictions. The advertising regulations will now come into force on 1 January 2024.

We included a power in the Health and Care Act to delay implementation of the advertising restrictions if necessary. We will be utilising this power to amend the date of implementation for the advertising restrictions by secondary legislation. The implementation of the volume price restrictions will also be amended by secondary legislation.

This Government remains committed to halving childhood obesity by 2030 and these measures and others, including last month's new measures on calorie labelling in large restaurants, cafes and takeaways, will play their part in delivering against this ambition.

TREASURY

■ Update on carbon leakage mitigations

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Lucy Frazer):

[\[HCWS26\]](#)

The Government is taking ambitious domestic action to tackle climate change and recently opened a consultation on developing the UK Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS), so the UK can become the world's first net zero carbon cap and trade market^[1]. While domestic action is critical, climate change is a global issue. When the UK took on the COP26 Presidency, only 30% of the world was covered by net zero targets – now over 90% of the global economy is committed to net zero. In 2021, the UK placed climate change and nature at the top of the international agenda during its G7 and COP26 presidencies, presiding over the agreement of the Glasgow Climate Pact, to speed up the pace of climate action.

The Government also wants to see other countries do more to drive down their own emissions and we continue to work on the global stage to support more ambitious international action. Recent global events and the resulting increase in energy prices reinforce the importance of transitioning to clean energy to ensure energy security and reduce our dependency on imported fossil fuels.

In parallel, Government is considering domestic action to continue to ensure the integrity of UK action to reduce its carbon emissions against carbon leakage, as our existing carbon leakage protection measures, including free allowances under the UK ETS, evolve to achieve our net zero objectives. This will also ensure that UK businesses are not disadvantaged. Carbon leakage is the displacement of production, and associated emissions, from one jurisdiction to another, due to different levels of carbon pricing and climate regulation across those jurisdictions.

The best way to prevent carbon leakage would be for all countries to move together in pricing, regulating, and therefore reducing carbon emissions. We are strongly committed to working with our international partners to develop a common global approach to carbon leakage. Multilateral solutions can take time to develop, however, and while we will continue to work on international solutions with partners, options for domestic action must be considered in parallel.

The Government is therefore exploring a range of policies that could potentially mitigate future carbon leakage risk. These include policies to grow the market for low emissions industrial products, on which the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy recently undertook a Call for Evidence. Today, we are announcing that it is our intention to consult later in the year on a range of carbon leakage mitigation options, including on whether measures such as product standards and a carbon border adjustment mechanism (CBAM) could be appropriate tools in the UK's policy mix. A CBAM applies a carbon price to specified imports, in order to mitigate differences in carbon pricing between jurisdictions, and therefore reduce the risk of carbon leakage.

The Government is clear that any policy or policies would need to carefully balance a range of priorities for the UK, both domestically and internationally, including compliance with WTO rules and our staunch commitment to free and open trade, alongside taking into account the needs of developing countries. As we determine our approach to carbon leakage, we will continue our ongoing engagement with our domestic and international partners.

[1] : [Developing the UK Emissions Trading Scheme \(UK ETS\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/developing-the-uk-emissions-trading-scheme-uk-ets)