



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 18 May 2022 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:33 P.M., 18 May 2022). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

ATTORNEY GENERAL

■ Police: Codes of Practice

Dr Luke Evans:

[\[1358\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what steps she is taking to help support police officers in (a) Leicestershire and (b) nationally with the delivery of the additional obligations for disclosure at the pre-charge stage under the 6th edition of the Director's Guidance on Charging.

Alex Chalk:

The current version of the Director's Guidance on Charging (DG6) is the sixth version and reflects significant changes in the way that cases are investigated, charged, and prosecuted since the last edition was published in 2013. Those changes include those revisions made by Attorney General's Guidelines on Disclosure 2020, and the revised Codes of Practice 2020 issued under the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996 (CPIA).

The first annual review of the operation of the disclosure guidelines has just been completed and will be published imminently. That review involved close collaboration with policing, the CPS and others in the criminal justice system and has led to some important amendments to the guidelines which should aid front line policing, particularly in relation to the development of an annex on redaction. The new approach of the Guidelines gives clear guidance on only providing relevant information to the CPS, for example by cutting footage from BWV or only including relevant message chains not an entire phone image. In this way there is less to redact, thereby helping the burden felt by front line policing. Further, the new, dedicated, annex on redaction sets out in detail and with examples how to apply the relevance, necessity and proportionality requirements. It also gives investigators direction on how to consider where redaction would be disproportionate due to time, resourcing and by taking counter measures such as enhanced security on document they provide to the CPS.

The section on accessing Third Party Material (TPM) has also been amended to include requirements that clear, pre-existing and recorded reasons must be present for any TPM request. Not only must requests be necessary and proportionate, but the Guidelines breakdown the relevant considerations for weighing necessity and proportionality to direct investigators and prosecutors to consider each issue in detail. For example: officers are directed to ringfence information to preserve it but not access it until necessary, and to examine alternative methods for accessing the same information without intruding into complainant or witness privacy wherever possible. There is also now a clear requirement to give ongoing, comprehensible and detailed information to those people whose information is accessed during investigations,

which will help alleviate victims' concerns about disproportionate and excessive requests.

The requirements in DG6 will be updated to reflect the upcoming changes made to the Attorney General's guidelines and the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), the College of Policing and the CPS are working together through a National Disclosure Improvement Plan (NDIP) Working Group to implement the Attorney General's Guidelines on Disclosure. That group includes a representative from Leicestershire police. The NDIP group is accountable to the Joint Operational Improvement Board (JOIB), a national Board chaired by senior leaders from the CPS, National Police Chiefs' Council and College of Policing, created to drive up standards in the criminal justice system and improve joint working in areas including disclosure. The Board's work is mirrored locally by Joint Operational Improvement Meetings at police force and local CPS Area level.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Boiler Upgrade Scheme

Dr Alan Whitehead:

[24]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of the inclusion of hybrid heat pumps coupled with renewable heating technologies, such as bioLPG, in the Boiler Upgrade Scheme.

Greg Hands:

Hybrid heating systems will not be supported through the Boiler Upgrade Scheme. The Government acknowledges that in off gas grid areas, a future transition from heating oil and LPG to biofuels may allow the boiler element of a hybrid system to decarbonise and the Government recognises the work taking place within the oil and LPG industries to that end. However, the Government does not yet have sufficient evidence to take decisions on the potential role of biofuels in this context.

■ Buildings: Health

Paul Girvan:

[411]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how his Department defines health and wellbeing within the context of the Government's Heat and Buildings Strategy.

Paul Girvan:

[412]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department is co-ordinating discussions with (a) Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, (b) Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, and (c) Department for Health and Social Care on a definition of health and wellbeing as it applies to the Government's Heat and Buildings Strategy.

Paul Girvan: [\[413\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department has provided guidance to health and wellbeing boards on how health and wellbeing is to be applied within the context of the government heat and buildings strategy.

Greg Hands:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Strangford on 16th March 2022 to Question [136558](#) and to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Minister of State for Health to my hon. Friend the Member for Dudley North on 28th March 2022 to Question [128459](#).

■ Coal Authority: Climate Change

Caroline Lucas: [\[165\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Answer of 6 April 2022 to Question 149218 on Coal Authority: Climate Change, whether it is his policy that the climate emergency is an exceptional circumstance when considering the powers of the direction.

Greg Hands:

Any proposals for new coal extraction projects would be assessed in accordance with the Coal Authority's duties under the Coal Industry Act 1994 - which do not involve a formal role for BEIS Ministers. Powers of direction can be used where the Secretary of State considers that the Coal Authority has erred in the carrying out of its duties.

■ Coal Fired Power Stations

Caroline Lucas: [\[166\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the impact on (a) national and (b) global CO2 emissions of delaying the closure of coal plants operated by EDF, Drax and Uniper; and if he will make a statement.

Caroline Lucas: [\[167\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the potential average change to consumers' energy bills as a result of the Government's request that EDF, Drax and Uniper maintain coal plants beyond their planned closure dates; and if he will make a statement.

Greg Hands:

In light of Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine, it is right that the Government explore a wide range of options to further bolster energy security and domestic supply. The Government is exploring slightly extending the life of remaining coal-fired power stations to provide additional back up electricity this coming winter if needed. It remains the Government commitment to end the use of coal power by October 2024. If the stations were to remain open over the winter, the Government would expect the

impact on national and global CO2 emissions and consumers' energy bills to be minimal.

■ **Competition Appeal Tribunal: Standards**

Liz Saville Roberts:

[\[1258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the performance of the Competition Appeal Tribunal in completing cases in a timely manner.

Paul Scully:

[Holding answer 17 May 2022]: The Post Implementation Review of the Competition Appeal Tribunal Rules 2015 was published in April 2022. This sets out that the intended objectives of the Rules, that is, to streamline procedures in the CAT and minimise the length and cost of CAT cases while ensuring access to recourse for affected parties, have largely been achieved.

The Competition Appeal Tribunal reports on all of their cases in their annual report and they provide regular updates on the case pages on their website.

Liz Saville Roberts:

[\[1259\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many cases brought to the Competition Appeal Tribunal within the last five years have taken over nine months to complete.

Paul Scully:

[Holding answer 17 May 2022]: The Tribunal is resourced to deal with these cases as quickly as due process allows. The parties before the Tribunal need time to prepare for the hearing, and the Tribunal will set a timetable for this taking account of the parties' resources, the need for a fair hearing and the need to resolve cases as expeditiously as possible.

Further detail covering the period October 2010 to October 2020 was set out in the [Call for Evidence](#) for the recent post-implementation review of the Competition Appeal Tribunal Rules published in May 2021.

■ **Energy: Billing**

Charlotte Nichols:

[\[508\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the £40 annual charge on energy bills will be applied to new bill payers in households that do not receive a £200 reduction in their electricity costs through the Energy Bills Support Scheme in 2022.

Greg Hands:

The £200 payment to help with energy bills will be recouped from all domestic electricity meter points over five years from April 2023.

The Government is aware that there will be cases where changes in circumstances mean some people may not receive the reduction, but still have to pay the levy. There will also be recipients of the payment who do not in due course pay back the levy. We are seeking to make the Scheme as fair and straightforward as possible.

The Government's consultation on the scheme will close on 23 May and a response will be published in the summer.

■ Fracking

Craig Mackinlay: [\[1520\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the British Geological Survey's short report on shale gas extraction commissioned by his Department, if he will publish the criteria for lifting the moratorium on shale gas extraction.

Greg Hands:

The recent request to the British Geological Survey has been made to assess if any progress has been made in the scientific understanding which underpins government policy on hydraulic fracturing.

The Government has always been clear that the exploration of shale gas reserves in England could only proceed if the science shows that it is safe, sustainable and of minimal disturbance to those living and working nearby. The request to the British Geological Survey does not indicate a change to government policy.

■ Heat Pumps

Dr Alan Whitehead: [\[23\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he will take to help ensure a fair transition to net zero for able to pay homes off the gas grid who cannot afford both the retrofit costs and upfront cost of installing a heat pump to their property.

Greg Hands:

The Government has committed to spend £6.6 billion in this Parliament to further improve the energy performance of our buildings through a range of schemes. The Boiler Upgrade Scheme will provide grants of £5,000 for air source heat pumps and biomass boilers, and £6,000 for ground source heat pumps to support homes off the gas grid transition away from fossil fuel heating. In the Heat and Buildings Strategy, the Government set out ambitions to work with industry to reduce the upfront costs of heat pumps by 25-50% by 2025 and to parity with gas boilers by 2030.

Members: Correspondence

Robert Largan: [\[524\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to respond to the enquiry of 2 March 2022 from the hon. Member for High Peak, reference RL34520.

Robert Largan: [\[525\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to respond to the enquiry of 2 March 2022 from the hon. Member for High Peak, reference RL32303.

Robert Largan: [\[526\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to respond to the enquiry from the hon. Member for High Peak dated 4 March 2022, reference RL35234.

Robert Largan: [\[533\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to respond to the enquiry from the hon. Member for High Peak dated 15 March 2022, reference RL36156.

Robert Largan: [\[534\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to respond to the enquiry from the hon. Member for High Peak dated 3 March 2022, reference RL36091.

Greg Hands:

I wrote to the hon. Member on 8th March about the energy bills rebate (RL34520); on 17th March about the rising cost of energy bills (RL35234); on 18th March about the energy rebate scheme and the winter fuel allowance (RL32303); and on 12th April about heating oil (RL36156). Further copies of those responses have been sent to your office.

The Department apologises for the delay in replying to the hon. Member's enquiry of 3rd March (RL36091), and a response will be issued shortly.

Nuclear Power: Carbon Emissions

Jim Shannon: [\[253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate his Department has made of the level of nuclear power generation capacity that will be required for the UK to achieve net zero by 2050.

Greg Hands:

Following publication of the British Energy Security Strategy, the Government has increased its plans for the deployment of civil nuclear power to up to 24GW by 2050, around 25% of projected 2050 electricity demand.

The Government intends to take one project to Final Investment Decision (FID) this Parliament and future projects to FID in the next Parliament, including Small Modular Reactors. As with any Government decision, this will be subject to value for money, relevant approvals and technology readiness/maturity.

■ **Offshore Industry: Carbon Emissions and Climate Change**

Dan Carden: [\[417\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the compatibility of Shell's proposed Jackdaw Field Development with the UK's (a) international climate obligations and (b) net-zero target.

Dan Carden: [\[418\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the compatibility of Shell's proposed Jackdaw Field Development with the decarbonisation targets for industry in the North Sea Transition Deal.

Greg Hands:

Development proposals for oil fields under existing licences are a matter for the regulators - the North Sea Transition Authority and the Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment and Decommissioning (OPRED). As part of that regulatory process, OPRED completes an Environmental Impact Assessment and a public consultation on any proposal, ensuring the impact on the environment is taken into account. OPRED's decision on the Environmental Impact Assessment for Jackdaw will be made in due course.

The emissions reduction targets in the North Sea Transition Deal (NSTD) are monitored by the North Sea Transition Authority, emissions from any new fields as production comes on stream would be taken into account in continuing to ensure the targets in the Deal are met.

Dan Carden: [\[419\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential impact of the new oil and gas licensing round in the North Sea on the UK's (a) international climate obligations and (b) net-zero target.

Greg Hands:

The North Sea Transition Authority plans to launch another licensing round later this year, taking into account the forthcoming climate compatibility checkpoint.

The climate compatibility checkpoint will be used to assess whether any future licensing rounds remain in keeping with the UK's climate goals.

The Government invited contributions on the design of the checkpoint with a public consultation, which closed at the end of February. The Government is currently considering the responses to the consultation, and will respond in due course.

■ Water: Conservation**Dr Alan Whitehead:** [20]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the potential role of water efficiency measures in helping achieve the Government's net zero aims.

Greg Hands:

As outlined in the [Energy-related Products Policy Framework](#), the Government estimates 0.9 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent could be saved over Carbon Budget 5 through consumer behaviour change encouraged by a mandatory water label on taps and non-electric showers.

Defra has already committed to mandatory water labelling on taps and non-electric showers, among other products, and is working closely with BEIS officials to explore the inclusion of energy efficiency information on the labels in order to best support consumers to make energy- and money-saving purchases.

The Government will continue to explore the feasibility of other efficiency measures for these products.

Dr Alan Whitehead: [21]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of retrospectively adding water efficiency measures to (a) Energy Company Obligation and (b) other existing domestic retrofit policies.

Greg Hands:

This Government's proposals to help households across England use water more efficiently were announced last year by my rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs[1].

The principle objectives of the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) scheme and other domestic retrofit schemes are to help alleviate fuel poverty, accelerate progress to meet targets, and contribute to carbon reduction targets in the domestic sector. ECO also aims to reduce the costs of meeting the UK's renewable energy target through promoting more efficient energy use.

It is not within scope of ECO or other existing domestic retrofit policies to address water efficiency.

[1] <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2021-07-01/hcws140>

■ Wind Power: Housing**Charlotte Nichols:** [511]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what support the Government is providing to home owners who wish to install domestic wind turbines on their property.

Greg Hands:

The Government introduced the Smart Export Guarantee (SEG) in January 2020 and is available to eligible small-scale renewable generators, such as home-owners with domestic wind turbines. The SEG is a market-driven mechanism designed to pave the way to projects being deployed without subsidies, so different tariffs are available from participating suppliers.

CABINET OFFICE■ **Cabinet Office: Buildings****Mr Andrew Mitchell:**[\[64\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to the Answer of 24 May 2021 to Question 3807, on Cabinet Office: Buildings, what progress has been made over the last twelve months on developing plans by the Government Property Agency to refurbish No. 36 Whitehall for use by civil servants; when that building was vacated by its last public service occupants; what the annual cost to the public purse in respect of (a) rates, (b) maintenance and utilities and (c) security relating to that building has been since that date; when he plans to provide the commercially sensitive information referred to in that Answer to the hon. Member for Sutton Coldfield; whether he has plans to visit No. 36 Whitehall; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Jacob Rees-Mogg:

The GPA has developed detailed designs for the building to be refurbished for use by Civil Servants. Records indicate the building was vacated in 2012.

As at 31 March 2021:

- Rates: £0 per annum
- Maintenance and security costs: £3.5k per annum

From 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022:

- Rates: £0
- Maintenance - principally for one-off urgent Health and Safety works: £724k

I visited 36 Whitehall on 4 May 2022. I have written to my Right Honourable Friend with regards to the letter he was expecting.

■ **Civil Servants: Workplace Pensions****Mr Clive Betts:**[\[1479\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many (a) widows and (b) widowers that were in receipt of their partner's Civil Service Classic Scheme pension have seen their payments stopped as a result of (a) remarrying and (b) cohabiting with a partner over the last 5 years.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

A total of 660,782 Civil Servants are in receipt of a pension under classic terms.

Of those

1. 92,550 are in receipt of a widows pension and;
2. 15,905 a widowers pension.
3. 552,327 are in receipt of the classic pension

50.47% (278,762) of retired Civil Servants in receipt of a classic pension are women.

The number of widows and widowers who have had their pensions suspended is given in the below table.

Year in which pension suspended	NUMBER OF PENSIONS SUSPENDED IN YEAR	
	Widows	Widowers
2017	42	48
2018	22	13
2019	5	7
2020	1	3
2021	3	0
2022	0	0

MyCSP, the pension administrator, are unable to split the numbers based on those remarrying and those cohabiting as their system does not record it in this manner.

The numbers provided are based on MyCSP's current data holding and include those that were suspended and have not since been restored on their system.

Where a spouse's Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) remains payable and only the spouse pension in excess of this is suspended, MyCSP are unable to include these in the data provided because their system will show the benefit as 'in payment' although the excess element is suspended. Therefore, the record does not show as suspended.

■ Russia: Subversion

Caroline Lucas:

[\[162\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to FCDO Press Release of 1 May 2022 entitled UK exposes sick Russian troll factory plaguing social media with Kremlin propaganda, whether the Kremlin's trolling activities were in operation during the referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union; and if he will make a statement.

Michael Ellis:

We have seen no evidence of successful interference in the EU Referendum. There are no plans to make a statement.

It is, and always will be, an absolute priority to protect the UK against foreign interference. The National Security Bill was introduced to Parliament on 11 May. The Bill will provide new tools and powers for the intelligence agencies and law enforcement, including offences for foreign interference, supporting a foreign intelligence service and sabotage.

UK Commission on Covid Commemoration**Justin Madders:** [\[812\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the membership and terms of reference are of the UK Commission on Covid Commemoration Commission.

Michael Ellis:

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

DEFENCE**Afghanistan: Refugees****David Linden:** [\[414\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many applications to the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy scheme are awaiting decision.

James Heappey:

As of 13 May 2022, there are 15,177 applicants to the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) Scheme awaiting an initial decision.

Large volumes of applicants continue to be reviewed, many from applicants with no connection to the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and thus any realistic chance of being eligible for ARAP. The MOD continues to resource the process for ARAP but the process is slowed by the volume of ineligible applicants.

David Linden: [\[415\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many applications to the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy scheme received a decision in each month since August 2020; and what proportion of those decisions were approvals.

James Heappey:

The Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) scheme was launched on 1 April 2021 and has been one of the most generous relocation programmes in the world.

Due to constraints on accessible data, the information requested is only available from October 2021 onwards and can be found in the table below:

MONTH	DECISIONS MADE
October 2021	706
November 2021	1,450
December 2021	803
January 2022	477
February 2022	409
March 2022	451
April 2022	799
May 2022 (up to 12 May)	234

Of all the decisions made over this period, 8.4% were approved.

■ **Armed Forces Compensation Scheme and War Pensions: Appeals**

Stephanie Peacock:

[\[1273\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the average length of appeal is, from start to resolution, for those appealing against Veterans UK decisions on applications for (a) AFCS and (b) War Pensions.

Leo Docherty:

It should be noted that appeals are a three-stage process in which Veterans UK are solely responsible for Stage One and Stage Three. There is no Key Performance Indicator for Stage Three. Information on Stage Two should be requested from HM Courts and Tribunal Service (HMCTS).

Key Performance Indicators are set for Stage One of the process and data is held regarding achievement as follows:

War Pension Scheme appeals Key Performance Indicator Average Clearance Time is set at 122 days, current achievement as at end April 2022 is 117.32.

AFCS appeals Key Performance Indicator Average Clearance Time is set at 150 days, current achievement as at end April 2022 is 123.9 days.

Work is ongoing towards an end to end Key Performance Indicator for Veterans UK and MOJ (HMCTS). This is in parallel with work being undertaken with HMCTS England and Wales to adopt a process of Direct Lodgement. This should provide customers with a better overall experience. A date for the implementation of Direct Lodgement for England and Wales has not yet been confirmed.

Stephanie Peacock: [\[1274\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many service personnel and veterans are undertaking an appeal against a Veterans UK decision regarding an application to (a) AFCS and (b) War Pensions.

Leo Docherty:

The number of Service personnel and veterans undertaking an appeal against a Veterans UK decision regarding an application to AFCS as at 30 April 2022 is 1,692 (358 on hand with Veterans UK and 1,334 outstanding at HM Courts and Tribunal Service (HMCTS)).

The number of Service personnel and veterans undertaking an appeal against a Veterans UK decision regarding an application under the War Pension Scheme as at 30 April 2022 is 1,158 (397 on hand with Veterans UK and 761 outstanding at HMCTS).

Stephanie Peacock: [\[1275\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what mental health support is available for those undertaking an appeal against Veterans UK decision regarding an application to (a) AFCS and (b) War Pensions.

Leo Docherty:

Veterans UK offers support through both the Veterans Welfare Service and the caseworker staff who process applications to both Schemes. Welfare Managers are given specific training in how to correspond verbally and in writing with veterans suffering from mental health conditions. All welfare cases have a holistic assessment of the support or assistance required; where a veteran requires more specific clinical support the Welfare Manager would be able to advise on the appropriate mental health provision available in each devolved region of the UK. Veterans UK caseworker training includes both the theory and practical experience of current and past cases, including those concerning veterans claiming mental health issues. Staff are issued with desk aids and guidance to which they can refer and receive training awareness sessions conducted by a Medical Adviser who specialises in mental health issues.

■ Armed Forces: Applications

John Healey: [\[1480\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the average length of time is for an application to join the armed forces to be processed by Capita.

Leo Docherty:

I refer the Rt hon. Member to the answer I gave on 26 April 2022 to Question 153783 to the hon. Member for Rayleigh and Wickford (Mark Francois).

Attachments:

1. Armed Forces Recruitment [153783 - Armed Forces Recruitment.docx]

John Healey:

[1481]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many applications to join the armed forces have been (a) received and (b) processed by Capita in each month since January 2021.

Leo Docherty:

The British Army conducts recruiting activities in partnership with Capita under the Recruiting Partnering Project (RPP), whereas the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force deliver recruitment in-house. The below tables therefore represent applications to the Regular Army only.

Table 1 - Army Regular Applications broken down by Officers and Other Ranks by month from 1 January to 30 September 2021

MONTH (DURING)	TOTAL REGULAR APPLICATIONS	REGULAR OFFICER	REGULAR OTHER RANKS
Total - 1 Jan to 30 Sept 2021	61,918	7,180	54,738
January 2021	10,624	1,258	9,366
February 2021	8,437	1,022	7,415
March 2021	7,517	873	6,644
April 2021	5,420	618	4,802
May 2021	6,007	597	5,410
June 2021	5,620	589	5,031
July 2021	5,407	636	4,771
August 2021	6,789	808	5,981
September 2021	6,097	779	5,318

Table 2 - Army Regular Basic Training Entrants broken down by Officers and Other Ranks by month from 1 January to 31 December 2021

MONTH (DURING)	TOTAL REGULAR BASIC TRAINING ENTRANTS	REGULAR OFFICER	REGULAR OTHER RANKS
Total - 1 Jan to 31 Dec 2021	8,560	670	7,890
January 2021	1,455	220	1,235
February 2021	610	-	610

MONTH (DURING)	TOTAL REGULAR BASIC		REGULAR OTHER RANKS
	TRAINING ENTRANTS	REGULAR OFFICER	
March 2021	1,370	~	1,365
April 2021	325	15	310
May 2021	720	140	575
June 2021	440	~	440
July 2021	455	25	425
August 2021	460	~	460
September 2021	1,515	250	1,260
October 2021	695	5	690
November 2021	520	~	515
December 2021	~	-	~

Notes/Caveats:**Tables are independent of each other and not a Cohort Analysis.**

Table 1

1. Figures define an application as an online application submitted by an individual and accepted by the Defence Recruitment System (DRS).
2. Figures reflect the number of applications. Applicants may apply more than once in the same period.
3. The volumetric count of applications as collated here, must not be used as a performance indicator, and should not be compared year on year. A change in volume does not equate to a change in popularity of the Army or performance of the Recruiting Partnering Project. Marketing campaigns and recruiting activity are designed to match the number of applications with the required size and shape of the Army as set by the MoD over a several year period.
4. From 1st January to 30th September 2021 - 8,460 Officers and 54,827 Other Ranks have either been rejected or withdrawn from the Application process. This is not a cohort analysis of Table 1 and a large number of these personnel had applied prior to 1 January 2021.
5. Application data runs on a three-month lag; therefore, figures are only available up to 30th September 2021 as at the date of the latest Service Personnel Statistics publication.

Table 2

1. Applications processed by Capita has been interpreted as applicants who entered Basic Training.
2. The figures are for the Regular Army only and therefore exclude Gurkhas, Full Time Reserve Service, Mobilised Reserves, Army Reserve, and all other Reserves, but includes those personnel that have transferred from GURTAM to UKTAP.
3. Figures exclude personnel transferring from the Navy or RAF.
4. Some personnel may have left Basic Training and subsequently re-joined. If any personnel have joined, left and re-joined during this time period then they will be counted more than once in these figures.
5. Basic Training Entrant Inflow is seasonal. Royal Military Academy Sandhurst has three main commissioning courses starting in January, May and September each year for Officers entering the Regular Army. Other Ranks entrants are seasonal due to events such as the start of the Junior Entrant course in Army Foundation College Harrogate in September and March each year and low numbers of entrants during December.
6. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5 to limit disclosure and ensure confidentiality.
7. Totals and sub-totals have been rounded separately and so may not appear to be the sum of their parts.
8. "~" fewer than 5. "-" denotes zero.

■ Armed Forces: Recruitment**John Healey:**[\[1482\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many complaints (a) his Department and (b) relevant contractors have received about the armed forces recruitment website in each of the last five years.

Leo Docherty:

Following the Defence Recruiting System being temporarily taken offline on 16 March 2022, two formal complaints have been received. No other formal complaints about the Army's recruitment website were received in the remainder of the most recent recruiting year (April 2021 to end March 2022).

John Healey:[\[1483\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the value for money of the £113m Capita-run recruitment website.

Leo Docherty:

£113 million reflects the cost of establishing the Defence Recruiting System, the candidate management system which sits behind the Capita-run recruitment website

(Army Jobs). For the last Recruiting Year (April 2021 - March 2022), the Army Jobs website generated over eight million visits, with over 180,000 potential candidates registering an interest to join the Army. Without the website, registrations could not be made, nor applications submitted.

■ Armoured Fighting Vehicles

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[628\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent assessment he has made of the UK's ability to effectively operate its existing provision of Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles.

Jeremy Quin:

We remain confident of our ability to effectively manage our protected mobility fleet to meet our commitments.

■ Army: Food

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[630\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the pay as you dine scheme in the British Army since the introduction of that scheme.

Leo Docherty:

Defence utilises a number of mechanisms to assess the adequacy of catering services, including Pay As You Dine (PAYD), across the three Services.

The independent Armed Forces Pay Review Body's (AFPRB) annual report for the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Defence assesses the quality of catering, among other management services. AFPRB reports can be accessed online: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/armed-forces-pay-review-body. All three Services utilise a two-star Honorary Catering Advisor (HCA) from the hospitality sector. The HCA's independent reports complement the AFPRB reports, but provide a more focussed scrutiny of catering and messing to respective Commands and the Chief of the Defence Staff.

This activity was supplemented last year with the Delivering Defence Dining Quality (3DQ) Review, which was tasked by the 2* Military People Leadership Team, following repeated and consistent reports of poor-quality food provision across the Defence estate. The initial findings from the 3DQ Review have evidenced a number of inadequacies with PAYD, the Defence dining environment and food offer, and action planning is now underway to support the delivery of transformational changes to these factors governing Defence catering services.

Regarding the British Army specifically, the Army Messing Working Group (AMWG) and Exploring Appetites of Today's Soldiers (EATS) pilot survey have been established to progress Army-specific issues to action. Together the AMWG and EATS initiatives have provided valuable evidence to inform the 3DQ Review, and

close collaboration between the two areas of activity will allow Defence to accelerate improvements to messing services.

■ AWE Burghfield

John Healey: [\[43\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what his timeframe is for completing the construction of MENSA.

John Healey: [\[44\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what his timeframe is for completing the construction of the PEGASUS facility.

John Healey: [\[45\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the (a) original and (b) current cost expectations are for the (i) MENSA and (ii) PEGASUS projects.

Jeremy Quin:

The original and current approved costs and the current in-service dates for Project Mensa and Project Pegasus are as follows:

PROJECT	ORIGINAL COST APPROVED IN 2011	CURRENT APPROVED COST	APPROVED IN-SERVICE DATE
MENSA	£734 million	£1996 million	2024
PEGASUS	£634 million	£634 million	Material Handling Store - 2025 Manufacture Capability – 2030

■ Challenger Tanks

John Healey: [\[609\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what discussions he has had with his counterparts in NATO countries with Soviet-era capabilities about backfill arrangements in addition to those proposed with Poland in respect of Challenger II tanks.

James Heappey:

The UK has been steadfast in its support for our Allies on the Eastern Flank who face threat from Russia most acutely.

British Challenger 2 tanks will deploy to Poland to bridge the gap between Poland donating tanks to Ukraine and replacements arriving from the United States.

Defence ministers have made clear to partners that we remain open to backfill arrangements for Soviet-era capabilities given to Ukraine.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[638\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, on what basis the Challenger 2 upgrade has been spread over four years; and what assessment he has made of the effect this duration will have on the availability rates for Main Battle Tank.

Jeremy Quin:

Rheinmetall BAE Systems Land (RBSL) were awarded the Challenger 2 (CR2) upgrade contract based on their timelines to conduct the Demonstration and Manufacture phases for the Challenger 3 (CR3). The initial production vehicles are expected to be delivered in 2027 with all vehicles delivered by 2030. The Army will continue to meet current operational commitments requiring Main Battle Tanks throughout this period of transition from CR2 to CR3.

Defence is keen to see the delivery of Challenger 3 as soon as practical but it is important that this technically complex project is executed effectively and on a realistic timeframe.

■ Challenger Tanks: Exports**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[639\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment has he made of the likelihood that Challenger 3 will be successful in the export market.

Jeremy Quin:

Challenger 3 (CR3) will be a highly capable Main Battle Tank with world-leading performance. The Ministry of Defence continues to work with industry to explore export markets, opportunities, and priorities for the CR3 tank and the CR3 turret. We are confident that its cutting-edge capabilities will make it attractive to our international partners.

■ Defence: Finance**Dr Matthew Offord:** [\[219\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will make it his policy to spend at least 3 per cent of GDP on defence.

James Heapey:

The UK Government remains committed to spending at least 2% of GDP on defence as set by this Parliament and NATO. The UK is the largest European Defence spender and the second largest in the Alliance overall.

■ Joint Strike Fighter Aircraft: Procurement**John Healey:** [\[1103\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many F-35 fighter jets his Department plans to (a) buy and (b) have delivered to the UK in each year until 2040.

Jeremy Quin:

Deliveries of the remainder of the first tranche of 48 Lightning aircraft between 2023 and 2025 are shown in the following table:

2023 (LOT 15) - two airframes

2024 (LOT 16) - four airframes

2025 (LOT 17) - seven airframes

For the second tranche of Lightning aircraft, I refer the Rt. Hon Member to the Answer I gave to the Member for Islwyn on 9 December 2021 to Question 86564.

Attachments:

1. Joint Strike Fighter Procurement [86564 - Joint Strike Fighter Aircraft Procurement.docx]

John Healey:[\[1105\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the total cost will be for the UK's order of F-35 jets as of 12 May 2022.

Jeremy Quin:

The estimated price for the procurement of the 48 aircraft ordered is circa £4.2 billion.

LE TacCIS Programme**John Healey:**[\[624\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he expects the Battlefield Management Application to be completed.

Jeremy Quin:

The Battlefield Management Application is part of the MORPHEUS project. The Ministry of Defence is in discussion with various parties to identify the optimum route to full MORPHEUS capability.

LE TacCIS Programme: Costs**John Healey:**[\[615\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department will be liable for potential cost increases resulting from delays to the Land Environment Tactical Communication and Information System.

Jeremy Quin:

Whilst the delivery of the first element of the MORPHEUS project is behind schedule the delivery of the other projects within the Land Environment Tactical Communication and Information System (LE TacCIS) programme are progressing well against cost and time forecasts. Any changes to costs as a result of delays to the MORPHEUS programme will be determined as part of ongoing discussions.

■ National Cyber Force: Samlesbury

John Healey: [46]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether he held discussions with the permanent secretary in his Department on a potential (a) conflict of interest or (b) breach of the Ministerial Code in respect of the decision to select Samlesbury as the location for the headquarters of the National Cyber Force.

John Healey: [47]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the selection of Samlesbury as the location for the headquarters of the National Cyber Force was made by Ministerial direction.

John Healey: [48]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether staff in his Department raised concerns in respect of the selection of Samlesbury as the location for the headquarters of the National Cyber Force.

John Healey: [49]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department undertook a cost-benefit impact assessment in respect of the selection of Samlesbury as the location for the headquarters of the National Cyber Force.

John Healey: [50]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department undertook a full comparative cost-benefit assessment of (a) Samlesbury and (b) other locations under consideration as the headquarters of the National Cyber Force.

John Healey: [51]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, which Minister in his Department decided on the selection of Samlesbury as the location of the headquarters of the National Cyber Force.

John Healey: [52]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will publish the full comprehensive cost-benefit assessment of Samlesbury as the location for the headquarters of the National Cyber Force.

John Healey: [53]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether ministerial direction was required for a decision on the location of the headquarters of the National Cyber Force.

John Healey: [57]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether he made the final decision on the selection of Samlesbury as the location for the headquarters of National Cyber Force.

John Healey: [58]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the criteria for selecting the location of the headquarters of the National Cyber Force were amended during the selection process.

John Healey: [608]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what locations other than Samlesbury were considered as the location for the headquarters of the National Cyber Force; and for what reasons were they not chosen.

Mr Ben Wallace:

A number of factors were taken into account when considering the locations for the National Cyber Force. The process was fully in accordance with normal Government practice and in line with the Government's stated policy of Levelling Up and investing in public bodies right across the UK. Further details to the right hon. Member's questions will be provided in response to his letter dated 29 April to the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Defence.

■ **Russia: National Security**

Mark Pritchard: [139]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with references to threats made by Russia to UK security, if he will enhance mobile and physical security checks at (a) military and (b) other government facilities.

James Heapey:

The Ministry of Defence does not comment on our security arrangements on national security grounds. We take the security of our people, assets and sites extremely seriously and have robust measures in place to ensure the integrity of the Defence Estate. These measures are kept under constant review and adjusted according to the threat. The security of other government facilities is the responsibility of their respective ministers and Permanent Secretaries.

■ **Ukraine: Military Aid**

John Healey: [1484]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many (a) Starstreak missiles and (b) Brimstone anti-ship missiles the UK has sent to Ukraine since 24 February 2022.

James Heapey:

For operational security reasons we are not yet releasing information on quantities of each missile type delivered.

■ **Ukraine: Veterans**

Stephanie Peacock: [1269]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what data his Department holds on the number of British ex-service personnel residing in Ukraine.

Leo Docherty:

This information is not held. The Ministry of Defence does not collect or hold information on all veterans and cannot say where veterans of the Armed Forces reside post service.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT■ **Football: Sponsorship****Jim Shannon:**[\[2313\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of bringing forward legislative proposals to prevent betting companies from being sponsors of Premier League football clubs.

Chris Philp:

The Government is looking closely at the evidence regarding the impacts of sports sponsorship by gambling operators, including in the Premier League, as part of the wide-ranging Review of the Gambling Act. We will publish a White Paper setting out our conclusions and next steps in the coming weeks.

EDUCATION■ **Adult Education: Yorkshire and the Humber****Alex Sobel:**[\[441\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what body was awarded the contract for the Adult Education Budget in the Yorkshire region.

Alex Burghart:

The providers who bid to deliver in the Yorkshire and Humber region, and were awarded an Adult Education Budget (AEB) procured contract for the 2021/22 funding year, are listed in the attached spreadsheet.

It is important to note that adult skills in South and West Yorkshire is a devolved matter and that AEB is funded through the mayoral combined authority.

Attachments:

1. 441_Table [441_table_showing_providers who bid to deliver in the Yorkshire and Humber region, and were awarded an Adult Education Budget.pdf]

■ **Further Education: Care Leavers and Children in Care****Siobhan Baillie:**[\[1007\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many (a) looked after children and (b) care leavers went onto further education for the latest available year.

Siobhan Baillie:

[1009]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many looked after children studying at KS5 level in the latest period for which figures are available, and what the exam and assessment results were for looked after children in the 2020-21 academic year.

Will Quince:

The department does not hold information on the numbers of all care leavers in further education. The department does hold and publish information on the activities of care leavers aged 17 to 21 who had been looked after by local authorities in England. This includes information on care leavers in education but not specifically further education. The latest statistics are available at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-tables/fast-track/607634ac-0f37-4ffc-8cdc-576d0bb9b16b>.

The department does not hold information centrally on all looked-after children who are studying at KS5 or who are in further education. The department does hold and publish information on pupils who were at the end of key stage 4 in 2018/2019 and reports on their destinations in the following academic year (2019/2020). The figures show, in academic year 2019/20, 5,450 children looked after were in a sustained education destination in the year following the end of key stage 4. Of these, 2,910 were in further education, 860 were in a school sixth form or sixth form college and 1,240 were in some other form of education. Further information is available here: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-tables/permalink/d583af1d-ad7d-4f1f-990b-2b27586d6c69>.

The latest information on attainment for looked after children is published here: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/outcomes-for-children-in-need-including-children-looked-after-by-local-authorities-in-england>.

■ **Graduates: Average Earnings**

Dr Matthew Offord:

[211]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of average starting salaries for university graduates by ethnicity in 2022.

Michelle Donelan:

The department publishes graduate labour market statistics annually, which report median salaries for young graduates – those aged between 21 and 30 – by ethnicity. The 2022 figures will be available in spring 2023. Further information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/graduate-labour-market-quarterly-statistics>.

In 2020, the latest year for which data are available, young Asian or Asian British graduates had the highest median salaries, £28,000. The median salary difference between the young Asian or Asian British graduates and the lowest earning ethnic group, 'Other ethnicity graduates', was £1,000.

■ Mental Health Services: Children**Caroline Lucas:** [\[168\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Answer of 26 April 2022 to Question 154193, on Mental Health Services: Children, what funding is available to the 75 per cent of schools and colleges who will not be supported by mental health support teams by 2022-23 to provide professional counselling for their pupils.

Caroline Lucas: [\[169\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Answer of 26 April 2022 to Question 154193, on Mental Health Services: Children, if he will make additional funding available for the 75 per cent of schools and colleges who will not be supported by mental health support teams by 2022-23 to provide professional counselling for their pupils.

Will Quince:

As a department, we are committed to building education providers' capability to create safe, calm, and supportive environments for children and young people, where they can access mental health and wellbeing support if and when they need it.

The department recognises professional counselling can form an important part of an education providers' approach to mental wellbeing, and we have set a strong expectation in our 'Counselling in schools: a blueprint for the future' guidance that over time, all schools will offer counselling services to their pupils. This guidance is available here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/497825/Counselling_in_schools.pdf.

Many children and young people also benefit from other in-school support, including from trained pastoral staff, educational psychologists and Emotional Literacy Support Assistants, who may offer a range of therapies. It is vital that schools and colleges continue to have the freedom to choose what support to offer their pupils based on need.

Schools can use the additional £1 billion of recovery premium funding announced in the autumn, on top of pupil premium funding, and their increased core budget to support their pupils' mental health and wellbeing, including for counselling or other therapeutic services.

To support schools and colleges to introduce effective approaches to mental health and wellbeing, the department has committed to offer all state schools and colleges a grant to train a senior mental health lead by 2025. Over 8,000 schools and colleges, which includes half of all state-funded secondary schools in England, have taken up the offer so far, which has been backed by £9.5 million in the 2021/21 financial year. On 12 May, the department announced an additional £7 million to extend senior mental health lead training to even more schools and college to meet our ambition of reaching two-thirds of eligible education providers by 2023, bringing the total amount of funding for the 2022/23 financial year to £10 million.

As part of the training, senior leaders will be equipped with the knowledge and skills to understand the mental health needs of their student population and consider the range of in-school provision needed, such as counselling services.

Information on progress introducing Mental Health Support Teams is included in a report published on 12 May 2022, which follows the news that more than 2.4 million children and young people now have access to support in schools and colleges. This report is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transforming-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-provision>. NHS England has also announced that over 500 teams will be confirmed this year, which will surpass the government's original ambition to have 400 teams in place by April 2023. This article is available here: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/2022/05/nhs-fast-tracks-mental-health-support-for-millions-of-pupils/>.

■ National Curriculum Tests

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: **[928]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of SATs in measuring children's learning and attainment.

Mr Robin Walker:

The main purpose of statutory assessment, as set out in the Standards and Testing Agency's test frameworks is to ascertain what pupils have achieved in relation to the age-related attainment targets set out in the national curriculum. These test frameworks are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-test-frameworks>. A validity framework to demonstrate how well the tests meet this purpose is published in the appendices of the test handbook, available on GOV.UK.

Due to the cancellations of the statutory assessments in 2020 and 2021, the most recent version of the test handbook is from 2019 and is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2019-national-curriculum-test-handbook>.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: **[930]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment his Department has made of the potential impact of SATs on primary children's mental health.

Mr Robin Walker:

The department knows that the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people and will have an impact in the longer-term. We expect leaders and teachers to consider their pupils' mental health and wellbeing as a priority and identify those who may need additional support.

Although schools should encourage all pupils to work hard and achieve well in primary assessments, the department does not recommend that they devote excessive time to preparation, and certainly not at the expense of pupils' mental health and wellbeing. Schools should support a culture of wellbeing amongst staff and pupils.

Children and young people's mental health and wellbeing is a priority for this government. The department is continuing to help schools support children and young people's wellbeing, announcing in May 2021 more than £17 million of mental health funding to improve mental health and wellbeing support in schools and colleges. This includes £9.5 million dedicated to training senior mental health leads in over 8,000 schools and colleges, with an additional £3 million announced this year to extend this training to even more schools and colleges. The training will equip leads with the skills and knowledge to develop a culture and ethos that promotes positive mental health wellbeing, as well as how to make the best use of local resources to support children and young people experiencing issues such as anxiety.

The department has also recently brought together all its sources of advice for schools and colleges into a single site on GOV.UK, which includes signposting to external sources of mental health and wellbeing support for teachers, school staff and school leaders. This site is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/mental-health-and-wellbeing-support-in-schools-and-colleges#mental-health-and-wellbeing-resources>.

■ Primary Education: Free School Meals

Ian Lavery:

[258]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has made representations to Cabinet colleagues on the potential merits of making free school meals available to all primary school children for the purposes of supporting families with the rising cost of living.

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.

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 department thinks it is right that provision is aimed at supporting the most disadvantaged, those out of work or on the lowest incomes. We do not have any plans to extend universal provision but we will continue to keep all free school meal eligibility under review, to ensure that these meals are supporting those who most need them.

The government is continuing to provide targeted cost of living support for households most in need. Through the Household Support Fund, the government is

providing an additional £500 million to help households with the cost of household essentials, on top of what we have already provided since October 2021, bringing the total funding for this support to £1 billion.

■ Primary Education: Ipswich

Tom Hunt:

[\[1349\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential impact on primary school education in Ipswich of the priority education investment area status.

Mr Robin Walker:

The department was pleased to announce Ipswich as a Priority Education Investment Area (EIA) as part of the recent Schools White Paper, Opportunity for all: strong schools with great teachers for your child.

The White Paper set out the department's vision for a school system that helps every child to fulfil their potential founded on achieving world-class standards of literacy and numeracy and confirmed the headline ambitions. At primary, this is for 90% of children to achieve the expected standards in reading, writing and maths by the end of Key Stage 2, and for performance in the worst performing areas to have improved by over a third – by 2030.

In Priority EIAs, the department will offer intensive investment in addition to the significant support available to all EIAs, so that they can drive improvement further and faster. This has the potential to transform pupils' outcomes at primary and secondary, by overcoming entrenched barriers to improvement and strengthening the school's system in these areas. In existing opportunity areas, like Ipswich, the department will refine the focus on their Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 headline ambitions and build on the good work that is already underway.

In all 55 EIAs, the department will be taking steps to support underperforming schools to make the necessary improvements, build trust capacity, support improved digital connectivity in the schools that need this most and offer the Levelling Up premium, worth up to £3,000 tax free, to eligible teachers. The department's additional support to Priority EIAs includes a share of around £40 million of funding to address local needs, such as those acting as a barrier to improvement at primary and priority access to a number of other Department for Education programmes.

My hon Friend, the Minister for the School System, and I will be writing to all MPs with Priority EIAs in their constituencies to update them on our next steps for the programme, following the briefing session we held on 27 April.

■ Pupils: Coronavirus

Rachael Maskell:

[\[317\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to help ensure pupils whose learning was impacted by the covid-19 pandemic are able to access post-16 catch-up support while in education and apprenticeships.

Alex Burghart:

The department recognises that many young people in 16 to 19 education will have lost learning during the COVID-19 pandemic and we are therefore providing targeted support to help them to catch up.

We introduced the 16-19 Tuition Fund in 2020, giving access to one-to-one and small group tuition for students to catch up on their core subjects. This academic year we have provided £102 million for the fund and will provide a further £222 million to continue the fund for an additional two years from the 2022/23 academic year. In addition, and to ensure that those with the least time left in education have the opportunity to progress, we have given providers of 16 to 19 education the option to offer students in year 13 (or equivalent in further education settings) the opportunity to repeat up to one more year of their studies in the 2021/22 academic year, where they had been particularly severely affected by the pandemic.

The department is also delivering an extra £1.6 billion boost for 16 to 19 year olds' education across the next three financial years (2022/23 to 2024/25). Within this total investment, £800 million will be provided to fund 40 additional learning hours per student each year in 16 to 19 education settings to help them catch up on the vital teaching and learning they need to progress.

We also recognise that many apprentices were impacted by the pandemic, and this is why we introduced a number of flexibilities to ensure that apprenticeship training and assessments could continue. For example, where it was not possible and practicable for the apprentice to continue training, a break in learning could be used to allow the apprentice to return to learning at a future date and complete their apprenticeship. We also encouraged providers and assessment organisations to deliver training and assessments flexibly, to support apprentices in completing their apprenticeships.

School Milk**Kate Osborne:****[1558]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department has undertaken an assessment of the affordability of subsidised milk under the School Milk Subsidy Scheme in the context of the increasing cost of living; and what steps the Government is taking to ensure that families are able to afford to purchase subsidised milk for their children in schools.

Will Quince:

Milk is an excellent food for children's growth and development. This is why under the school food standards, schools must ensure it is available to all pupils who want it during school hours. Further guidance on the school food standards can be accessed here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-food-standards-resources-for-schools>.

Lower fat milk or lactose reduced milk must be available for drinking at least once a day during school hours and milk must be provided free of charge to pupils eligible for free school meals. Schools may offer milk as many times as they wish, however it

must be free to infant and benefits-based free school meal pupils when it is offered as part of their school meal and free to benefits-based free school meal pupils at all other times.

Where schools provide milk, they can also choose whether to participate in the School Milk Subsidy Scheme which can be used to reduce the cost of the milk. The rate for the subsidy is topped up nationally for pupils in primary education.

Further information about the scheme is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/the-school-milk-subsidy-scheme-guidance>.

As announced in the Spring Statement, the government is continuing to provide targeted cost of living support for households most in need. From April 2022, the government is providing an additional £500 million to help households with the cost of household essentials, on top of what we have already provided since October 2021, bringing the total funding for this support to £1 billion.

■ Schools: Coronavirus

Caroline Lucas:

[160]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will make it his policy to immediately communicate to schools that they can use any stocks of lateral flow tests held locally; and if he will make a statement.

Caroline Lucas:

[161]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will make it his policy to make free covid-19 testing available for all (a) pupils, (b) staff and (c) exam invigilators over the current exam period; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Robin Walker:

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 UK Health Security Agency's (UKHSA) updated health protection in education and childcare settings guidance. Students and staff should follow UKHSA's advice for those who have symptoms.

As individuals are now mixing in an otherwise open society, regular testing within school and colleges is no longer as effective as it once was. Instead, the most effective protection against severe disease from COVID-19 for everyone, including those at higher risk from COVID-19, is to get vaccinated.

Although settings may still have some unused test kits in stock, they should not continue to hand these out to staff or students or dispose of them (unless they have reached their expiry date).

The department are currently working with UKHSA to explore the options for removal of testing resources no longer required and repurpose or redeploy them as much as possible based on clinical need prioritisation.

In the meantime, settings should retain any surplus stock and may wish to note this in their contingency plans. The department has published emergency planning and response guidance for education and childcare settings here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-planning-and-response-for-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care-settings>.

The department is also aware that some schools and colleges have reported finding the recruitment of invigilators more challenging this year. We are working with exam boards to monitor the risk and have supported recruitment by sharing The Exams Office's vacancy map with pools of invigilators like parents and higher education students.

The Joint Council for Qualifications has published updated guidance for centres managing exams in case of invigilator shortage. This includes information about varying start times; alternative sites; invigilation ratios; use of subject teachers as invigilators; addressing challenges for individual candidates; and remote invigilation.

■ Special Educational Needs

Stephen Morgan:

[431]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many children have an Education Health and Care plan by local authority for the period in which the latest figures are available.

Will Quince:

The department collects figures on education, health and care (EHC) plans workload from local authorities annually. This data is published at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/education-health-and-care-plans>. The most recent figures were published on 12 May 2022 and the number of children and young people with an EHC plan by local authority can be found here: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-tables/permalink/51d6175e-670a-4d52-a023-2b11d363d01b>.

■ Special Educational Needs: Appeals

Grahame Morris:

[1502]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Answer of 28 April 2022 to Question 158936, what discussions he has had with families with disabled children when formulating the policy proposal in the SEND Review to only allow families with disabled children to pick a school from a pre-defined list where those families have had to take a local authority to the SEND tribunal to get the school their disabled child needs.

Will Quince:

Throughout the SEND Review, the department has engaged hundreds of people, including children, young people, and their families, as well as working with a cross-sector steering group which had representation from parents and carers. In March 2022, we addressed questions about the review at a webinar attended by 200 parents and carers of children and young people with SEND. Earlier this month, the

department hosted a meeting of 14 SEND charities convened by the Council for Disabled Children. These charities include representation of children and young people, and their parents.

The department recognises that the significant set of proposals outlined in the green paper need to be subject to a full public consultation. For this reason, over 120 consultation events have been arranged, allowing direct engagement with a broad range of people, including children, young people, and their families. The department is committed to ensuring everyone has an opportunity to take part in the consultation and we encourage everyone to do so.

■ **Special Educational Needs: Finance**

Grahame Morris:

[\[1501\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Answer of 28 April 2022 to Question 158937, what assessment he has made of the prospect of the policy proposal in the SEND Review on deciding the levels of support disabled children get from a national banding system having the potential effect of reducing the level of support disabled children and families currently receive.

Will Quince:

The special education needs and disabilities (SEND) and alternative provision green paper sets out our proposals to improve the outcomes and experiences of children and young people with SEND and their families so that they can fulfil their potential and lead happy, healthy, and productive adult lives. The proposals aim to drive national consistency in how needs are assessed, identified, and met across education, health and care through the introduction of national standards.

The department wants to ensure the most effective use of our investment in high needs funding and the proposal for national framework of funding bands has the potential to ensure far greater consistency in funding arrangements throughout the system. The department is consulting on how it can best develop a national framework for funding bands and tariffs, to achieve its objectives and help make it easier for all children and young people and their families to understand not only the provision they can access locally but also the funding levels that provision would attract, giving them greater assurance that their child's needs will be met appropriately.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ **Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000**

Dr Rupa Huq:

[\[892\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to extend the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to include (a) rivers, (b) woods and (c) Green Belt land.

Rebecca Pow:

We recognise the importance of enabling access to the countryside, for people's health and wellbeing. That is why we have established 13 community forests, alongside our substantial programmes to create more green space and significantly expand National Trails, and we have created and restored some 360,000 football fields of habitat since 2010. We have no plans to change the Rights of Way Act.

■ **Fertilisers****Duncan Baker:**[\[505\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential impact of CF Fertiliser's decision to keep certain UK plants closed on the (a) carbon dioxide and (b) nitrogen industries.

Jo Churchill:

CF Fertilisers produces 40% of the ammonium nitrate fertiliser used in the United Kingdom. This is 10-15% of total fertiliser usage when including other mineral fertilisers. Government officials from Defra and other government departments routinely meet with commercial food supply chain representatives, including CF Fertilisers.

The production of ammonium nitrate fertiliser also creates three critical by-products: ammonia, nitric acid and carbon dioxide (CO₂).

In September 2021, CF Fertilisers plants temporarily shut down. The Government provided limited financial support for CF Fertilisers' operating costs for three weeks. Industry then came to a further agreement in October without taxpayer support to ensure CF Fertilisers could continue to operate for three months. This market-led agreement was renewed in January 2022 and continues at the current time. The deal meant that key sectors, including food processing and nuclear power, were ensured supplies of CO₂. Details of this support will be published in the usual way in the 2021-22 BEIS Annual Report and Accounts.

In the longer term, the Government would like to see the market take measures to improve resilience, and we are engaging on ways this could happen.

The decision about whether to reopen Ince is a commercial one for CF Fertilisers. We are not aware of any current issues with domestic CO₂ or nitrogen supplies.

■ **Food: Prices****Colleen Fletcher:**[\[274\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans his Department has to mitigate the impact of rising food prices on consumers in (a) Coventry North East constituency, (b) Coventry, (c) the West Midlands and (d) England.

Victoria Prentis:

The Government is providing support worth around £22 billion in 2022/23 to help families with the rising cost of living. This includes an additional £421 million for the

Household Support Fund in England to support households with the cost of food, utilities and wider essentials over the coming months. Details of allocations to County Councils can be found at [Household Support Fund Grant Determination 2022 No 31/3096 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/107311/Household-Support-Fund-Grant-Determination-2022-No-31-3096.pdf).

■ **Furs: Trade**

Martyn Day: [352]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when he plans to publish the findings of The Fur Market in Great Britain call for evidence.

Jo Churchill:

The Government made a commitment to explore potential action in relation to animal fur, as set out in the Action Plan for Animal Welfare. We continue to gather information and speak to a range of interested parties about the issues involved.

We are reviewing the evidence gathered both from our Call for Evidence and wider engagement with the fur trade and stakeholders, and a summary of responses will be published soon.

■ **Livestock and Wildlife: Dogs**

Mr David Jones: [1492]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to help encourage dog owners to train dogs not to chase (a) farm livestock and (b) wild animals.

Victoria Prentis:

The Government takes the issue of livestock worrying and chasing very seriously, recognising the distress this can cause farmers and animals, as well as the financial implications.

New measures to crack down on livestock worrying in England and Wales are to be brought in through the Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill, which was introduced in Parliament on 8 June 2021. The new measures will enhance enforcement mechanisms available to the police and expand the scope of livestock species and locations covered by the law. Improved powers will enable the police to respond to livestock worrying incidents more effectively.

The purpose of the livestock worrying legislation is to tackle the anti-social behaviour of those whose dogs worry or attack animals that are commonly found in agricultural settings and whose injury or death may have serious financial consequences for their keepers. Feral wild animals are outside the scope of this legislation. Protections for animals in their wild state are dealt with separately under different legislation.

In December 2021, Defra published research in collaboration with Middlesex University investigating measures to reduce dog attacks and promote responsible dog ownership across all breeds of dog. The research considers the effectiveness of current dog control measures, and the report makes several recommendations,

including strengthening the accreditation of dog trainers and providing dog awareness courses for those with dog control issues. The report will provide the basis for the consideration of reform in this area and the Government is already working with the police, local authorities, and animal welfare stakeholders to consider the recommendations further.

Guidance is available to educate owners about handling their dogs responsibly in the vicinity of livestock and animals, in order to prevent the occurrence of attacks or chasing. Natural England recently published a refreshed version of the [Countryside Code](#), which highlights that it is best practice to keep dogs on a lead around livestock. The Code also makes specific reference to keeping dogs in sight and under control to make sure they stay away from livestock, wildlife, horses and other people unless invited. Moreover, the Code helpfully sets out certain legal requirements, encouraging visitors to always check local signs as there are locations where you must keep your dog on a lead around livestock for all or part of the year.

In addition, dog owners can prevent incidents of chasing by undertaking appropriate training. It is important that dogs are trained to behave well, ideally from a young age, and introduced gradually and positively to different environments, people and animals. Reward-based training for dogs is widely regarded as the preferred method of training. Owners who have concerns about controlling their dog's behaviour may take advice from their vet or a suitably qualified dog behaviourist or trainer. The Animal Behaviour and Training Council maintains national registers of appropriately qualified trainers and behaviourists and The Code of Practice for the Welfare of Dogs also details best practice methods of training.

■ **Members: Correspondence**

Robert Largan: [\[541\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when he will respond to the correspondence of 7 March 2022 from the hon. Member for High Peak, , referenced RL35918.

Victoria Prentis:

A reply to the hon. Member is being prepared and will be issued very shortly. I apologise for the delay in responding to the hon. Member.

■ **Water: Conservation**

Dr Alan Whitehead: [\[22\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will take steps with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on additional ringfenced funding for the roll-out of water saving technologies.

Rebecca Pow:

There are no plans for additional ringfenced funding for the roll-out of water saving technologies. Some water companies are already funding water saving measures for their customers and we continue to work towards delivering the Written Ministerial

Statement on reducing demand for water, including introducing a water efficiency label.

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

■ Afghanistan: Mayhew

Mick Whitley: [\[456\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to assist Afghan nationals who formerly worked for the animal charity Mayhew and are now resident in Pakistan safely reach the UK.

James Cleverly:

Where Afghan nationals have been approved for relocation, we are continuing to support them to come to the UK.

■ Afghanistan: Refugees

Stephen Morgan: [\[1540\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to ensure the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme is able to support women who remain in the country and are unable to travel unchaperoned.

James Cleverly:

The Home Office have overall responsibility for the Afghanistan Citizen Resettlement Scheme. The then Minister for Afghan Resettlement, Victoria Atkins MP, announced the opening of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) on 6 January. The scheme will prioritise those who have assisted the UK efforts in Afghanistan and stood up for values such as democracy, women's rights, freedom of speech, and rule of law, and vulnerable people, including women and girls at risk, and members of minority groups at risk (including ethnic and religious minorities and LGBT+).

Spouses, partners and dependent children under the age of 18 of eligible individuals will be eligible for the scheme. Other family members may be resettled in exceptional circumstances.

Since the end of Op Pitting, the Government have supported over 4,600 individuals to leave Afghanistan. We will continue to work to ensure those still in Afghanistan are able to depart the country safely.

Wera Hobhouse: [\[391\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, when Chevening programme students will receive confirmation of eligibility on the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme.

James Cleverly:

Under the third pathway of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS), and in year one, the Government will consider eligible, at-risk Chevening alumni for resettlement, (as well as eligible at-risk Gardaworld contractors and British Council

contractors). The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office will be in touch with those eligible to support them through the next steps.

■ Cameroon: Humanitarian Aid

Harriett Baldwin: [\[237\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what humanitarian assistance the Government is providing to Anglophone regions in Cameroon, including to those internally displaced by continuing armed conflict, in 2022.

Vicky Ford:

The crisis in the North-West and South-West regions of Cameroon has had tragic impacts on the lives of civilians. The UK has called for continued humanitarian access, and on 14 April, alongside the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Cameroon and other UN Member States, we joined the launch of the 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). The HRP outlines how humanitarian actors will support 2.6 million people living in crisis areas with multi-sectoral humanitarian assistance. Over the last five years, we have allocated over £21 million aid to Cameroon, which has included food supplies, sanitation, healthcare and social protection. This is supporting the World Food Programme and International Committee for the Red Cross to assist those affected in the North-West and South-West regions.

■ Cameroon: Medecins Sans Frontieres

Harriett Baldwin: [\[236\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the impact on the humanitarian situation in South West Cameroon of the suspension in late March of the activities of the charity Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), further to the ongoing detention of four MSF staff members by the Cameroonian Government.

Vicky Ford:

The humanitarian situation in the North West and South West (Anglophone) regions of Cameroon continues to have a tragic impact on civilians. Violence between separatist groups and Government forces has displaced 1.1 million people; over 2 million people require humanitarian support and 850,000 children are without safe access to school. MSF is an important health actor in the North West and South West regions and its temporary withdrawal has left gaps in health service provision which will disproportionately impact vulnerable populations. The UN is trying to manage these gaps; for example in April it allocated \$1.7 million Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) funds to address a cholera outbreak in the South West, which typically the MSF would have been well placed to cover.

We have allocated over £21 million of humanitarian support for needs in Cameroon over the last five years, and regularly call for continued humanitarian access. We continue to engage with UN and other humanitarian actors active across Cameroon

to ensure that urgent needs are met, including most recently with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) on 29 April, on the impact of the suspension of humanitarian activities.

■ Climate Change

Mr David Lammy:

[\[35\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment her Department has made of the implications for her policies of the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report on Climate Change 2022: Migration of College Change, published in April 2022.

Vicky Ford:

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) latest report makes clear that the window to keep 1.5 degrees alive is closing alarmingly fast. However, there are early signs of hope. For the first time, the IPCC scientists tell us that while emissions continue to rise, this growth is starting to slow. This shows that our policies and actions are starting to work. We must seize this opportunity, and double down now to accelerate action. The report also highlights the economic opportunities from the transition to a net zero economy, with the falling costs of renewable energy, and comes six months after the UK published its own comprehensive Net Zero Strategy.

The UK is encouraging all countries to revisit and strengthen their 2030 targets, as necessary, to align with the Paris Agreement temperature goal, and to do this by the end of 2022, following the agreement reached in the Glasgow Climate Pact (GCP). As COP Presidency, the UK is leading by example and considering our own response. We will publish any updates to our Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) ahead of COP27. We are also working closely with partners through our COP Presidency to ensure major events including the UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15), G7 and G20 build on the GCP ahead of COP27.

■ Development Aid: Disclosure of Information

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[1142\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will take steps to ensure that the Development Tracker website managed by her Department maintains publicly accessible records of all development projects closed as a result of reductions in overseas development assistance.

Amanda Milling:

The FCDO remains committed to Aid Transparency, and will continue to publish financial data and documentation regularly to the Development Tracker (DevTracker), with data and documents from active programmes being uploaded to the site monthly. FCDO publishes programme data (including programme names and descriptions), and documents (including business cases, annual reviews, project completion reports, as well as MoUs, Grants Agreements and contracts) regularly to the site. Data and documents relating to closed programmes remain on DevTracker,

unless a decision is taken to redact or remove them for the safety and security of individuals and organisations, who may be working in the more sensitive countries we operate in.

■ **EU Countries: Democracy**

John Howell: [\[157\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the debate entitled Safeguarding and promoting genuine democracy in Europe, which took place at the Council of Europe on 28 April 2022.

James Cleverly:

The UK has a long track record of supporting democracy and inclusive governance. We are committed to working with partners and allies across the world, including civil society, to support more open, inclusive and accountable societies. The government recognises the crucial work of the Council of Europe and in particular PACE in this sphere, noting that recommendations will go to the Committee of Ministers in due course for appropriate review.

■ **Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Early Day Motions**

Patrick Grady: [\[1514\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will publish a response to Early Day Motion 36 on arrests in Hong Kong.

Amanda Milling:

As Minister Cleverly set out in this House on 12 May, the Hong Kong authorities' decision to target leading pro-democracy figures including Cardinal Zen, Margaret Ng, Hui-Po-Keung and Denise Ho under the National Security Law is unacceptable.

Freedom of expression and the right to peaceful protest, which are protected in both the Joint Declaration and the Basic Law, are fundamental to Hong Kong's way of life.

■ **Morocco: Trials**

Kim Johnson: [\[516\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she asked the UK Ambassador to Morocco to send an observer to the trial of two students from Western Sahara, Mohammed Layichi and Hassan Alloud, which commenced on 5 May in Agadir.

James Cleverly:

Human rights is a UK priority around the world, including in Morocco. We regularly discuss human rights issues with the Moroccan authorities, including individual cases.

Rwanda: Human Rights and Security**Mr David Lammy:** [29]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of the current (a) human rights and (b) security situation in Rwanda.

Mr David Lammy: [30]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessments she has made of the threats facing minority groups in Rwanda.

Vicky Ford:

Rwanda is a fundamentally safe and secure country with respect for the rule of law. The World Justice Projects Rule of Law index ranks Rwanda top in African and amongst low income countries for order and security.

Rwanda has a strong record on economic and social rights, promotion of gender equality, and protecting the rights of migrants. We discuss regularly any concerns with the Government of Rwanda through our High Commission in Kigali and at Ministerial level we firmly believe that civil society and opposition parties must be able to operate freely, holding the Government to account and contributing to the debate on how Rwanda should be governed.

The Rwandan constitution prohibits all forms of discrimination based on identity. We continue to work with the Government and with minority communities in Rwanda to improve their situation in the country.

Shireen Abu Akleh**Afzal Khan:** [1541]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if her Department will take steps to encourage an independent inquiry by the parties involved into the death of Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Aqleh.

Afzal Khan: [1542]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she has made any representations to her Israeli counterpart on the murder of Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Aqleh.

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. The UK Ambassador to Israel has 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.

■ Sub-Saharan Africa: Obstetric Fistula**Ms Lyn Brown:****[1140]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps her Department will take to support the prevention of Obstetric fistula globally in 2022-2023; and how much funding will be allocated to programmes in Sub-Saharan Africa to this end..

Amanda Milling:

The UK is well aware of the lasting trauma caused by obstetric fistula globally - the stigmatisation that results and the ultimate ruin of many women's lives. The condition affects up to 100,000 women each year, largely in low income countries. The UK's work is mainly on the prevention of obstetric fistula. Key factors include delaying the age of first pregnancy and ensuring access to timely quality obstetric care. The UK supports family planning, adolescent sexual reproductive health and rights and maternal health through a combination of central and country programmes, such as the £260 million Women's Integrated Sexual Health programme (2018-2023), which now works across 17 African countries. We recently published a paper outlining our approach to Ending the Preventable Deaths of Mothers, Babies and Children by 2030.

We cannot comment on plans for specific countries or regions until ongoing business planning is finalised.

■ Sudan: Democracy**Dr Luke Evans:****[500]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps is she taking to help support the development of a democratic Sudan.

Vicky Ford:

Since the military coup in October 2021 we have consistently pressed for a return to Sudan's transition to democracy. This includes through statements, discussion at the UN Security Council, and directly with different Sudanese political actors. We also provide support to civil society and the UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan, which is mandated to assist Sudan's transition to democracy. Further, we have conveyed to Sudan's military leadership that the restoration of a credible civilian-led government is vital for the resumption of economic support and international debt relief.

We welcome the efforts of the UN and African Union to facilitate talks to end the crisis and urge all sides to engage fully in this process. We also call for the military to end arbitrary detentions, lift the State of Emergency and allow people to protest without fear of violence. These messages were delivered directly to Sudan's military leadership and other political actors during a recent visit to Khartoum by the UK Envoy for the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea, and other envoys, on 27-29 April.

■ Sudan: Humanitarian Aid**Dr Luke Evans:****[501]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made about the current impact of UK humanitarian aid to Sudan.

Vicky Ford:

We are concerned at the levels of humanitarian need in Sudan, with almost half the population expected to face hunger this year and the World Food Programme (WFP) estimates up to 20 million people will face "emergency" or "crisis" levels of acute food insecurity in 2022. This situation is driven by the ongoing political and economic crisis. As a leading donor, the UK continues to deliver lifesaving support to those who need it most. In 2021 we contributed £27 million to humanitarian response via partners, including the World Food Programme, the UN-led Sudan Humanitarian Fund, and the International Committee of the Red Cross. This provided approximately 1.2 million people with urgent assistance such as food, cash and voucher support, safe drinking water, shelter, and sanitation, with over 500,000 vulnerable children receiving free school meals.

■ Tanzania: Education**Preet Kaur Gill:****[407]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what comparative assessment she has made of the impact of the levels of funding for the Shule Bora education programme announced in (a) March 2020 and (b) April 2022 on that programme's ability to meet its objectives relating to the (i) improvement of (A) learning outcomes, (B) transition rates to secondary school for girls and (C) access to education for children with disabilities and (ii) reduction of sexual and physical violence.

Vicky Ford:

We have sought to maximise the effect of our ODA by (i) encouraging additional funding from other development partners, including a \$500 million World Bank concessional loan for primary education and a circa \$120 million Global Partnership in Education (GPE) grant; (ii) supporting government reforms to strengthen the management of education systems so that domestic funds are spent to maximum effect. In this way, we are confident UK taxpayers will contribute to the key areas of learning, inclusion, safety and increased transition of girls to secondary school. Our support will enable Shule Bora to reach over 4 million children in Tanzania with improved learning outcomes, and to help over 250,000 more girls (some with disabilities) to transition into secondary school. It will establish a nationwide monitoring and improvement system for schools, making them safer, more inclusive and free from violence.

■ Tigray: Humanitarian Aid**Preet Kaur Gill:** **[400]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what progress she has made on delivering humanitarian assistance and supplies to Ethiopia's Tigray region during the ceasefire in that region.

Vicky Ford:

As I observed in my statement of 1 April, the arrival of a humanitarian convoy in Tigrayan-controlled areas on that day was a welcome development, but there remains an acute and urgent requirement for sustained and unimpeded humanitarian access. I reiterated this critical need when I met with Ethiopian Finance Minister Ahmed Shide on 21 April, and again in my statement on 28 April. More than 400,000 people are experiencing catastrophic famine-like conditions in Tigray and this year nearly 30 million people throughout the country will require life-saving aid. In Northern Ethiopia conflict has affected more than 9 million people - including 5.2 million people in Tigray, where humanitarian access is negligible.

Since the start of the conflict in November 2020 the UK has allocated more than £75 million in humanitarian assistance for Northern Ethiopia. This includes £15.6 million to the World Food Programme (WFP) for its food and nutrition operations in Northern Ethiopia. This helped WFP reach more than 885,000 people with food assistance and approximately 219,000 people with nutrition support. It has funded 54 trucks for humanitarian convoys, 28 of them involved in the latest convoy on 24-25 April.

■ Ukraine: Armed Conflict**Mr David Lammy:** **[32]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment her Department has made of the impact of the war in Ukraine on food shortages and famine in the Global South.

James Cleverly:

Russia's invasion of Ukraine is exacerbating global food insecurity risks, already heightened by climate change, conflict and Covid-19. 43 million people are living a step away from famine; almost 570,000 people are estimated to be living in famine-like conditions. With 1.7 billion people in over 100 countries facing food, energy and commodity price rises, the global impact of Russia's war and the pursuit of practical solutions is a key priority for the UK.

We are calling for all countries to keep food trade flowing. At the World Bank and IMF Spring Meetings in April, the UK and our partners secured the largest ever financial commitment from the World Bank: \$170 billion until end June 2023 to support countries faced with economic hardship as a result of the Russian invasion and its impact on the world. With G7 allies, we are discussing Germany's proposal for a G7 Global Alliance on Food Security, to scale up a rapid, needs-based coordinated response, while building on current food security architecture and avoiding a fragmented global response.

■ Ukraine: British Nationals Abroad**Luke Pollard:**[\[1334\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what estimate she has made of how many British nationals will join the conflict in Ukraine in the next three months to fight for (a) Russia and (b) Ukraine.

James Cleverly:

The Government does not currently have an estimate of British Nationals fighting in Ukraine, but we are working with the Government of Ukraine to understand how many British Nationals have joined the Ukrainian Armed Forces. We do not have an estimate of the British Nationals fighting in the Russian military, or with Russian-aligned forces. The FCDO is advising people to follow our travel advice, which is not to travel to Ukraine. Those currently in Ukraine are advised to leave as soon as they can.

Luke Pollard:[\[1335\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to monitor the application of the Geneva Conventions to British nationals captured by Russian forces in Ukraine since 24 February 2022.

James Cleverly:

British nationals captured by Russian forces or proxies and detained in eastern Ukraine must be treated in accordance with International Humanitarian Law, including the Geneva Conventions. This applies to those who were fighting as part of the Ukraine Armed Forces and therefore considered as prisoners of war, and civilians who are protected persons under International Humanitarian Law. The Government is clear that responsibility for the treatment of any foreign nationals detained in separatist-controlled areas of Ukraine lies with Russia, and we will hold them to account.

■ Ukraine: Military Aid**Duncan Baker:**[\[1559\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of (a) reported shortages of medical and basic need items, including first aid kits on the front-lines, amongst Ukrainian forces and (b) the further steps that the UK Government could take to assist in this matter.

James Cleverly:

The UK has not supplied medical equipment to the Ukrainian military during this conflict. We have focused our supply of military support on other areas, including heavier weapons, while other countries have supplied medical support. We have however made the offer that the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine and other UK military medical facilities will be made available to injured Ukrainian service personnel.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE■ **Abortion**

Ian Paisley: [\[1172\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much funding the NHS has spent on repeat abortions over the last year.

Ian Paisley: [\[1174\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how NHS funding on abortion is recorded and reported by his Department; and whether that information is available in a searchable format.

Ian Paisley: [\[1175\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how her Department (a) records and (b) reports on the allocation of NHS funding for abortion; and whether that information is presented in a searchable format.

Ian Paisley: [\[1176\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Social Care, what steps the NHS takes to monitor and review its funding of abortions carried out by third-party providers.

Maggie Throup:

The information requested is not collected centrally. Clinical commissioning groups are responsible for commissioning abortion services and monitoring funding and contracts.

■ **Ambulance Services: Hendon**

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[720\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate his Department has made of the average waiting time for an ambulance in the regional health authority area that covers the Hendon constituency in the latest period for which data is available.

Edward Argar:

The information is not collected in the format requested. Response times are not measured by regional health authority area and the average waiting time for an ambulance is not collected centrally.

■ **Cancer: Stockport**

Navendu Mishra: [\[998\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the (a) levels of cancer diagnoses and (b) forecasted increases in diagnosis will affect resources apportioned by the Government for treating cancer patients in Stockport Constituency and Borough.

Maria Caulfield:

[Holding answer 16 May 2022]: Funding allocated to integrated care boards in England for the provision of services, including in Stockport, is determined by a range of factors. While this does not specifically include the level of cancer diagnoses, the funding formula takes account of local factors such as age, deprivation and unmet health needs, which may have a correlation with cancer rates in that area.

Care Homes: Disease Control**Martyn Day:**[\[345\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the efficacy of infection prevention and control measures in social care settings as of 10 May 2022; and if he will make a statement.

Gillian Keegan:

No specific assessment has been made. On 31 March 2022, we issued updated guidance on infection prevention and control measures. This includes advice on personal protective equipment, testing and hand hygiene. These measures balance the risk of COVID-19 transmission in care settings, maintain protections for care recipients and aim to avoid restrictions on residents' movement and activities as far as possible.

Martyn Day:[\[346\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps his Department has taken to help ensure that high standards of infection prevention and control are implemented consistently across social care settings.

Gillian Keegan:

In November 2021, the Department launched the IPC Champions Network for Adult Social Care, a forum for infection prevention and control (IPC) experts in the sector to share best practice. Accompanying the launch, the Department created a guide providing examples of IPC measures and best practice in various care settings. On 31 March 2022, we also published updated IPC guidance supported by webinars hosted by the Chief Nurse for Adult Social Care.

Care Homes: Sick Pay**Steve McCabe:**[\[1475\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the current sick pay policy for care home staff who are absent due to covid-19.

Gillian Keegan:

The majority of staff working in the social care sector are employed by private providers which determine pay and the terms and conditions of employment. All providers should support good health and safety practice and employers should ensure staff stay away from the workplace where there would be a health risk to those in their care.

Statutory Sick Pay is available to those infected by COVID-19 and are unable to work, payable after four days. It is paid at £99.35 per week and is available in all sectors to those who earn more than £123 a week on average.

■ **Coronavirus: Disease Control**

Rachael Maskell: [\[1223\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether it is his Department's policy that two per cent covid-19 prevalence in the population signifies covid-19 levels being under control.

Maggie Throup:

There is no predetermined level of prevalence. A range of factors are reviewed, including preparedness and capacity of the National Health Service, to ensure that current measures are appropriate.

■ **Coronavirus: Screening**

Esther McVey: [\[1169\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether companies that paid the mandatory desktop review fee to submit an individual application to the Coronavirus Test Devices Approval process will be reimbursed if no outcome is given by the UK Security Agency before the 31 May temporary protocol deadline.

Maggie Throup:

The fee is charged to assess an applicant test to ensure it is safe and of sufficient quality to enter the United Kingdom market. It is not related to the 31 May temporary protocol deadline therefore no reimbursement will be made.

■ **Dementia: Diagnosis**

Jim Shannon: [\[248\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Answer of 29 September 2021 to Question 50151 on Dementia: Diagnosis, what recent assessment he has made of the impact of the £17 million to NHS England and NHS improvement on improving dementia diagnosis.

Gillian Keegan:

No formal assessment has yet been made. NHS England and NHS Improvement continue to monitor the monthly diagnosis rate and are analysing trends at regional and sustainability and transformation partnership level to aid targeted efforts to improve dementia diagnosis rates in 2022/23.

We will set out plans for dementia in England later this year. The strategy will focus on the health and care needs of people living with dementia and their carers, including dementia diagnoses.

■ Disability**John Howell:**[\[153\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the debate entitled Deinstitutionalisation of persons with disabilities, which took place at the Council of Europe on 26 April 2022.

Gillian Keegan:

We welcome this debate, as the NHS Long Term Plan committed to achieving at least a 50% reduction in the number of people with a learning disability and autistic people who are inpatients in mental health hospitals by March 2024.

The proposed reforms to the Mental Health Act 1983 aim to end inappropriate detentions of people with a learning disability and autistic people. We are also developing the 'Building the right support' action plan to reduce reliance on mental health inpatient care through the provision of services in the community.

■ Epilepsy: Cannabis**Alberto Costa:**[\[827\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he is taking steps to establish a domestic supply of Bedrocan oil for children suffering with severe epilepsy.

Maria Caulfield:

Domestic manufacture of Bedrolite oil has now been established. The Dutch Government has agreed to allow continued supply of Bedrocan oils against United Kingdom prescriptions until 1 July 2022 to allow domestic manufacture of Bedrocan oils used by patients in the UK to be established. The Department continues to work with the Dutch Government, the Home Office and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency to ensure the uninterrupted supply of Bedrocan oils beyond this period.

■ Health Services and Social Services: Coronavirus**Rachael Maskell:**[\[1222\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department plans to extend availability of lateral flow tests in health and care settings beyond Autumn 2022, in the event that covid-19 rates rise in Autumn-Winter 2022.

Maggie Throup:

For those unable to mount a full immune response, testing to support effective COVID-19 treatments are available and will be retained. We will continue to monitor prevalence and whether additional testing in health and care settings is required in autumn and winter 2022 will be kept under review.

■ Health Services Safety Investigations Body**Sir Bernard Jenkin:** [\[567\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when the provisions of the Health and Care Act in respect of the Health Services Safety Investigation Body will be brought into force, and if he will make a statement.

Maria Caulfield:

We intend to commence provisions to enable the Health Services Safety Investigation Body to be established and fully operational by April 2023.

■ Heart Diseases: Diagnosis**Steve McCabe:** [\[591\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate his Department has made of the estimated number of people living with undiagnosed heart valve disease.

Maria Caulfield:

No specific estimate has been made.

A new pre-diagnosis breathlessness pathway has been developed to support the improved recognition and timely diagnosis of heart failure and heart valve disease. Community diagnostic centres have also been launched to support Primary Care Network diagnostic services and improve detection of conditions such as heart failure and heart valve disease.

NHS England and NHS Improvement are working with Health Education England and cardiology clinicians in England to develop new heart failure and heart valve disease e-learning. This will support healthcare professionals to recognise the symptoms of heart failure and valve disease and to diagnose, manage and provide care to patients with heart disease in the community.

Steve McCabe: [\[592\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress has been made on the commitments in the NHS Long Term Plan to improve the detection of heart valve disease.

Maria Caulfield:

NHS England and NHS Improvement are working with Health Education England to develop new e-learning to support healthcare professionals to recognise the symptoms of heart valve disease and diagnose, manage and provide care for these patients. There are currently eight training modules available, with further resources to be published in 2022

A full-time integrated training scheme leading to both a post-graduate certificate in echocardiology and level 2 British Society of Echocardiography accreditation in transthoracic echocardiograms has been developed to increase the number of cardiac physiologists. There are currently 57 trainees in the scheme with another 85 funded posts from October 2022. The National Health Service is investing in cardiac

networks to support whole pathway improvements. These networks have been developed to improve prevention, diagnosis, treatment and end of life care.

■ **Hormone Replacement Therapy**

Tulip Siddiq: [\[899\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what his timetable is for publishing the findings of the public consultation on making hormone replacement therapy products available without the need for prescription.

Maria Caulfield:

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency's (MHRA) consultation on reclassifying a locally acting hormone replacement therapy (HRT), Gina 10 microgram vaginal tablets, from a prescription-only to pharmacy medicine has closed. The MHRA is currently reviewing the responses received and the outcome of the consultation will be available in due course. The consultation did not apply to other HRT products.

■ **Hormone Replacement Therapy: Prescriptions**

Ruth Cadbury: [\[792\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to reduce the cost of prescriptions for Hormone Replacement Therapy below £9.35.

Maria Caulfield:

We are working with the NHS Business Services Authority to implement a new hormone replacement therapy (HRT) prescription prepayment certificate as soon as possible. By April 2023, the annual cost for all HRT products will be the cost of two prescription charges, which is currently £18.70.

■ **Maternity Services at Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust Independent Review**

Peter Aldous: [\[743\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that the recommendations of the Ockenden Report are implemented in all hospitals where there is a maternity unit.

Maria Caulfield:

The Ockenden Report outlined 15 immediate and essential actions to improve care and safety in maternity services in England. NHS England has written to all trusts with maternity services to request that maternity providers assess services against these 15 actions and ensure that services meet the standards expected.

We have also committed to the creation of a new working group to guide the Maternity Transformation Programme on the implementation of the recommendations in the report. NHS England has also announced a £127 million investment in the National Health Service maternity workforce and to improve neonatal care.

■ Maternity Services: Death**Peter Aldous:** [\[744\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to reduce deaths in NHS maternity units.

Maria Caulfield:

The Maternity Safety Strategy has funded initiatives such as the Saving Babies Lives Care Bundle, Maternal Medicine Networks and Maternal Mental Health Hubs to halve the number of stillbirths, maternal and neonatal deaths by 2025. Since 2010, these initiatives have contributed to a 25% reduction in the stillbirth rate, a 36% reduction in the neonatal mortality rate for babies born over the 24-week gestational age of viability, and a 17% reduction in maternal mortality.

NHS England are investing £127 million into the maternity system to ensure safe staffing levels in maternity and neonatal care. This is in addition to £95 million to support the recruitment of 1,200 more midwives and 100 more consultant obstetricians. A further £6.8 million is being provided to support Local Maternity Systems to implement equity and equality action plans and implement enhanced Continuity of Carer to improve safe outcomes for mothers and babies from black, Asian and mixed ethnic groups and those living in the most deprived areas.

■ Medical Equipment: Energy**Daisy Cooper:** [\[962\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the increased energy costs facing dialysis patients and other patients using medical equipment at home.

Maria Caulfield:

No recent assessment has been made. NHS England's service specification on adult home dialysis that the additional direct utility costs for home dialysis for adults will be reimbursed to the patient through the payment of the national tariff to the patient's usual dialysis provider. For paediatric home haemodialysis, there is currently no national tariff and as such, it is at the discretion of individual providers as to whether additional direct utility costs for patients are reimbursed.

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy monitors the energy market in the United Kingdom to ensure it meets the need of all consumers, including those using medical equipment at home.

■ Members: Correspondence**Paul Maynard:** [\[159\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to respond to the correspondence of 1 February 2022 from the hon. Member for Blackpool North and Cleveleys on vaccine mandates in the private sector on behalf of a constituent.

Edward Argar:

We replied to the hon. Member on 18 May 2022.

Robert Largan:[\[529\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to respond to the enquiry from the hon. Member for High Peak dated 7 February 2022, reference RL31852.

Edward Argar:

We replied to the hon. Member on 18 May 2022.

John Penrose:[\[675\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to respond to the letters of 4 January and 1 February 2022 from the hon. Member for Weston-super-Mare on behalf of a constituent, Ms. Roxanne Blackmore.

Edward Argar:

We replied to the hon. Member on 16 May.

Midwives**Peter Aldous:**[\[740\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to improve recruitment and retention in the midwifery service.

Edward Argar:

NHS England recently announced a £127 million investment to increase staffing numbers in maternity and neonatal services. This is in addition to £95 million allocated in 2021 to support the recruitment of 1,200 more midwives and 100 more consultant obstetricians. Health Education England is working with stakeholders to provide an additional 3,650 midwifery student training places by March 2023, leading to professional registration. In 2019/20, there were 626 additional places and 1,140 in 2020/21 and we are on schedule to meet the target for 2021/22.

The NHS People Plan includes a programme for organisations to retain staff through prioritising health and wellbeing, building an inclusive and compassionate culture in the National Health Service and strengthening support for flexible working. The NHS Retention Programme also seeks to understand why staff leave, resulting in targeted interventions to support staff to stay whilst keeping them well.

Peter Aldous:[\[742\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to support the midwifery service in its recovery from the covid-19 pandemic.

Maria Caulfield:

The Chief Midwifery Officer's Health and Wellbeing Taskforce has been established to listen and respond to concerns raised by midwives following the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The number of Professional Midwifery Advocates (PMAs) has increased by 160, providing restorative clinical supervision to the maternity workforce

in England. Psychological support training is being provided for all 750 PMAs in England to incorporate into the practice and supervision PMAs provide, whilst maintaining their own wellbeing. A midwifery leadership and support course is currently being piloted. Following an evaluation of the pilot, further courses will be commissioned.

NHS England recently announced a £127 million investment in maternity services to increase the number of staff. This is in addition to £95 million to support the recruitment of 1,200 midwives and 100 consultant obstetricians. In 2022/23, NHS England will invest a further £8 million to ensure that each maternity unit can offer enhanced supernumerary support to newly qualified and returning midwives to aid retention and pastoral support.

■ Neurology

Peter Aldous: [\[732\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of the total adult social care budget has been spent on people with neurological conditions annually from 2013-14 to 2020-21; and if he will make a statement.

Gillian Keegan:

The data is not collected in the format requested as NHS Digital's data does not show neurological conditions recorded as a primary support reason.

■ NHS: Agency Workers

Rachael Maskell: [\[316\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much the NHS has spent on agency and locum staff in York in each of the last five years.

Edward Argar:

This information is not held in the format requested.

■ Prostate Cancer

Sir Charles Walker: [\[86\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to help improve the (a) early detection and (b) treatment of prostate cancer; and if he will make a statement.

Maria Caulfield:

[Holding answer 16 May 2022]: In February and March 2022, NHS England and NHS Improvement and Prostate Cancer UK delivered an awareness campaign on prostate cancer risks. This encouraged men to use Prostate Cancer UK's clinically approved risk checker to understand their level of risk and make an informed choice on whether to have further tests.

NHS England and NHS Improvement are implementing a best practice timed pathway for prostate cancer, including the use of multi-parametric magnetic

resonance imaging prior to biopsy for a faster diagnosis. NHS England and NHS Improvement have introduced a new financial incentive for 2022/23 through the Commissioning for Quality and Innovation scheme to support the delivery of the pathway.

In 2018, we allocated £75 million for clinical trials for prostate cancer focusing on improving early diagnosis and survival rates and exploring options for different treatments. Through the Early Access to Medicines Scheme, patients can now access lutetium vipivotide tetraxetan in the treatment of prostate-specific membrane antigen positive metastatic castration-resistant prostate cancer.

■ **Surgery: Waiting Lists**

Rachael Maskell: [\[853\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has made an estimate of the additional healthcare costs associated with delayed treatment including from (a) GP appointments, (b) prescription drugs and (c) emergency services.

Maria Caulfield:

No specific estimate has been made.

■ **Veterans: Mental Health Services**

Stephanie Peacock: [\[1268\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many calls Op COURAGE has received each month from October 2021.

Gillian Keegan:

The following table shows the number of referrals received by Op COURAGE in each month from October 2021 to March 2022. Data from April 2022 is not yet available.

MONTH OF REFERRAL	NUMBER OF REFERRALS
October 2021	490
November 2021	560
December 2021	436
January 2022	489
February 2022	505
March 2022	520

HOME OFFICE■ **Asylum**

Rachael Maskell: [\[322\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of integrating asylum applicants in local communities while those people are waiting for their application to be processed.

Kevin Foster:

The UK has a proud history of providing protection to those who need it and this Government is committed to ensuring refugees can take positive steps towards integration as they rebuild their lives in the UK. However, as not all of those who seek asylum are found to need international protection, we are not considering the merits of integrating asylum applicants in local communities whilst they wait for their application to be processed. Rather than invest in integration for those who may not qualify, this Government's priority is to focus our efforts and resources to support those who most need it.

■ **Asylum: Applications**

Rachael Maskell: [\[1229\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in the context of the time taken to process asylum applications, if she will (a) enable asylum seekers to work while their applications are being processed and (b) make an assessment of the potential merits of ending no recourse to public funds (i) from arrival, (ii) after one month and (iii) after three months.

Kevin Foster:

We allow asylum seekers to work if their claim has been outstanding for 12 months or more, through no fault of their own. Those permitted to work are restricted to jobs on the Shortage Occupation List (SOL).

Only those who are normally or habitually resident in the UK are entitled to access benefits and social housing, reflecting their strength of connection to the UK. This includes those with indefinite leave to remain, refugees, protected persons and those granted discretionary leave. Asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute can obtain support under section 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

■ **Asylum: Hotels**

Angela Crawley: [\[845\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department has taken to ensure that asylum seekers housed in bridging hotels have access to all items outlined in Section 4 of the Home Office Guide to Living in Asylum Accommodation.

Kevin Foster:

The Guide to Living in Asylum Accommodation sets out what is available for people being accommodated in asylum accommodation and who are eligible for asylum support. Those accommodated in bridging hotels have been evacuated from Afghanistan and are refugees with leave to remain in the country, they are not asylum seekers and therefore are not eligible for asylum support and so the guide does not apply to them.

In 2021 The UK Government undertook the biggest and fastest emergency evacuation in recent history, helping over 15,000 people to safety from Afghanistan. Due to the scale and pace of the evacuation we were not able to source appropriate accommodation in the normal way, we therefore had to use bridging hotels as a temporary measure. In these hotels we provide 3 meals a day for residents. All arrivals received an Aspen Card with funds equivalent to those on Universal Credit (UC). The families/individuals will then apply for UC and Aspen Cards will be terminated.

■ Asylum: Housing**Dr Rupa Huq:****[371]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum seekers have been waiting for a decision on eligibility for Section 95 support for longer than (a) three months, (b) six months (c) nine months and (d) 12 months; and how many asylum seekers in each of those categories are accommodated in Ealing Central and Acton constituency.

Kevin Foster:

Asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute can apply for free accommodation and cash support to cover their essential living needs whilst their cases are considered. If they have an emergency need for accommodation they can ask to access initial accommodation under Section 98 whilst their support applications are being processed. The vast majority of such requests are processed on the same day. We aim to resolve Section 95 applications received from people in Initial Accommodation within 3 days and other applications from people staying in private accommodation within 10 days.

All cases are considered on their own merits, in some cases decisions can take longer as applicants are asked to provide further information before a decision on eligibility can be reached. The Home Office does not publish a breakdown of statistics which disaggregates the number of asylum seekers waiting on an eligibility decision for Section 95 support. These figures are not available in a reportable format and to provide the information could only be done at disproportionate cost.

■ Asylum: Mental Health Services**Angela Crawley:** [\[846\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what support his Department is providing for asylum seekers who are experiencing trauma and mental health issues (a) upon their arrival to the UK and (b) in temporary accommodation.

Kevin Foster:

Asylum seekers have access to NHS health service.

All Home Office staff and contractors engaging with asylum seekers are trained to adopt a risk-based approach towards potential indications of vulnerability and to refer relevant cases onto the Safeguarding Hub, a dedicated resource assigned to identifying and safeguarding vulnerable asylum seekers.

The Safeguarding Hub works closely with the statutory agencies to signpost vulnerable customers for support with their health and social care needs.

We are investing an additional £2.3 billion a year into mental health services by 2023/24, the largest increase in mental health funding in NHS history.

■ Asylum: RAF Linton-on-Ouse**Stuart C McDonald:** [\[285\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether facilities will be in place for (a) asylum screening interviews and (b) asylum substantive interviews to be conducted at the proposed new asylum accommodation centre at RAF Linton-on-Ouse.

Stuart C McDonald: [\[286\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the likely healthcare needs that residents at the proposed asylum accommodation centre at RAF Linton-on-Ouse will have; what healthcare provision will be available on-site; whether residents will be registered with local GPs off-site; what estimate she has made of the number of GP practices in the local area; and what assessment she has made of the (a) capacity of those practices to take on new patients and (b) levels of experience in working with asylum seekers and refugees.

Stuart C McDonald: [\[287\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department plans to use a person's asylum claim type, including the admissibility or inadmissibility of that claim, to determine whether that person will be accommodated at the proposed new asylum accommodation centre at RAF Linton-on-Ouse.

Stuart C McDonald: [\[288\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, at what stage in a person's asylum claim will they be accommodated at the proposed new asylum accommodation centre at RAF Linton-on-Ouse.

Stuart C McDonald:

[289]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the adequacy of legal support for residents at the proposed new asylum accommodation centre at RAF Linton-on-Ouse.

Stuart C McDonald:

[290]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what legal advice provision will be available at the proposed new asylum accommodation centre at RAF Linton-on-Ouse; and whether she has made an (a) estimate of the number of legal firms in the local area and (b) assessment of whether those firms have the (i) capacity and (ii) necessary expertise to take on clients from that site.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 16 May 2022]: 287 - Those accommodated at Linton-on-Ouse will be admissible and have an outstanding asylum claim. Both the design of the Linton-on-Ouse operating model and the proposed site configuration will enable substantive asylum interviews to be undertaken remotely, via video conference.

285 - Asylum Seekers will have their asylum claim considered at Linton-on-Ouse and will reside there until their interview has been completed and case progressed to a decision ready stage. At this point they will be dispersed for their decision to be made and served at Dispersed Accommodation.

290 - Those accommodated at Linton-on-Ouse will have the ability to access the support of legal representation, either face-to-face or remotely. The Home Office continues to liaise with colleagues in the Ministry of Justice and Legal Aid Agency to finalise the details of this provision at Linton-on-Ouse.

286 - Initially, those accommodated at Linton-on-Ouse will be single, adult, males with limited vulnerabilities. To ensure the safety and wellbeing of those allocated accommodation at Linton, an assessment will take place by the Home Office prior to allocation using suitability criteria. The Home office continue to work with Department of Health colleagues to ensure a minimal impact on local health services.

288 - Asylum seekers will be eligible to be accommodated at Linton-on-Ouse at the early stages of their admissible asylum claim case working, after they have been screened. Initially, we will select those staying at hotels and who have applied for asylum support via the submission of an ASF1 form.

289 - Those accommodated at Linton-on-Ouse will have the ability to access the support of legal representation, either face-to-face or remotely.

■ **Crime: Scottish Limited Partnerships**

Kenny MacAskill:

[492]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the use of Scottish Limited Partnerships in criminal enterprise.

Kenny MacAskill: [493]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has received representations from (a) Police Scotland or (b) the National Crime Agency on the use of Scottish Limited Partnerships for criminal enterprise.

Kit Malthouse:

The National Risk Assessment (NRA) of Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing is the UK's stock-take of our collective knowledge of money laundering and terrorist financing risks in the UK.

The NRA is jointly produced by the Home Office and HM Treasury and draws on evidence submitted by law enforcement agencies, government departments, supervisors, firms and non-governmental organisations.

The latest NRA (published in 2020 and found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-risk-assessment-of-money-laundering-and-terrorist-financing-2020>) assesses the use of Scottish Limited Partnerships in criminal enterprise.

■ **HM Passport Office: Remote Working****Sir Christopher Chope:** [1080]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of HM Passport Office staff who worked from home on the most recent day for which information is available; and whether she plans to reduce the number of those staff working from home in the future.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 17 May 2022]: For staff whose role can only be performed from an office, they will continue to work from a Home Office building at all times.

Her Majesty's Passport Office operational teams securely process passport applications both working from an office and through the use of homeworking solutions. Working from home has no impact upon HM Passport Office's capacity to process passport applications, with output running at record levels. In March and April, HMPO processed over 2 million passport applications.

■ **HM Passport Office: Staff****Peter Kyle:** [370]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps the Government is taking to increase capacity in Her Majesty's Passport Office to enable significant additional appointments for fast track applications to be made within the next six weeks.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 16 May 2022]: 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.

HM Passport Office has increased its staffing numbers by 500 since April 2021, and is in the process of recruiting a further 700. This has helped to ensure that passport applications continue to be processed in higher numbers than ever before. Across March and April 2022, HM Passport Office completed the processing of nearly two million applications.

■ **HM Passport Office: Standards**

Sir Christopher Chope:

[\[584\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the passport renewal application submitted on 21 March 2022 PEX 384 617 3794 will be processed and returned to the applicant in time to enable them to travel on 20 May 2022.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 16 May 2022]: It is not Her Majesty's Passport Office (HM Passport Office) practice to discuss individual cases in the public domain.

■ **Immigration Controls: Airports**

Bell Ribeiro-Addy:

[\[470\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate her Department has made of the number of (a) burgundy and (b) blue British passports that must be manually checked by a Border Force officer as a result of a failure at an eGate.

Kevin Foster:

a) Passengers may be referred from the eGates to an officer at PCP desks for a variety of reasons. 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.

b) It is impossible to quantify the answer from when as the UK/EU passports (burgundy) have been in circulation for 20+ years.

Bell Ribeiro-Addy:

[\[471\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the impact of IT issues on the efficiency of eGates in UK airports.

Kevin Foster:

From late September through to mid-November we saw a series of short interruptions of service for the Border Crossing system and eGates. These had a variety of root causes, and a contributory factor was the need to expedite the roll-out of the new gates, which incorporated checking the Passenger Locator Form as part of reopening

the UK's border - this compression of timescales, meant we experienced more problems than in previous upgrades.

We have since taken a series of actions to review and address the cause of these issues and have increased monitoring to identify system pressures early to avoid interruptions to service - this has been reflected in a reduction of service interruptions.

Border Force works closely with technology partners to minimise the impact of service interruptions and have a series of operational mitigations to manage the impact on passenger flows, whilst ensuring border security is maintained at all times.

■ **Members: Correspondence**

Rosie Cooper: [\[1129\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will assist with obtaining a response from the Director General for UKVI to a letter dated 17 March 2022 from the hon Member for West Lancashire reference ZA59210 regarding an asylum claim.

Kevin Foster:

The Home Office responded to the correspondence on 13 May 2022.

■ **Police: Pensions**

Grahame Morris: [\[1161\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when will she publish the guidance necessary for calculating the correct pension entitlement for retiring police officers.

Kit Malthouse:

[Holding answer 17 May 2022]: The Government is taking steps to remove discrimination on the grounds of age, associated with the transitional protection arrangements linked to the 2015 pension reforms, which was subsequently identified by the courts.

The Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices Act (PSPJOA) received Royal Assent on 10 March, establishing the legal framework to provide this remedy. The Police and Firefighters' Pension Schemes (Amendment) Regulations 2022 ('the Regulations') provided the first, prospective, element of the remedy in respect of police pensions.

The second, retrospective, part of the remedy is more complex and will require further detailed changes to scheme regulations using the powers in the PSPJOA. These changes will be in force by 1 October 2023, in line with the Government's commitments under that Act.

The Home Office and the National Police Chiefs' Council are developing supporting material that will allow scheme members to make an informed choice about their pension options at the point they retire.

■ Proceeds of Crime

John Howell:

[156]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has been made of the implications for her policies of the debate entitled How to put confiscated criminal assets to good use?, which took place at the Council of Europe on 27 April 2022.

Damian Hinds:

The UK has mature policies in place relating to the disposal of confiscated criminal assets. Domestically, confiscated assets are disposed of in line with the Asset Recovery Incentivisation Scheme (ARIS), under which operational agencies are allocated a portion of the assets recovered.

The use of ARIS allocations/payments is a matter for each agency. However, in the spirit of the Scheme, incentive payments should be used to drive up performance on asset recovery and, where appropriate, to fund local crime fighting priorities for the benefit of the community.

Internationally, the UK is fully committed to recovering and returning corruptly obtained assets. HMG has recently published its first ever Framework for Transparent and Accountable Return, which details HMG's process for returning assets in line with UNCAC, including the involvement of civil society actors in this process.

■ Refugees

Stuart C McDonald:

[291]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her oral statement of 19 April 2022, Official Report, col 25, what the evidential basis is for the UK having welcomed (a) 185,000 people through safe and legal routes, including from Syria, Hong Kong, Afghanistan and Ukraine and (b) 40,000 people in recent years through refugee family reunion routes.

Kevin Foster:

The Home Office publishes data on immigration in the '[Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release](#)'. As part of that release, data up to December 2021 is available on the following areas:

- Data on those fleeing the Syrian conflict who were resettled under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme are published in table Asy_D02 of the '[asylum and resettlement detailed datasets](#)'.
- Data on BN(O) visas granted (to individuals who hold a BN(O) passport and are, or have recently been, resident in Hong Kong, and their dependants) are published in the chapter '[How many people come to the UK each year \(including visitors\)?](#)'.
- Data on refugee family reunion visas granted are published in table Fam_D01 of the '[asylum and resettlement detailed datasets](#)'.

In addition, data on visas issued under the Ukraine Family Scheme and Ukraine Sponsorship scheme are published weekly on gov.uk: [Ukraine Family Scheme and Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme \(Homes for Ukraine\) Visa Data - GOV.UK](#)

In the [Afghanistan resettlement and immigration policy statement](#), the Home Office reported that around 15,000 people had been evacuated from Afghanistan through Operation Pitting. In the six months since Operation Pitting, a further 3,000 have been helped to enter the UK.

■ Refugees: Afghanistan

Margaret Ferrier: [278]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress her Department has made on progressing Afghanistan-related cases in the context of the UK co-hosting the United Nation's pledging summit on Afghanistan's humanitarian crisis.

Kevin Foster:

On 14 April, the chairs of the UN Afghanistan Pledging Summit published a statement on the outcome of the conference, which was held in March 2022 and was co-hosted by the UK, Germany and Qatar. Highlights include pledges of \$2.4bn in support of the continued humanitarian response and a commitment to tailoring humanitarian aid in 2022 to specifically address the distinct needs of women and girls in Afghanistan. The statement can be viewed in its entirety at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/un-afghanistan-pledging-summit-chairs-statement-14-april-2022>

The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) commenced on 6 January 2022, and will provide up to 20,000 eligible women, children and others at risk with a safe and legal route to resettle in the UK.

We will exceed our initial aim to resettle 5,000 through ACRS in the first year. 6,500 people have already been brought to safety in the UK during and after the evacuation and who are eligible for the ACRS.

We are working at pace to prepare to receive the first referrals under Pathways 2 and 3 as soon as we can, so that individuals affected by the events in Afghanistan can safely arrive in the UK and rebuild their lives.

The Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) provides relocation and assistance to Locally Employed Staff directly employed by, or worked closely alongside, Her Majesty's Government and assessed to be at serious risk of threat to life in Afghanistan with over 7,000 people have been relocated to the UK so far. The ARAP remains open, and the Home Office is continuing to work with the Ministry of Defence and the FCDO to relocate those who are eligible under ARAP.

Rachael Maskell: [318]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her Department's target is for resettling Afghan refugees into permanent accommodation out of bridging hotels.

Kevin Foster:

We do not want to keep people in temporary accommodation for any longer than is absolutely necessary. We have moved – or are in the process of moving - over 6,000 Afghan Refugees since June 2021.

There is a huge effort underway to support the families into permanent homes as soon as we can so they can settle and rebuild their lives, alongside ensuring those still temporarily accommodated in hotels are given the best start to their life in the UK.

The length of time that a family will remain in a bridging hotel is dependent on a number of factors including offers of appropriate housing from local authorities.

Rachael Maskell:[\[319\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure that (a) the faith needs of Afghan refugees in bridging hotels are met during the month of Ramadan and (b) access to places of worship are facilitated from bridging hotels where there are poor transport links.

Kevin Foster:

The Home Office liaised with hotels prior to Ramadan to ensure support was in place for any individuals or families taking part in Ramadan, and normal provisions would continue for those not taking part.

Hotels are expected to provide meals compliant with non-fasting times and make additional space available for prayers if needed. They are working alongside Local Authorities and the voluntary sector who are already supporting the needs of the Afghan evacuees.

The Home Office Liaison Offers have also had these conversations with hotel staff/management on the ground along with other strategic partners. They are also visiting hotels slightly later in the day to accommodate peoples' change of daily routine.

Free transport is provided either by the Home Office or Local Authority where hotel locations are remote, to provide access to shops, places of worship and education.

Mick Whitley:[\[457\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has established a timeframe for securing permanent accommodation for Afghan refugees who are housed in hotels as of 10 May 2022.

Kevin Foster:

We do not want to keep people in temporary accommodation for any longer than is absolutely necessary. We have moved – or are in the process of moving - over 6,000 Afghan Refugees since June 2021.

There is a huge effort underway to support the families into permanent homes as soon as we can so they can settle and rebuild their lives, alongside ensuring those still temporarily accommodated in hotels are given the best start to their life in the UK.

The length of time that a family will remain in a bridging hotel is dependent on a number of factors including offers of appropriate housing from local authorities.

Mick Whitley: [\[459\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate her Department has made of the number of Afghan nationals who have sought asylum in the UK following the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021 who continue to be housed in hotels (a) nationally and (b) in the Liverpool City Region as of 10 May 2022.

Kevin Foster:

There are 12,200 Afghan nationals who have arrived under the Afghan Resettlement scheme and are accommodated in bridging hotels. However, it should be noted that these individuals are not seeking asylum in the UK, they all have leave to remain including the right to work and access benefits and other public services. Within Liverpool, there are approximately 290 individuals.

Approximately 1800 supported asylum seekers claiming to be Afghan Nationals are currently accommodated in Hotels across the UK. Of these, 55 reside in the Liverpool City Region.

■ Refugees: Resettlement

Emily Thornberry: [\[665\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 19 April to Question 150113, whether her Department's policy on evaluating ongoing refugee resettlement will govern the (a) frequency and (b) content of evaluations of refugee resettlement schemes.

Emily Thornberry: [\[666\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 19 April to Question 150113, whether her Department's policy to evaluating ongoing refugee resettlement will govern the evaluation of the (a) number of arrivals over time, (b) public discourse and responses and (c) patterns of secondary migration related to refugee resettlement schemes.

Emily Thornberry: [\[667\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 19 April to Question 150113, whether her Department's policy on evaluating ongoing refugee resettlement will govern the evaluation of (a) English the language levels, (b) health, (c) legal status, (d) employment outcomes, (e) social bridges and bonds and (f) resettlement locations of refugees.

Emily Thornberry: [\[668\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has produced internal evaluations of the (a) ACRS and ARAP schemes and (b) Homes for Ukraine scheme.

Emily Thornberry:

[669]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has produced internal evaluations of the Hong Kong BN(O) scheme beyond the 2021 Survey of Hong Kong British National (Overseas) visa holders.

Emily Thornberry:

[670]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 19 April to Question 150113, whether her Department's policy to evaluating ongoing refugee resettlement will replace the current policy for the evaluation of refugee resettlement.

Emily Thornberry:

[671]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 19 April to Question 150113, whether her Department's policy on evaluating ongoing refugee resettlement will include a requirement for the publication of an evaluation of (a) the ACRS and ARAP and (b) Homes for Ukraine schemes.

Kevin Foster:

The Home Office will set out its approach to evaluating the Government's refugee resettlement schemes in due course outlining the scope of the evaluation and the frequency of data collection.

The evaluation approach is expected to draw on the mixed-methods approach used to evaluate the previous Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme and Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme. It is expected this will include analysis of data such as numbers of arrivals over time and cohort characteristics, as well as the collection of data on refugees against a range of indicators of integration, such as education, employment, language skills, housing and health, with the aim of better understanding barriers to integration and identifying how best to support resettled refugees' longer-term integration into life in the UK.

It is intended that the products of this evaluation will be made publicly available once the evaluation has concluded.

This Government introduced two new schemes: the Ukraine Family Scheme announced on 4 March, and the 'Homes for Ukraine' Scheme announced by the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities on 14 March

The Ukrainian Schemes have been designed in light of very different circumstances to those which led to the Government's Syrian and Afghan resettlement schemes.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities is responsible for the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

■ Refugees: Ukraine

Steve McCabe:

[594]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of expanding the Ukrainian caseworker hub based in Portcullis House for members' staff.

Kevin Foster:

The service provided by the Home Office at Portcullis House has received wide praise from Hon. Members who have made enquiries regarding Ukraine.

On 10 May 2022, the Home Office widened the service provided in Portcullis House, to include urgent enquiries about Her Majesty's Passport Office. The department is currently considering how best to expand the service to cover wider Home Office enquires, given the positive feedback.

Registration of Births, Deaths, Marriages and Civil Partnerships**Wera Hobhouse:**[\[912\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure same sex partners can register as the mothers of their child on birth certificates.

Kevin Foster:

Civil registration in the UK is a devolved matter and there are separate systems in place for Scotland and Northern Ireland.

In England and Wales, a birth entry records the name of the child's mother and, where certain conditions can be met as set out in law, the name of a second female parent.

There are currently no plans in England and Wales to change how a mother, father or parent is recorded in birth entries or on birth certificates.

UK Visas and Immigration: Telephone Services**Ronnie Cowan:**[\[1207\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many calls have been received by the UK Visas and Immigration hotline on passport cases from hon. Members' offices between 1 March and 12 May 2022.

Ronnie Cowan:[\[1208\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has received any income as a result of calls to the passport hotline made by hon. Members' offices.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 17 May 2022]: The HM Passports option on the MP enquiry line has received 797 calls between 4 April and 12 May 2022. We only have data from 4 April as this is when the specific passport option was made available. UKVI has not received any money as a result of calls to the MP Enquiry line, including the HM Passports specific option.

■ Visas: Ukraine**Caroline Lucas:**[\[1156\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to applications for visas to come to the UK from Ukrainian refugees, what service standard has been communicated to TLS Contact in relation to ensuring (a) availability of appointments for enrolling biometrics and (b) the time in which to contact applicants to collect visas when decisions have been made; how many working days it is taking from the date that a Visa Application Centre is notified of a positive visa decision to the individuals in question being informed they can collect their visas; and if she will make a statement.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 17 May 2022]: The Home Office works closely with its commercial partners to ensure sufficient appointments are made available in each location to meet demand. At the start of the Ukraine crisis we bolstered capacity in neighbouring countries by increasing staffing and IT resources and introducing pop-up locations in order to create more appointments.

TLS, who operate Visa Application Centres (VACs) overseas on behalf of UKVI, were advised to provide appointments as soon as possible to customers and within 48 hours. Since the new online Ukraine Schemes went live, and customers in possession of a valid Ukrainian/endorsed government passport no longer needed to attend a VAC to enrol their biometrics, there has been a significant reduction in the volumes of Ukrainian customers attending a VAC for biometric appointments and requiring a vignette to be issued.

TLS notify customers that their visa decision is ready for collection as soon as possible and within 24 hours of them receiving the vignette at the VAC.

■ Youth Custody**Marsha De Cordova:**[\[1543\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what (a) steps she is taking to safeguard children who are in custody and (b) procedures her Department has put in place to ensure police protect the welfare of children.

Rachel Maclean:

Nobody should be subject to any use of police powers because of their race or ethnicity and extensive safeguards exist to ensure this does not happen. Her Majesty's inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspect police forces' compliance with the legislation and College of Police guidance through their programme of national thematic inspections. In addition, the Home Office fund the Independent Custody Visiting Association who co-ordinate independent custody visitors in making unannounced visits to police custody to check on the rights and wellbeing of detainees.

Any use of strip search should be carried out in accordance with the law and with full regard for the dignity and welfare of the individual being searched – particularly if the

individual being searched is a child. If police judge it operationally necessary to strip search a child, they must do so in the presence of the child's appropriate adult (unless both the child and appropriate adult consent to it being done in the absence of the appropriate adult) and in line with safeguarding procedures.

Children and young people are a protected group with specific vulnerabilities. Their treatment in detention is governed not only by domestic legislation but also by the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#) which the UK has signed and ratified. Everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe. This means they have a role to play in identifying concerns about a child's safety and wellbeing, sharing information and taking prompt action when it is needed to protect a child.

It is essential that the police and frontline professionals recognise vulnerability in children and young people, regardless of the circumstances around any interaction. To support this the Home Office have funded the National Police Chiefs' Council's Vulnerability Knowledge and Practice programme, which shares the very best practice across forces. We also fund the College of Policing's Public Protection and Safeguarding Leadership programme which ensures senior leaders in policing have a strong understanding of vulnerability.

■ Youth Custody: Racial Discrimination

Marsha De Cordova:

[1544]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to tackle (a) racism and (b) adultification bias in the police following the Child Q case.

Rachel Maclean:

Nobody should be subject to any use of police powers because of their race or ethnicity and extensive safeguards exist to ensure this does not happen. Her Majesty's inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspect police forces' compliance with the legislation and College of Police guidance through their programme of national thematic inspections. In addition, the Home Office fund the Independent Custody Visiting Association who co-ordinate independent custody visitors in making unannounced visits to police custody to check on the rights and wellbeing of detainees.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

■ Richmond House

Michael Fabricant:

[585]

To ask the hon. Member for Broxbourne, representing the House of Commons Commission, what assessment the Commission has made of the potential merits of increasing external access to Richmond House.

Sir Charles Walker:

The Commission has not made an assessment of the potential merits of increasing external access to Richmond House and there are no plans to open the entrance into Richmond House from Whitehall. The House of Commons Commission's decision to house Members and their staff in Richmond House was for three years from summer 2021, and the scope of this light refresh did not include opening up this entrance.

In order to open up access there would be a need for intrusive infrastructure works. There would also be an increase in operational costs as the entrance would need to be manned by Met Police. Any opening up of the Whitehall entrance would need to be evaluated against the decision of the Commission (for the three-year period) and other necessary changes to provide adequate physical security arrangements for passholders entering and exiting the building at this location would also be required.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Arms Trade: Israel

Beth Winter:

[990]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if she will publish for (a) which countries and (b) what reasons her Department has (i) refused to grant and (ii) revoked arms export licenses in accordance with the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria in each year since 2010.

Beth Winter: [991]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if she will publish how many arms exports applications to Israel her Department has (a) licensed and (b) rejected in each year since 2010.

Beth Winter: [992]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if she will publish the value of all arms export licenses to Israel in each year since 2010.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

HM Government publishes Official Statistics (on a quarterly and annual basis) for export licences granted, refused and revoked to all destinations on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) and these reports contain detailed information, including the overall value, the type (e.g. Military, Other), and a summary of the items covered by these licences. The data for 2021 was published on 12th April 2022.

The Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria, was superseded by Strategic Export Licensing Criteria, announced in the Written Statement of 8th December 2021, [HCWS449](#).

■ Export Controls: India

Mr Kevan Jones: [69]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what criteria her Department plans to use to assess the success of the Open General Export Licence with India for defence procurement.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

We are continuing to work with relevant departments on the Open General Export Licence announced by my Rt Hon. Friend the Prime Minister, at the press conference with India's Prime Minister Modi on 22nd April 2022.

■ Exports: Arts

Gareth Thomas: [28]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to the Answer of 25 April 2022 to Question 153700 on Exports: Arts, which of the international creative sector events listed in that Answer Ministers attended; what their itinerary was at those events; and if she will make a statement.

Mike Freer:

The Department for International Trade (DIT) Ministers did not attend any of the events listed in the answer to Question 153700 as during the pandemic in 2021/22 support for exporters at key events was overwhelmingly virtual. In person events attended by Ministers were:

- Launch of the “Made in UK sold to the world” Creative Industries Campaign. London, September 2021. DIT Minister Freer and Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) Minister Lopez attended.
- International Trade Week in Birmingham in November. DIT Minister Freer attended.
- Create Week, Dubai Expo, November 2021; DIT led event attended by DCMS Minister Huddleston.

In 2022/2023 with international markets reopening, DIT is planning work to support more than 600 companies at 30 key events across the globe. Current support planning includes Ministerial presence at key creative industries’ events such as South X South West in the US in March 2023.

JUSTICE

■ Wormwood Scrubs Prison: Security

Andy Slaughter:

[\[1493\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Answer of 25 April 2022 to Question 158877 on Wormwood Scrubs Prison: Prison Governors, if he will place a copy of the security assessment in the Library; and if he will list vulnerabilities identified by the security assessment.

Victoria Atkins:

As with all proposals for new uses of Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) sites we have drawn up a site mitigation assessment plan. This ensures we have given full consideration of issues related to physical security, and other vulnerabilities such as estate boundaries, personal safety of staff and residents, and use of technology. It is not possible to place a copy of the assessment in the library nor to publish a list of vulnerabilities as this would compromise security and public safety.

LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

■ Freehold: Service Charges

Ruth Edwards:

[\[514\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, when the Government plans to bring forward legislative proposals to create a new statutory regime to ensure that freeholders that pay maintenance charges can access equivalent rights to those of leaseholders.

Eddie Hughes:

The Government is committed to promoting fairness and transparency for homeowners and ensuring that consumers are protected from abuse and poor

service. Where people pay estate rent charges it is not appropriate that these homeowners have limited rights to challenge these costs.

That is why the Government intends to give freeholders on private and mixed tenure estates equivalent rights to leaseholders to challenge the reasonableness of estate rentcharges, as well as a right to apply to the First-tier Tribunal to appoint a new manager to manage the provision of services.

We will translate these measures into law when parliamentary time allows. We are committed to a long-term programme of reform to make sure that homeowners experience the benefits of true home ownership.

■ Homes for Ukraine Scheme

Adam Afriyie: [681]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether his Department is taking steps to prepare for a potential increase in demand for social housing in the event that housing for Ukrainian refugees through the sponsor scheme is unsuitable, or after the initial six month period expires.

Eddie Hughes:

Six months is the minimum period of sponsorship – and the Government will support sponsors including with ‘thank you’ payments for up to 12 months. We are considering how we can best support people beyond the Home For Ukraine scheme.

Mike Amesbury: [943]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the Homes for Ukraine scheme, what assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of information produced by RESET on unmatched guests and sponsors; and what steps his Department is taking to provide improved data on unmatched sponsors to local authorities so that they can commence pre-checks earlier.

Eddie Hughes:

Guidance has been published at: www.gov.uk/guidance/homes-for-ukraine-guidance-for-councils .

■ Homes for Ukraine Scheme: Vetting

Steve McCabe: [588]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps his Department has taken to ensure appropriate vetting and safeguarding measures are in place during the matching process of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme to protect lone female refugees from exploitation.

Eddie Hughes:

In addition to the security and police 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 .

Mike Amesbury: [942]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the Homes for Ukraine scheme, what guidance his Department is providing to local authorities in the event that people fail a DBS check following a social worker review.

Mike Amesbury: [944]

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 when an accommodation check has failed.

Eddie Hughes:

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

■ Leasehold: Fees and Charges

Sir Charles Walker: [85]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what plans he has to regulate the cost of residential lease extensions; and if he will make a statement.

Eddie Hughes:

[Holding answer 16 May 2022]: We are taking forward a comprehensive programme of reform to end unfair practices in the leasehold market.

Under the current system, too many leaseholders find the process for extending their lease or buying their freehold prohibitively expensive, too complex and lacking transparency. The Government is addressing historic imbalance to ensure fairness for leaseholders, whilst taking account of the legitimate rights of freeholders. We will continue to ensure we meet this objective as we bring forward reforms.

In January 2021, the Government announced a package of reforms on enfranchisement valuation. The Government will reform the process of valuation that leaseholders must follow to calculate the cost of extending their lease or buying their freehold. We will abolish marriage value, cap the treatment of ground rents at 0.1% of the freehold value, and prescribe rates for the calculations at market value. The Government will also introduce an online calculator, further simplifying the process and ensuring standardisation and fairness for all. These changes will result in substantial savings for some leaseholders, particularly those with fewer than 80 years left on their lease. Our reforms also make sure that sufficient compensation is paid to landlords to reflect their legitimate property interests.

Through these reforms, the length of a statutory lease extension will increase to 990 years, from 90 years (for flats) and 50 years (for houses). Leaseholders will be able to extend their lease with zero ground rent on payment of a premium.

We have already taken action to end unfair practices in the leasehold market, beginning with the Ground Rent Act, which comes into force on 30 June 2022, and is the first part of a two-part programme of legislation to reform the leasehold system in this Parliament.

■ **Planning Permission: Appeals**

Crispin Blunt:

[\[1077\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what the average length of time is applicants have had to wait since 1 January 2020 to have an appeal heard (a) against a planning authority's decision against development of more than one home and (b) planning enforcement decisions by a planning authority.

Stuart Andrew:

The average time applicants have to wait to have an appeal heard is as follows:

a) For appeals against a planning authority's decision against development of more than one home, the average time is 29 weeks b) For appeals against planning enforcement decisions by a planning authority, the average time is 43 weeks.

The Planning Inspectorate maintains its commitment to simplifying the planning appeal process by making best use of digital systems to support effective service delivery. The Inspectorate has also developed a cyclical Inspector recruitment process which is intended to support the recovery of Inspector resource numbers and consequently improve wait times for customers.

■ **Property Management Companies: Regulation**

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[212\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, when the recommendations of the Regulation of Property Agents Working Group published in July 2019 will be implemented.

Eddie Hughes:

The Government remains committed to creating a fair and just housing system that works for everyone.

This commitment includes raising professionalism and standards amongst property agents (letting, estate and managing agents), protecting consumers, and defending the reputation of good agents from the actions of rogue operatives. We welcome the ongoing work being undertaken by the industry itself to raise professionalism and standards across the sector, including on potential codes of practice for property agents, and continue to engage with industry on this.

The Government is considering the recommendations in the final report on the regulation of property agents from Lord Best's working group.

■ Redress Reform Working Group**Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[213\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, when the Redress Reform Working Group will be re-established.

Eddie Hughes:

The Redress Reform Working Group was established and began work in the summer of 2019. The group continues to meet independently and provides updates to the department.

■ Refugees: Ukraine**Dr Dan Poulter:**[\[688\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether he plans to offer financial assistance to Ukrainian families who travelled to the UK either on the (a) Homes for Ukraine Scheme or (b) Ukraine Family scheme; and what plans he has to lessen potential disparities between the two schemes.

Eddie Hughes:

All Ukrainians arriving under either scheme have the right to work and access to benefits and services including Universal Credit. The Department for Levelling Up's Homes for Ukraine scheme provides additional funding for local authorities. The Ukraine Family Scheme is administered by the Home Office.

■ Vagrancy Act 1824**Layla Moran:**[\[437\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what his timeline is for publishing his Department's response to the consultation on the Vagrancy Act 1824.

Eddie Hughes:

[Holding answer 16 May 2022]: The consultation closed on 5 May and we are working to analyse these responses to inform replacement legislation. A Government response will be issued in due course.

NORTHERN IRELAND**■ Northern Ireland Office: Social Clubs****Gareth Bacon:**[\[2666\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, with reference to the Answer of 7 March 2022 to Question 132399 on civil service staff networks, what information he holds on (a) FTE staff time and (b) budgets available to recognised staff groups in his Department within each of the last three years.

Conor Burns:

With reference to my answer of 7 March 2022 to Question 132399 on civil service staff networks, no information is held with regard to (a) the allocation of FTE for these groups. They are staff-led groups and staff contribute as time permits and as part of their wider corporate contribution to the department. In respect of part (b), no budgets are available to recognised staff groups.

PRIME MINISTER■ **Muslims: India****Sarah Owen:**[\[1353\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, whether he had discussions with Prime Minister Modi during his visit to India on the issues of (a) increased violence and (b) discrimination against Muslims in that country.

Boris Johnson:

I refer the hon. Member to my answer to PQ 157533 on 27 April.

■ **Prime Minister: Climate Change and Energy****Caroline Lucas:**[\[1157\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, how many times he has met in any (a) formal and (b) informal capacity to discuss climate and energy issues with (i) representatives and (ii) members of the (A) Global Warming Policy Foundation and (B) Net Zero Scrutiny Group in the last two years.

Boris Johnson:

Details of ministerial meetings with external organisations are published on gov.uk as part of the government's transparency agenda.

SCOTLAND■ **Business: Scotland****Christine Jardine:**[\[900008\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what recent discussions he has had with the Scottish Government on providing additional support to Scottish businesses.

Iain Stewart:

We have regular discussions with the Scottish Government. The Chancellor boosted small business growth by increasing the Employment Allowance with small business owners saving over £250 from the changes to National Insurance thresholds. We call on the Scottish Government to focus on support for business through an agenda for growth as set out by this government in the Queen's Speech.

■ Electric Cables: Seas and Oceans**Kenny MacAskill:**[\[90009\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what recent discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on the progress on proposals for the Eastern high voltage subsea cable from Scotland to England.

Iain Stewart:

I fully support the development of the Eastern High Voltage Direct Current Link.

The UK Government maintains engagement with SSEN Transmission, Scottish Power Transmission and National Grid Electricity Transmission - as well as Ofgem - on this important project.

■ Freeports: Scotland**Dr Jamie Wallis:**[\[90013\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what recent discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on the potential economic impact of the two proposed new freeports in Scotland.

Mr Alister Jack:

Colleagues across Cabinet are delighted that the UK and Scottish Governments have made a landmark agreement to establish two new Freeports in Scotland.

With up to £52 million of UK government funding, freeports will support regeneration of communities across Scotland by creating higher quality, better-paid jobs whilst helping achieve our Net Zero agenda.

This builds on the UK Government's plan to level up the whole of the UK.

■ Islamophobia: Scotland**Afzal Khan:**[\[90011\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what recent discussions he has had with the Scottish Government on tackling Islamophobia in Scotland.

Rachel Maclean:

Tackling Islamophobia is a matter of devolved competence in Scotland

The UK Government is committed to eradicating anti-Muslim hatred and all forms of religious prejudice, and I know that the Scottish Government shares that commitment.

■ Shipbuilding: Scotland**Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[709\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what recent assessment his Department has made of the impact of the UK National Shipbuilding Strategy on Scotland's shipbuilding sector.

Mr Alister Jack:

The National Shipbuilding Strategy encourages exports, the uptake of green technology, and support to increase shipyard's productivity and competitiveness. The National Shipbuilding Office (NSO), which is closely engaged with the shipbuilding enterprise in Scotland, has a clear focus on maximising UK content wherever possible. I was also pleased to see that the NSO plans to open an office at Queen Elizabeth House, the UKG hub in Edinburgh to ensure there is a direct link to the shipbuilding enterprise in Scotland.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund: Scotland**Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[710\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what discussions he has had with (a) Cabinet colleagues and (b) the Scottish Government on the potential impact of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund on regional inequality in Scotland.

Mr Alister Jack:

The Scotland Office is in regular contact with colleagues across UK Government and Scottish Government on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund is a central pillar of the UK's ambitious Levelling Up mission. It puts £212 million of new funding for local investment directly into the hands of local partners, who have far greater flexibility to invest in priority areas and to target funds where needed.

Allocations for each Local Authority in Scotland were made using a needs-based assessment, including a specifically tailored proportion for rural areas in Scotland.

Local leaders are empowered to design their own investment plans in line with the levelling up missions. We are determined to boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards across the whole of the UK.

TRANSPORT**Ferries: Regulation****Grahame Morris:**[\[191\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Recruitment and Placement) Regulations 2014 in regulating compliance in the ferry sector with the provisions on (a) seafarer employment agreements and (b) financial systems of protection for seafarers.

Robert Courts:

No review of the effectiveness of the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Recruitment and Placement) Regulations 2014 has been made in relation to the ferry sector. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency aims to publish a post-implementation review of the Regulations by the end of the year.

■ Great British Railways

Rachael Maskell: [\[1219\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the ways in which Great British Railways could increase passenger use beyond pre-pandemic levels.

Wendy Morton:

GBR will have a strong commercial focus and a new relationship with the private sector. New Passenger Service Contracts will ensure that Train Operators are incentivised and rewarded for working with GBR to deliver the high-quality services, effective market and modernised retailing offer that will attract passengers to rail.

New private sector partners will be attracted through new contracts for retail technology and services which will create greater opportunities for global players, supporting the introduction of new opportunities to manage stations and deliver commercialisation of railway assets. Open data, locally-led innovation schemes, targeted Research Development and Innovation spending and closer collaboration with industry, private sector innovators and technical institutions will enable rail to benefit from new ideas, new technology and new ways of working, in turn improving services and attracting more passengers to rail.

Rachael Maskell: [\[1220\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has a timeframe for Great British Railways to have a single ticketing platform.

Wendy Morton:

Great British Railways will become an online retailer in its own right, ending the current confusion passengers face with multiple train operating company websites. The Rail Delivery Group is working to procure what will become Great British Railways' website and app for ticket retailing. We will provide further detail in due course.

■ Highway Code

Adam Afriyie: [\[685\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that road users are aware of the recent changes 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.

■ M6: Repairs and Maintenance

Sir Gavin Williamson: [751]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether Highways England will make the traffic reports and studies taken to produce the design of the connection at Junction 11 on the M6 link road available to the public.

Trudy Harrison:

The traffic reports and studies that informed the design of the M54 to M6 Link road scheme have been made publicly available on both National Highways' website and the Planning Inspectorate's website.

The Scheme Assessment Report which details the appraisal of options and informed the Preferred Route Announcement can be found here:

<https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/he/m54-to-m6-m6-toll-link-road/results/schemeassessmentreport.pdf>.

The Scheme Assessment Report that was submitted as part of the scheme's Development Consent order application, along with the Transport Assessment Report, can be found here: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/projects/TR010054/TR010054-000335-TR010054%20M54%207.4%20Transport%20Assessment%20Report.pdf>.

The Transport Assessment Report was updated as part of the DCO application and that can also be found on the Planning Inspectorate's website:

[https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/projects/TR010054/TR010054-000727-7.4%20P06%20Transport%20Assessment%20Report%20clean%20\(1\).pdf](https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/projects/TR010054/TR010054-000727-7.4%20P06%20Transport%20Assessment%20Report%20clean%20(1).pdf).

■ Motor Vehicles: Excise Duties

Martyn Day: [350]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will bring forward proposals to accept applications for vehicle tax at a reduced rate when purchasing (a) online or (b) at Post Office branches.

Martyn Day: [351]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the (a) financial and (b) accessibility impacts for disabled drivers of the process of applying for a reduced rate of vehicle tax.

Trudy Harrison:

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) considers the potential impacts on those with protected characteristics when developing and revising policies, processes or services.

Customers in receipt of the enhanced mobility component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) are able to apply for a vehicle tax exemption on-line or via the Post Office.

The introduction of a similar service for individuals in receipt of the standard rate of PIP to license their vehicle at the reduced rate is more complex. The DVLA is exploring ways of improving the process for payments of vehicle tax for individuals in receipt of the standard rate of PIP with a view to making it easier for customers.

In the meantime, a service is in place which allows customers in receipt of the standard mobility component of PIP to apply directly to the DVLA to license

■ **Motor Vehicles: Testing**

Steve McCabe: [\[597\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of increasing the length of MoT certificates from 12 months to 24 months on motorists' costs; and if he will make an estimate of the potential average annual saving to motorists from such an increase.

Steve McCabe: [\[598\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has made an assessment of the potential effect on (a) efficiency of car performance and (b) the environment of increasing the length of MoT certificates from 12 months to 24 months.

Steve McCabe: [\[599\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has made an assessment of the potential effect of increasing the length of MoT certificates from 12 months to 24 months on job retention of (a) MoT testers and (b) service mechanics.

Trudy Harrison:

We recognise the cost of living pressures that households face. It is right that we consider measures that can help alleviate such pressures including changes to systems like MOT testing that have been unaltered for a considerable period of time.

However, we have not made any decision to change the frequency of MOT testing. Should we put forward a proposal to amend the MOT legislation, we will provide an assessment of the effects of the proposed changes.

■ **P&O Ferries: Insurance**

Grahame Morris: [\[189\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with ministerial colleagues regarding the future viability of P&O Ferries protection and indemnity policies.

Robert Courts:

The Secretary of State for Transport and Minister for Aviation, Maritime and Security have had numerous discussions with colleagues across Government regarding the disgraceful actions that P&O Ferries took when they made nearly 800 seafarers

redundant. However, it is up to the insurers of P&O Ferries to consider their protection and indemnity policies.

■ Railways: Fees and Charges

Gavin Newlands:

[816]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much has been levied in fixed track access charges for (a) all train operators and (b) each train operator for each financial year from 2016-17 to 2021-22.

Wendy Morton:

The below table shows the amount levied in fixed track access charges for (a) all train operators and (b) each train operator for each financial year from 2016-17 to 2021-22.

£m, cash prices

Franchised operator	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22 (1)
Arriva Trains Wales	15.3	18.6	24.0			
Transport for Wales					4.5	32.9
Keolis Amey Wales			15.0	33.6	24.8	
c2c	4.1	4.9	9.8	15.5	16.7	16.0
Chiltern	22.1	22.0	37.6	33.2	33.5	35.1
Cross Country	16.5	22.4	46.2	49.7	45.9	45.5
Virgin East Coast	22.4	27.2	18.1			
London North Eastern Railway			40.6	50.4	45.7	55.6
East Midlands	12.2	15.0	33.5	18.2		
East Midlands Railway				29.1	42.5	39.7
Govia Thameslink Railway	31.9	39.2	85.4	149.0	155.0	136.7
First Great Western	24.7	31.7	67.0	83.2	78.3	77.6
Greater Anglia	9.8					
Abelio East Anglia	8.4	22.2	47.2	45.3	55.8	52.2
London Midland	14.2	10.9				

West Midlands Trains	4.9	33.6	46.9	46.6	52.8	
London Overground	2.6					
Arriva Rail London	1.6	5.2	11.0	19.6	21.7	22.3
Merseyrail	2.6	3.1	6.6	17.7	16.2	17.6
MTR Crossrail	2.0	2.4	31.1	69.9	79.9	79.6
Arriva Rail North	20.2	25.8	56.1	73.8		
Northern Trains				13.4	83.2	85.1
Scotrail	89.2	149.7	243.5	263.1	276.2	287.7
Serco Sleeper	4.2	7.0	11.0	4.0	4.2	4.5
London & South Eastern Railway	19.1	23.7	49.1	69.4	41.3	
Southeastern				35.4	70.5	
South West Trains	20.9	9.4				
South Western Railway	15.5	53.9	72.3	78.6	84.4	
Transpennine	10.4	12.7	27.4	35.5	32.1	29.1
Virgin West Coast	35.8	43.0	91.1	42.1		
Avanti West Coast	18.7	61.1	68.0			
Total	390.2	516.5	1,038.8	1,253.6	1,279.3	1,293.0
<i>Accounting adjustments (2)</i>	<i>1.8</i>	<i>2.5</i>	<i>(0.8)</i>	<i>0.4</i>	<i>(0.3)</i>	<i>(0.0)</i>
Total disclosed in Regulatory Financial Statements	392.0	519.0	1,038.0	1,254.0	1,279.0	1,293.0

Notes

(1) 21/22 figures have yet to be published and are subject to year end assurance and audit

(2) Accounting adjustments relate to some centrally managed items not attributable to an individual operator

Changes in franchises

During 2018/19 responsibility for the London North East rail franchise transferred from Virgin East Coast to London North Eastern Railway.

During 2018/19, London North Eastern Railway was created to operate the London North East rail franchise whilst the government assessed franchising options for this route. Therefore, income is recognised for the first time against this operator in that year

Abelio East Anglia replaced Greater Anglia as the franchise operator during 2016/17 which accounts for the movements between 2015/16 and 2016/17 for these two operators.

In 2016/17, Arriva Rail London assumed responsibility for the London overground concession previously run by London Overground Rail Operations. Therefore, there is a significant decrease in the revenue reported from London Overground in 2016/17 compared to 2015/16 with a corresponding increase in Arriva Rail London

In 2017/18, West Midlands Trains replaced London Midland as the franchise operator on the London North West route. This also resulted in a decrease in London Midland income in 2017/18 compared to the previous year.

In 2017/18, South Western Railway replaced South West Trains as the principle operator in the Wessex route. Consequently, the income earned by the latter was shown for the first time in 2017/18, whilst the former has a noticeable year-on-year decrease in their turnover in the above table in those years

Arriva Trains Wales – this franchise ended in October 2018. Responsibility for operations in this area moved to Keolis Amey Wales, which means that Arriva Trains Wales has a reduction in income in 2018/19 compared to 2017/18

Keolis Amey Wales – this franchise commenced in October 2018, so reported income for the first time in 2018/19

During 2019/20 Avanti West Coast replaced Virgin West Coast as the franchisee for the West Coast Main Line. As a result, Virgin West Coast income decreases in 2019/20 and Avanti West Coast reports income for the first time

During 2019/20 East Midlands Railway replaced East Midlands as the franchisee for the east midlands line. As a result, East Midlands income decreases in 2019/20 and East Midlands Railway reports income for the first time

During 2020/21 Transport for Wales replaced Keolis Amey Wales as the franchisee for Wales. As a result, Keolis Amey Wales income decreases in 2020/21 and Transport for Wales reports income for the first time

During 2019/20 Northern Trains replaced Arriva Rail North as the franchisee for Northern. As a result, Arriva Rail North income decreases in 2019/20 and Northern Trains reports income for the first time

During 2020/21 Southeastern replaced London & South East Railway as the franchisee for South East. As a result, London & South East Railways income decreases in 2020/21 and

Southeastern reports income for the first time

■ **Railways: Mental Health**

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[925]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent steps he has taken to help ensure that rail workers have access to mental health support.

Wendy Morton:

The Department aims to ensure that the welfare and wellbeing of all of our hard-working front-line staff remains at the forefront of industry planning and thinking.

Working with representatives from across the rail industry, the Department has commissioned an industry-wide study, to bring together existing best practice and provide recommendations on supporting positive mental health. The study, led by Great Western Railway, working with a cross-industry group, Samaritans and Mental Health at Work, is currently underway and will be shared with the rail industry.

■ **Railways: Scotland**

Gavin Newlands:

[817]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much and what proportion of overall revenue received through fixed track access charges derives from payments relating to rail infrastructure solely in Scotland for (a) each rail operator and (b) all rail operators.

Wendy Morton:

The below table shows the total Network Rail revenue over the period 2016/17 to 2021/22 and how much of that total revenue comes from fixed track access charges and how much comes from fixed track access charges attributable to Scotland in both £m and % terms.

£M, CASH PRICES

16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22 (1)	Ref	
Overall Network Rail revenue (2)	6,763	7,132	8,837	8,981	9,601	9,980	A
Total fixed track access charges	392	519	1,038	1,254	1,279	1,293	B
Fixed track access charges attributable to Scotland	93	157	255	267	281	292	C

£M, CASH PRICES

Total fixed track access charges % of overall Network Rail revenue	6%	7%	12%	14%	13%	13%	$D = B / C$
Fixed track access charges attributable to Scotland % of overall Network Rail revenue	1%	2%	3%	3%	3%	3%	$E = C / A$

Breakdown of Scotland FTAC

Scotrail	89	150	244	263	276	288	
Serco Sleeper	4	7	11	4	4	5	
Accounting adjustments (3)	(0)	0	1	(0)	1	(0)	
Total	93	157	255	267	281	292	C

Notes

⁽¹⁾ 21/22 figures have yet to be published and are subject to year end assurance and audit

⁽²⁾ This is the revenue definition used by ORR and included in Network Rail's published Regulatory Financial Statements

⁽³⁾ Accounting adjustments relate to some centrally managed items not attributable to an individual operator

■ **Railways: Technology**

Rachael Maskell:[\[1221\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the role of safe autonomous systems in the rail network, such as the system being developed at York's Institute for Safe Autonomy.

Wendy Morton:

The Department supports further research into the application of safe autonomous rail systems in the UK, including the work being undertaken at York's Institute for Safe Autonomy, which will be enhanced by the new research facility due to open in autumn 2022.

The Office of Rail and Road (ORR), which is Britain's independent safety regulator, has recently consulted industry on the health and safety principles for operation of passenger trains with unattended train operation, which it plans to publish in due

course. The industry will need to follow these principles closely as it considers opportunities for the application of safe autonomous rail systems.

■ **Roads: Noise**

Dr Matthew Offord:

[708]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of establishing a regulated authority to tackle the use of (a) loud engines and (b) exhausts on public highways.

Trudy Harrison:

The police and local authorities have existing powers to take action against excessively noisy and illegally modified vehicles.

Research has been commenced to understand if the latest 'noise camera' technology can be an effective enforcement tool for the police and local authorities that will enable more targeted and efficient enforcement.

TREASURY

■ **[Subject Heading to be Assigned]**

Peter Gibson:

[454]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans he has to remove VAT on audiobooks to bring tax policy in line with the zero VAT rate on physical and ebooks.

Lucy Frazer:

At March Budget 2020, the Government announced the introduction of a zero rate of VAT on certain e-publications, including e-books, to support literacy and reading in all its forms and make it clear that e-books, e-newspapers, e-magazines, and academic e-journals are entitled to the same VAT treatment as their physical counterparts.

The extension of the zero rate of VAT to e-publications was introduced to provide consistency of approach between certain physical and digital publications, to support reading and literacy in all its forms. Audiobooks are already taxed consistently at the standard rate in both physical and digital formats.

The Government keeps all taxes under review, including VAT, but there are no current plans to extend the VAT zero rate to audiobooks.

■ **Aviation: Tax Allowances**

Alex Norris:

[416]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his Department has plans to review tax allowances for airline cabin crew.

Lucy Frazer:

Overseas Scale Rates (OSR) allow employers to reimburse expenses without the need to check receipts. The published rates are designed to reflect the average cost of subsistence, including local taxes and gratuities, when staying overseas.

Employers do not have to use OSR and can reimburse using actual amounts provided receipts are checked. Additionally, if an employee spends more than the amount their employer pays, they can claim tax relief on the difference.

Guidance was last updated in February 2019 and applied from 6 April 2019. The current rates are considered appropriate for general use and therefore it is not necessary to review them at this time.

Aviation: Taxation**Steve McCabe:**[\[595\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Answer of 26 April 2022 to Question 157540 on Aviation: Taxation, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of tolerating the potential administrative complexity of a frequent flyer levy to facilitate the move towards net zero.

Helen Whately:

As part of a consultation on aviation tax reform between March and June 2021, the Government sought views on whether a frequent flyer levy could replace APD as the principal tax on the aviation sector.

In the responses received to the consultation, the Government received a wide range of views on a frequent flyer levy. Some stakeholders, including those from the aviation industry, strongly opposed any suggestion that APD should be replaced with a frequent flyer levy, on the grounds that it would be significantly more difficult to administer. Conversely, environmental stakeholders supported the introduction of a frequent flyer levy, considering that the benefits of such a levy outweighed any potential administrative complexity.

Following the consultation, having considered all views received carefully, the Government published a response which outlined that it was minded to retain APD as the principal tax on the aviation sector, noting in particular concerns about the possible administrative complexity and data processing, handling and privacy of a frequent flyer levy.

Full details of the consultation and the Government's response can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-aviation-tax-reform

Cryptocurrencies**Tulip Siddiq:**[\[1255\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the total value of money held by UK adults on crypto exchanges.

John Glen:

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) published consumer research in June 2021, which offered insight into the cryptoassets market in the UK. The FCA found that 4.4% of UK adults currently hold cryptocurrency, or approximately 2.3 million consumers.

The Cryptoasset Taskforce – HM Treasury, the Bank of England, the FCA and the Payment Systems Regulator (PSR) – continues to monitor ongoing development in cryptoasset markets, and is taking forward a number of regulatory initiatives to manage risks and support innovation.

Tulip Siddiq:[\[893\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the impact of the collapse in the value of cryptocurrency on financial stability in the UK.

John Glen:

The Bank of England's Financial Policy Committee (FPC) has recently noted that direct risks to the stability of the UK financial system from cryptoassets are limited. The FPC also noted that crypto-technologies are growing and becoming more interconnected with the core financial system, and the government is working to ensure that the authorities have the appropriate tools to manage associated risks.

In April the government announced a number of specific reforms to strengthen crypto asset regulation, including a commitment to bring stablecoins into payments regulation, and to consult on a wider regulatory regime later this year. Internationally, the Treasury is working through the Financial Stability Board to assess and develop supervisory and regulatory approaches to address global financial stability risks posed by cryptoassets, including market risks driven by price volatility.

The government has also announced forthcoming legislation which, along with supportive Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) rules, will regulate in-scope cryptoasset financial promotions, requiring them to be fair, clear and not misleading for consumers.

Working with the Bank of England and FCA, the Treasury will continue to monitor developments in crypto asset markets closely.

■ Digital Technology: Taxation**Stuart Anderson:**[\[450\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to ensure that High Street retailers benefit from proceeds of the Digital Services Tax.

Lucy Frazer:

The Government is currently consulting on the proposal for an Online Sales Tax as a means to rebalance the taxation of the retail sector between online and in-store retail.

The Digital Services Tax, on the other hand, is a 2 per cent tax on the revenues of search engines, social media services, and online marketplaces which derive value

from UK users. It is a temporary solution to the challenges posed by digitalisation to the international system for taxing corporations' profits.

■ **Energy: Housing**

Siobhan Baillie:

[1005]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he plans to remove VAT on (a) heat pump radiators and (b) other home upgrade products that use energy savings materials.

Lucy Frazer:

At Spring Statement 2022, the Chancellor announced the expansion of the VAT relief on the installation of energy saving materials (ESMs) to residential accommodation in Great Britain.

The changes reverse restrictions introduced in 2019 following a Court of Justice of the European Union ruling, including re-instating wind and water turbines as qualifying materials, and removing complex eligibility conditions. Further to this, qualifying installations, including ground and air source heat pumps, will 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.

The changes to the VAT treatment of ESMs announced at Spring Statement 2022 were brought in at pace to immediately support households to improve the energy efficiency of their homes, bolstering the UK's energy security and contributing to our transition to Net-Zero.

In order to accelerate take-up and prevent loss of investment, the changes were brought in from 1 April 2022, 10 days after Spring Statement 2022. A longer delay between announcement and implementation risked having an adverse effect on the ESMs market, i.e. in anticipation of future relief business and consumers may have otherwise delayed entering into a contract thereby causing a temporary stalling effect in the market, and risking supply bottlenecks further down the line.

Evaluating the case for adding new technologies to the relief would require careful consideration and consultation to ensure changes represent value for money and would not have unintended behavioural effects, a process which would have delayed making changes to immediately benefit the public.

The Government keeps all taxes under review and continues to welcome representations on how the tax system can be improved. It is important that Government policy takes into account the pace of technological development in the ESMs market and the changing policy context since this particular relief was first introduced. That said, requests for further changes should be viewed in the context of over £50 billion of requests for relief from VAT received since the EU referendum. Such costs would have to be balanced by increased taxes elsewhere, increased borrowing, or reductions in Government spending.

■ Infrastructure: Investment**Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[702\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent steps his Department has taken to support investment in UK infrastructure.

Helen Whately:

The National Infrastructure Strategy was published in November 2020 and sets out the government's plans for an infrastructure revolution.

The Budget and Spending Review in October 2021 set out how the government will deliver on the commitments made in the Strategy, and went further, confirming a total of £100 billion of investment in economic infrastructure over the Spending Review period (2022/23-2024/25) to benefit every part of the UK.

The new UK Infrastructure Bank also opened for business in June 2021 and is partnering with the private sector and local governments to increase investment in infrastructure. With £22 billion of financial capacity, the Bank has already successfully supported five loans including investing in clean energy, digital infrastructure and green transport.

■ Members: Correspondence**John Penrose:**[\[141\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he will respond to the correspondence of 8 March and 6 April 2022 from the hon. Member for Weston-super-Mare on behalf of constituent Matthew Thompson on the matter of new HMRC tax guidance.

Lucy Frazer:

A response was sent to the hon. Member on 11 May 2022.

Paul Maynard:[\[2446\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he plans to reply to the correspondence from the hon. Member for Blackpool North and Cleveleys of 9 February 2022 on behalf of constituents regarding energy rebates.

Helen Whately:

I have responded to the hon. Member.

■ Offshore Industry: Taxation**Peter Aldous:**[\[738\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much tax has been paid by (a) oil and gas producers over the lifetime of the UK basin and (b) month in the last 12 months by oil and gas producers operating in the UK Continental Shelf.

Helen Whately:

Government revenues received from North Sea oil and gas operators between 1968 to 1969 and 2020 to 2021 are presented in Table 2 of HM Revenue & Custom's

(HMRC) “*Statistics of government revenues from UK oil and gas production*” publication, available on GOV.UK.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/government-revenues-from-uk-oil-and-gas-production--2>

Data for 2021 to 2022 onwards can be found in the “*HMRC tax receipts and National Insurance contributions for the UK*” tables, also available on GOV.UK.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hmrc-tax-and-nics-receipts-for-the-uk>

Peter Aldous: [739]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what projection he has made of how much tax will be paid by oil and gas producers in 2022-23.

Helen Whately:

Forecasts for government revenues from oil and gas production are provided by the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR). Their most recent published forecast, provided for Spring Statement 2022 on 23 March, is available on the OBR website at the following link <https://obr.uk/efo/economic-and-fiscal-outlook-march-2022/>. HM Revenue and Customs publishes monthly tax receipts statistics, including for UK oil and gas production, on a cash receipts basis, at GOV.UK at the following link <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hmrc-tax-and-nics-receipts-for-the-uk>.

■ Schools: Uniforms

Munira Wilson: [499]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of removing the VAT applied to school uniforms in the context of rising living costs.

Lucy Frazer:

Under the current VAT rules, all children’s clothing and footwear designed for young children who are less than 14 years of age, including school uniforms, attract a zero-rate of VAT, meaning that no VAT is charged on the sale of these items.

The UK is one of only two countries among the 37 OECD member countries to maintain a VAT relief for children’s clothing, which costs the Exchequer £2 billion per year.

Extending these reliefs 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. Any reduction in tax paid is a reduction in the money available to support important public services, including the NHS and policing.

The Government is supporting the hardest hit with £22 billion of help to address the cost of living and cutting hundreds of pounds off household bills, and keeps all taxes under constant review.

■ Taxation: Fraud**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[\[924\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent steps he has taken to help ensure efficient and clear communication between HMRC and Child Maintenance Service regarding tax fraud claims and investigations.

Lucy Frazer:

HMRC use a wide range of data to tackle non-compliance, including tax fraud. As part of this HMRC and the Child Maintenance Service (CMS) share data to enable tax investigations, and where intelligence relates to Child Maintenance, HMRC review this for evidence of fraud. Where either HMRC or the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) receive an allegation of wrongdoing and it is pertinent to the other Department, this information will be securely disseminated to the Department for their ongoing action. This is a long-established process conducted under the relevant legal gateway.

HMRC regularly shares data with DWP as the parent organisation for the CMS to support in administering the Child Maintenance System in Great Britain under the Welfare Reform Act.

The information shared for use by the CMS is set out in law under the Child Support Maintenance Calculation Regulations 2012 and HMRC shares information relating to certain types of income specified in either the Income Tax (Earnings and Pensions) Act 2003 or the Income Tax (Trading and Other Income) Act 2005.

In addition, the Welfare Reform Act enables HMRC to share information at the request of DWP for certain purposes. These specific requests are to assist DWP in their activities to tackle fraud and undertake investigations. All requests of this type are dealt with via a long-standing Memorandum of Understanding that is regularly reviewed for legality, proportionality, and to ensure it is fit for purpose.

WALES**■ Animal Welfare: Wales****Sarah Olney:**[\[907\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what discussions he has had with the Welsh Government on (a) animal welfare, (b) extending the ban on the use and manufacture of snares and (c) the potential merits of a ban on the use of cages to breed game birds in Wales.

Simon Hart:

I have regular discussions with colleagues in the Welsh Government on a wide range of subjects. Owing to the range of topics covered by this question, I will address each point in turn.

(a): DEFRA holds regular discussions with the devolved administrations – including the Welsh Government – through an Animal Welfare Policy Group. This group provides a key strategic policy and regulatory decision-making forum for UK-wide animal welfare and is governed by the processes and principles outlined in the [Animal Health and Welfare Common Framework](#).

(b): The UK Government's Action Plan for Animal Welfare included an ambition to conduct a call for evidence on the use of snares and this will be launched in due course. I am aware the Welsh Government has announced a commitment to ban the use of snares in Wales.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Asylum: Employment

Angela Crawley: [\[847\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether asylum seekers are able to access tailored job search support upon resettlement in the UK.

David Rutley:

Most asylum seekers in the UK do not currently have the right to work and are therefore not eligible to access DWP employment services.

Employment support is however available to refugees and those entering the UK as part of a resettlement scheme which is delivered by the Home Office. Local Jobcentre Managers have considerable flexibility and expertise to provide tailored support to meet individual needs as required.

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Washington

Mrs Sharon Hodgson: [\[104\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent estimate she has made of the number of jobs that will be affected by the closure of the Durham House site in Washington.

Mrs Sharon Hodgson: [\[105\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether compulsory redundancies will result from the closure of the Durham House site in Washington.

Mrs Sharon Hodgson: [\[106\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will publish his Department's (a) equality impact and (b) socio-economic impact assessment of the closure of the Durham House site in Washington.

Mrs Sharon Hodgson: [\[107\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, on what date the Durham House site will close.

Mrs Sharon Hodgson:

[108]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether additional travel support will be provided to civil servants employed at the Durham House site which has been identified for consolidation.

Mims Davies:

The changes the Department is making to estates will both improve the working environment for staff, become greener by becoming smaller, helping meet the Government's carbon reduction target, and provide value for money for the taxpayer.

As of March 2022, 905 colleagues located in Washington Durham House are being asked to relocate, with their role, to Sunderland Wearview House. Each colleague will have a discussion with their line manager to assess the impact of the move on them and if they are able to relocate. The Department's priority will be to retain, retrain and redeploy colleagues either within DWP, or within other Government Departments in the area. As a responsible employer, we will make provision for redundancies if it is necessary. However, this will be a very last resort after all efforts to redeploy have been exhausted.

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

The Department currently expects to exit Washington Durham House by November 2022. Should redeployment mean additional travel costs, colleagues may qualify for an Excess Fares payment to cover those costs. These costs would be paid for up to three years.

Mrs Sharon Hodgson:

[109]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the profile of the civil servants affected by the closure of Durham House is by (a) age, (b) race, (c) gender and (d) disability.

Mims Davies:

The following depicts the profile of colleagues based at Washington - Durham House.

Age – 1.7% aged 16-24, 14.4% aged 25-34, 25.2% aged 35-44, 28.3% aged 45-54, 27.2% aged 55-64, 3.1% aged 65+

Race – 1.7% of colleagues are of an ethnic minority

Gender – 31% male, 69% female

Disability – 14.4% of colleagues have declared a disability

Mrs Sharon Hodgson:

[110]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the effect of the consolidation of Durham House on levels of hybrid working among affected civil servants.

Mims Davies:

The adoption of hybrid working practices has been carefully and fully considered. The introduction of hybrid working arrangements by the Department for back of house functions means that staff will only need to work on average 40% of their working week in the new location. DWP aims to utilise its hybrid working policy to help facilitate more inclusive workplaces, which are capable of adapting to the needs of employees and the Department.

■ Employment

Dr Matthew Offord:

[202]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment her Department has made of the effectiveness of the Plan for Jobs in supporting people into work.

Mims Davies:

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is committed to supporting everyone who has been affected by the unprecedented impact of COVID-19 on the economy and the labour market. Throughout the pandemic the UK Government has provided historic levels of support to the economy – a total of over £370 billion. This includes key DWP programmes as part of the Plan for Jobs, such as Restart and Kickstart alongside other measures to boost work searches, skills, and apprenticeships. Our support was in addition to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (Furlough) and the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme.

Our Plan for Jobs is complemented by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), which will help to level up and create opportunity across the UK. As part of Plan for Jobs in England over 162,000 jobs have been started through the Kickstart programme. Data for the financial years 2020/21 and 2021/22 shows that as of 27 March 2022, there was a total of 149,980 starts to a Sector Work Academy Programme (SWAP) nationally. We have also launched Way to Work - a concerted drive across the UK to help half a million currently out of work people into jobs by the end of June 2022.

Employment is growing in England – up 30,000 on the quarter and 310,000 on the year to stand at 27.510 million in Dec 2021-Feb 2022, according to ONS figures. Employment in England is up from a low in the pandemic of 27.186 million - though it

is below its pre-COVID level, underlining the need for Way to Work to support more people into jobs.

We want everyone to be able to find a job, progress in work and thrive in the labour market, whoever they are and wherever they live.

■ **Employment: Immunosuppression**

Henry Smith:

[694]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether her Department has issued guidance to work coaches on avoiding recommendations for in-person work for people who are immunocompromised.

Mims Davies:

As mentioned in my previous response, the Department is committed to providing the best possible support for all claimants to meet their individual circumstances.

Claimants with a health condition or disability, including those who are immunocompromised, continue to have tailored commitments agreed based on their personal circumstances, including considering the impact of their health and wider situation.

Any work-related requirements are set in discussion with the claimant, tailored to their individual capability and circumstances, making them realistic and achievable. The guidance available to DWP staff outlines the easements which may be applied including that work search reflects the type and location of jobs which are appropriate to the individual.

Although DWP does not routinely provide guidance specifically on supporting people who are immunocompromised, we do ensure that staff are aware of the sources of information available to them relating to medical conditions that are associated with this. Staff are signposted to tools, guidance support and websites to effectively use resources from both internal and external sites, such as information directly from the NHS found [here](#).

This ensures that staff can access the most up to date advice and can use this to inform how they support individual customers.

We empower our Work Coaches to use all available resources to best support each claimant, however they are not trained to provide comprehensive healthcare advice, therefore while we do discuss the implications certain jobs may have on their health, we would not advise against jobs the claimant wishes to apply for.

■ **Employment: Long Term Unemployed People and Older People**

Navendu Mishra:

[993]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps her Department is taking to support (a) long-term unemployed and (b) over-50s unemployed people into work.

Mims Davies:

For those who are long-term unemployed, the Restart Scheme, which went live in July 2021, is providing support to Universal Credit Intensive Work Search Regime claimants and Income Based Jobseekers Allowance claimants. Claimants are considered for the Restart Scheme after claiming for 9 months.

The Restart Scheme is being delivered across England and Wales using 12 Contract Package Areas with providers working with employers, local government, and other partners to deliver tailored support for individuals, breaking down employment barriers that could be holding claimants back from finding work.

The Government also recognises the challenges faced by people aged 50 and over. Therefore, as part of the £500m Plan for Jobs expansion we are funding a new enhanced support package for workers over the age of 50 to help them to stay in or return to work. This offer will ensure that older job seekers receive more intensive, tailored support as part of their Universal Credit claim and will give Work Coaches more time to spend with older job seekers who have recently become unemployed.

The 50PLUS Champions network also provides dedicated support to Work Coaches to enable them to effectively direct suitable support to claimants who are aged 50 and over.

■ Employment: Young People**Dr Matthew Offord:****[201]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what progress her Department has made on supporting young people into high-skilled jobs in Hendon constituency.

Mims Davies:

Through Jobcentre Plus, DWP is helping young people to find the right support, education or training that will ultimately lead to sustained employment opportunities and career progression.

The Plan for Jobs provides a comprehensive package of support for young people, including the DWP Youth Offer. We have extended the DWP Youth Offer to 2025 and expanded eligibility to include 16 and 17-year-olds, in addition to 18 to 24-year olds, who are claiming Universal Credit and searching for work.

Both Hendon Jobcentres support young people through the DWP Youth Offer, which includes intensive Work Coach support, Youth Employability Coaches for those with additional barriers, and access to the Youth Hub in the Grahame Park area.

Core skills are fundamental in securing, retaining, and progressing in work. This Government has invested in apprenticeships, traineeships, vocational and basic skills training, alongside careers advice and Sector-based Work Academy Programmes (SWAPs).

SWAP opportunities link skills/employability training with guaranteed interviews and real vacancies – providing a routeway into work for young people. Whilst many opportunities are entry level, they often offer good career pathways and in work

progression. Springboard has recently offered SWAP opportunities in the hospitality sector in each of the four London Districts and are available to young claimants in Hendon. The jobcentre team are also working with No1 Fitness Academy, who are running a 6-week employability programme for young people in Hendon.

Employers from a range of sectors recruit on site daily and we deliver a Job Club to support with applications and interview techniques. Across North London, we hold regular recruitment events with multiple employers offering jobs with a range of entry levels.

The local jobcentre team work collaboratively with Barnet Council and various partners to support Hendon's young people, developing skills provision and routeways into higher skilled jobs in sectors including construction, computer programming and fitness instruction.

We work closely with the GLA, London Councils and our College Principals. We are working collaboratively to develop Skills Bootcamps in line with priority sectors and we also support the mayor's priorities around Good Work for Londoners.

■ Independent Case Examiner

Rachael Maskell:

[331]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people have been waiting for more than (a) three, (b) six, (c) 10, (d) 12 and (e) 18 months from receipt of a complaint to the investigating officer (i) being assigned and (ii) commencing the investigation as of 25 April 2022.

Guy Opperman:

A complaint is treated as having been accepted for investigation from the point at which the scope of the investigation is agreed with the complainant. The investigation commences from the point at which the complaint is assigned (allocated) to an Investigator.

As of 25 April 2022, there were 749 complaints that were accepted for investigation on or before 25 January 2022 awaiting allocation to an Investigator, of which:

WAITING TIME TO BE ASSIGNED (ALLOCATED) TO AN INVESTIGATOR:	NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS:
More than three months	749
More than six months	452
More than 10 months	188
More than 12 months	97
More than 18 months	0

■ **Independent Case Examiner: Staff**

Rachael Maskell: **[330]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many full-time equivalent investigating staff were employed by the Independent Case Examiner in each year since financial year 2010-11.

Guy Opperman:

The Independent Case Examiner's Office is resourced for and recruiting up to, a full-time equivalent headcount of 112. At the beginning of April 2022, it had 96 staff in post (92.34 full-time equivalent), and a recruitment exercise is underway.

The table below provides historic information on the average number of full-time equivalent staff in post in each financial year since 2010/2011.

REPORTING YEAR	AVERAGE NUMBER OF FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT STAFF IN POST
2010/2011	100.1
2011/2012	89.3
2012/2013	80.2
2013/2014	82.4
2014/2015	74.9
2015/2016	71.1
2016/2017	70.8
2017/2018	72.3
2018/2019	77.1
2019/2020	80.9
2020/2021	85.6
2021/2022	88.6

■ **Kickstart Scheme**

Nick Fletcher: **[1001]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many Kickstart scheme placements have been (a) approved, (b) advertised and (c) started by young people in each (i) sector, (ii) region and (iii) nation as of 11 May 2022.

Mims Davies:

The most recent data available is for the 8 May 2022. At that point over 162,600 Kickstart jobs had been started by young people. The last Kickstart jobs were started by young people on 31 March 2022, and we expect the number of starts to increase further as employers report commencement of employment.

We have previously published the number of jobs approved and advertised as of 31 January 2022, [here](#). At that point, over 235,000 jobs had been advertised and over 305,000 had been approved. Kickstart has now closed to employer applications and, as of March 2022, all approved jobs proceeding to the advertisement stage, have been advertised. As such, these totals will not increase further.

Below are tables listing the number of Kickstart jobs which have been made available and started by young people to date by geographical area of Great Britain and work sector. The figures used are correct as of the 8 May 2022 and these figures have been rounded according to departmental standards.

Jobs made available (advertised) and job starts quoted here include some unfunded Kickstart jobs. Also included in the Great Britain total are a small number of jobs made available (less than 100 in total) that have an unrecorded job location.

The number of approved jobs is defined as the number of jobs associated with approved applications recorded on the Kickstart application system on the date above. This total excludes approved jobs that have been withdrawn from the Kickstart Scheme by agreement with employers and gateways. This is generally because, over time, some previously approved jobs were removed where the employer chose not to follow up the application.

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

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

Table 1: Number of Kickstart total available jobs and job starts, Great Britain, by nation and region (figures rounded to nearest 100*)

	TOTAL JOBS MADE AVAILABLE	TOTAL JOBS STARTED
Region / Nation Split	(DATA RETAINED FROM 31/01/22)	(DATA EFFECTIVE 08/05/22)
Total, Great Britain	235,000	162,600
England	204,000	140,200

	TOTAL JOBS MADE AVAILABLE	TOTAL JOBS STARTED
East Midlands	14,000	10,300
East of England	18,000	11,800
London	51,000	32,800
North East	11,000	8,100
North West	30,000	20,600
South East	26,000	17,300
South West	14,000	9,800
West Midlands	21,000	15,800
Yorkshire and The Humber	19,000	13,700
Scotland	19,000	14,300
Wales	12,000	8,000

Table 2: Number of Kickstart total available jobs and job starts, Great Britain, by Sector (figures rounded to the nearest 10*)

SECTOR SPLIT	TOTAL JOBS MADE AVAILABLE	TOTAL JOBS STARTED
	(DATA RETAINED FROM 31/01/22)	(DATA EFFECTIVE 08/05/22)
Administration	57,350	40,000
Animal Care	1,610	1,330
Beauty & Wellbeing	1,720	1,320
Business & Finance	8,500	5,930
Computing Technology & Digital	15,840	12,360
Construction & Trades	7,230	5,190
Creative & Media	20,990	16,730
Delivery & Storage	6,380	4,430
Emergency & Uniform Services	520	360

SECTOR SPLIT	TOTAL JOBS MADE AVAILABLE	TOTAL JOBS STARTED
Engineering & Maintenance	7,080	4,900
Environment & Land	4,620	3,450
Government Services	1,000	710
Healthcare	6,140	3,460
Home Services	1,560	900
Hospitality & Food	26,380	14,060
Law & Legal	650	520
Managerial	960	660
Manufacturing	6,430	4,400
Retail & Sales	34,970	26,450
Science & Research	990	790
Social Care	4,740	2,640
Sports & Leisure	5,920	4,170
Teaching & Education	11,000	6,800
Transport	900	460
Travel & Tourism	1,110	580

***Due to rounding, sum of figures may not match declared total**

■ **Pensioners: Poverty**

Rachael Maskell:

[866]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent estimate has she made of the number of people of pension age living in (a) relative and (b) absolute poverty.

Guy Opperman:

Statistics are published annually in the "Households Below Average Income" publication. Latest statistics can be found here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1064433/hbai-summary-results.ods

Restart Scheme**Alison McGovern:** [\[234\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether the National Audit Office will conduct a review of the performance of the Restart Scheme.

Mims Davies:

The National Audit Office is independent of government and carries out reviews at the discretion of the Comptroller and Auditor General. They have started a review of the Restart Scheme which they have told us they intend to publish in the autumn. Details of this are available on the National Audit Office website.

State Retirement Pensions: Widowed People**Karin Smyth:** [\[1205\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate her Department has made of the number of men and women who are eligible to inherit a deceased partner's Additional State Pension but who have yet to make a claim to do so.

Guy Opperman:

No estimation has been made. Under current rules, State Pension recipients who become widowed do not need to make a separate claim to get any inherited additional State Pension they may be entitled to. Similarly, those widowed before State Pension age should receive any inherited additional State Pension they may be entitled to when they claim their State Pension.

Universal Credit**Alison Thewliss:** [\[299\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when she plans to announce the timetable for the managed migration from legacy benefits to Universal Credit.

David Rutley:

The Department is committed to ensuring the final phase of Universal Credit is rolled out safely and is responsibly delivered by the end of 2024. We are currently focused on the discovery phase of managed migration beginning with 250 claimants respectively in both Bolton and Medway

Alison Thewliss: [\[300\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when her Department plans to notify people in Universal Credit managed migration areas.

David Rutley:

The Department is currently focussed on the discovery phase of managed migration starting with 250 claimants in Bolton and Medway respectively. We started to issue migration notices in these two locations from 9 May 2022 and will consider the timeframe for other locations in due course.

There are no managed migration areas, we are conducting discovery work in a number of locations with controlled volumes in those locations.

Alison Thewliss: [\[302\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether she plans to make funding available for third sector organisations supporting their service users through managed migration to universal credit.

David Rutley:

The Department recognises the importance of establishing the best possible support arrangements for those moving from legacy benefits to Universal Credit. We will start the managed migration of legacy benefit claimants by initially moving very small numbers, beginning with 250 claimants respectively in both Bolton and Medway. There will be a range of support available to individuals, including a dedicated DWP telephone line and signposting to independent support through the Help to Claim service. As we develop our learning, we will gradually increase the cases over time. It is important that we learn how to safely move people to Universal Credit, and understand the support required to do so. We are also currently considering what further independent support might be needed to support those considering a voluntary move to Universal Credit.

Vicky Foxcroft: [\[358\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what her planned timetable is for the completion of the discovery phase of managed migration to universal credit.

David Rutley:

The department is currently focusing on the discovery phase of managed migration, beginning with 250 claimants respectively in both Bolton and Medway. We aim to complete the managed migration by the end of 2024. We will only scale once it is safe to do so and we are confident in the process.

Vicky Foxcroft: [\[360\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps her Department is taking to ensure the safe transfer of data from legacy systems to the universal credit system as part of the managed migration process.

Vicky Foxcroft: [\[876\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what (a) steps her Department is taking and (b) protocols her Department is putting in place to ensure the safe transfer of data from legacy systems to the universal credit system as part of the managed migration process.

David Rutley:

When undertaking the managed migration of claimants to Universal Credit, we will not migrate data from legacy systems to Universal Credit, but we will require the claimants or their respective appointee to make a new claim to UC.

Appropriate Data Sharing agreements are in place with other Government Departments (HMRC) to ensure data is shared securely for processing Migration Notices and calculating the correct awards (including Transitional Protection).

Within DWP, Data Protection Impact Assessments have been conducted by our Data Protection Team to ensure solutions in place are secure by design to adequately protect claimants' data before, during and post processing.

The claimant's data will be stored in line with the DWP's Data Retention Policy

The Department is also developing mechanisms to securely automate the transfer of data from legacy systems for use in the managed migration process.

■ Universal Credit: Disability

Vicky Foxcroft:

[\[355\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, in the context of the judicial review judgement handed down on 21 January 2022, whether her Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of introducing a transitional top up for claimants who had been in receipt of enhanced disability payments prior to their migration to universal credit.

David Rutley:

No assessment has been made. The government is aware of what the court has said, however, the Secretary of State has sought permission to appeal the judgment and therefore we are unable to comment any further at this stage.

Vicky Foxcroft:

[\[356\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, in the context of the judicial review judgment handed down on 21 January 2022, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that claimants in receipt of enhanced disability payments will not be adversely affected by managed migration to universal credit.

David Rutley:

The government is aware of what the court has said, however, the Secretary of State has sought permission to appeal the judgment and therefore we are unable to comment any further at this stage.

At the point of moving over to Universal Credit by managed migration, all claimants will be assessed for transitional protection and paid where appropriate. The vast majority will either be better off, or no worse off.

The aim of this temporary payment is to allow claimants time to adjust to the new benefit system.

Transitional Protection will gradually reduce as other elements of the Universal Credit award, other than the Childcare Costs Element, increase to align the claimant's entitlement with those claimants who have made a claim to Universal Credit without the managed migration process, and are in the same circumstances.

Vicky Foxcroft:

[\[357\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, which stakeholder groups her Department is working with as of 110 May 2022 to monitor and understand the needs of disabled people as part of process of managed migration to universal credit.

David Rutley:

The Department works in partnership with a broad range of stakeholders, including those from the health and disability sector. In developing our managed migration approach, we have engaged closely with our stakeholder networks, gaining valuable insight which has helped to inform our approach. We will be continuing to engage closely with our stakeholders and take feedback on board as we progress through the discovery phase.

■ **Universal Credit: Mental Illness**

Vicky Foxcroft:

[\[361\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that reasonable adjustments are put in place for universal credit claimants with mental health problems.

David Rutley:

We are committed to fully complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty as we proceed with managed migration and will be regularly reviewing and updating our equality analysis as we progress through the discovery phase and iterate our approach.

We have considered additional needs for those with health conditions including those with mental health conditions and the current support consists of:

- A dedicated DWP phonenumber for those receiving a migration notice
- Comprehensive guidance on Gov.uk
- Specially trained staff in JCP's and service centres who can identify and signpost to local tailored support
- Support through Help to Claim

Vicky Foxcroft:

[\[362\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment her Department has made of the potential challenges experienced by people with mental health problems as part of the managed migration to universal credit process; and what steps her Department is taking to mitigate those challenges.

Vicky Foxcroft:

[\[363\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment her Department has made of the potential challenges experienced by people with learning difficulties as part of the managed migration to universal credit process; and what steps her Department is taking to mitigate those challenges.

Vicky Foxcroft:[\[364\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment her Department has made of the potential challenges experienced by people with dementia as part of the managed migration to universal credit process; and what steps her Department is taking to mitigate those challenges.

David Rutley:

We are committed to fully complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty as we proceed with managed migration and will be regularly reviewing and updating our equality analysis as we progress through the discovery phase and iterate our approach.

We are currently reviewing our explicit consent process to make it easier for those who need the support but do not have or need an appointee to have someone to act on their behalf.

A variety of support is in place for those issued with migration notices, including for individuals with health conditions and disabilities. As we progress through the discovery phase, we are keen to understand what additional support is required for people to make their claim to UC.

Our current support consists of:

- A dedicated phonenumber
- Further guidance on Gov.uk
- Specially trained staff in JCP's and service centres who can identify local tailored support
- Support through Help to Claim

■ Universal Credit: Scotland**Alison Thewliss:**[\[301\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what her timeframe is for managed migration of Universal Credit in Scotland.

David Rutley:

The Department is currently focused on the discovery phase of managed migration starting with 250 claimants in Bolton and Medway. We are committed to ensuring the final phase of Universal Credit is rolled out safely and is responsibly delivered by the end of 2024 in Scotland and the rest of Great Britain.

■ Unpaid Work**Munira Wilson:**[\[972\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment her Department has made of (a) the average number of hours of unpaid labour carried out in the UK each year as part of trial shifts and (b) the potential benefits of introducing regulations on trial shifts to ensure that jobseekers are not exploited.

Mims Davies:

The Department does not hold the data requested.

Existing legislation already bans unpaid work trials that are not part of a legitimate recruitment process. They are not permitted if they are simply for the financial benefit of the employer or are excessive in length.

The DWP Work Trial scheme is a key enabler to help some of our most disadvantaged claimants try work in a risk-free environment. It provides them with a job guarantee providing both they and the employer are satisfied following the trial. It removes the requirement for them to compete with other candidates giving them an opportunity to demonstrate their suitability to the employer whilst having the knowledge that if it doesn't work out for either party there will be no effect on their current benefit entitlement with no requirement to reclaim benefits.

The requirement for the employer to guarantee that the Work Trial is linked to a genuine vacancy provides an additional safeguard to claimants.

MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ Kidney Diseases

Justin Madders:

[\[1191\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Answer of 25 April 2022 to Question 154082 on Kidney Diseases, how that information is held.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 17 May 2022. The correct answer should have been:

Edward Argar:

The National Health Service Electronic Staff Record does not identify renal counsellors as a staff group. Local NHS organisations will record the number of staff **specifically** identified as renal counsellors, although definitions of roles and responsibilities may differ between locations.

HOME OFFICE

■ HM Passport Office: Standards

Mary Kelly Foy:

[\[959\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with HM Passport Office on solutions to the current backlog of applications.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 18 May 2022. The correct answer should have been:

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 that passport applications can be processed in higher numbers than ever before. **Across March and April 2022, HM Passport Office completed the processing of nearly two million applications.**

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

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

DEFENCE

■ **The Defence and Security Industrial Strategy: Update**

The Minister of State for Defence Procurement (Jeremy Quin): [\[HCWS36\]](#)

I wish to update Parliament on the progress made since the publication of the Defence and Security Industrial Strategy (DSIS) on 23 March 2021.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has highlighted even more the importance of a sustainable and resilient sector that generates the necessary skills to deliver the capabilities we and our partners need, now and in the future.

Over the past 12 months, Government and industry have made significant progress on more than 50 DSIS commitments, and today, I am pleased to announce the publication of the Land Industrial Strategy (LIS) which will be published on the gov.uk website shortly. I am also placing a copy in the Library of the House.

The Land Industrial Strategy

The LIS draws on DSIS principles to provide, for the first time, a specific strategy for the sector. It sets the conditions for a long-term collaborative approach, based on shared culture and behaviours that support co-investment in capability delivery, innovation, the strengthening of supply chains and the national industrial resilience the UK needs to respond to crisis.

The LIS is not intended to prevent MOD looking overseas to acquire where appropriate the best value for money equipment. It is however designed to encourage greater transparency and partnerships especially with onshore suppliers.

The LIS should support the delivery of modernised equipment to the frontline more quickly and efficiently. Key platforms will serve for decades, so we will use open architectures, commonality, and modularity, and work with industry to make upgrades through-life. This will give us enhanced capabilities and decisive advantage against adversaries, and, with our allies, the critical 'technological edge' needed in this Information Age.

Partnerships

In the coming years, Government will be asking more of industry, to become more efficient and more enterprising, ensuring we have access to the skills and capabilities we need. This is why we are offering greater long-term transparency on our plans and policies. Since DSIS, MOD has published strategies for Digital, Data, Shipbuilding, Space and now Land. Other documents such as the Defence Artificial Intelligence (AI) Strategy will be published shortly.

In addition, we are now going beyond the commitments set out a year ago and, building on the principles of DSIS, we will soon be publishing a Defence Capability Framework that will articulate our longer-term military capability priorities and challenges, providing

greater transparency of our future plans and building upon the Equipment Plan 21. It will map out those areas where we expect industry to invest and upskill; combining our collective efforts to achieve the best outcomes for the UK.

In January, in recognition of the importance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) for innovation, diversity, and resilience in MOD's supply chains, we published the refreshed SME Action plan, which sets out how MOD will continue to create opportunities for SMEs.

I will shortly be launching the Defence Technology Exploitation Programme (DTEP) - a UK-wide initiative that will fund and support collaborative projects between SMEs and higher tier Defence suppliers - and help them win new business delivering against MOD's technological priorities.

DSIS also focuses on strengthening our partnerships abroad including through developing our Government-to-Government frameworks to better support defence exports.

Acquisition & Procurement Reform

Closer to home, we are driving increased pace into acquisition and incentivising innovation and productivity through a range of acquisition improvement initiatives and fundamental reforms of the regulations that govern defence and security procurement and single source contracts.

The implementation of Category Management is expected to result in financial savings, and capability benefits such as improved availability and time to delivery, through a pan-Defence approach to buying goods and services.

We are improving the way that we manage our Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) cadre by introducing an SRO talent pool and ensuring that our SRO skills are matched to the challenges of the projects. We are also targeting the SROs on our biggest projects allocating at least 50% of their time to the task.

We have implemented the Social Value model within MOD's procurement process, ensuring contracts deliver against key MOD outcomes and also support wider Government objectives. The MOD's Social Value Centre of Expertise has been established and is ensuring this model is consistently applied.

In March, the Joint Economic Data Hub published its first annual report, highlighting the important role the defence sector makes to the UK economy, including the large number of defence jobs supported by international business as well as the many apprentices and graduates in the sector. This is part of the drive by Defence to be more transparent in setting out the economic contribution the defence sector makes across the UK.

Innovation

This Government has reversed the long-term decline in Research and Development through additional funding and our ringfenced investment of at least £6.6bn over the four years of the 2020 Spending Review. We have increased funding to the UK Defence

Solutions Centre and the Defence and Security Accelerator, which is helping turn private sector innovation into military capability.

In February, the UK's first Defence Space Strategy included a commitment to invest a further £1.4 billion into space technologies over the next decade (with additional innovation funding since being provided); and in March, I opened Dstl's first regional S&T Hub in Newcastle upon Tyne, focussing on AI and Data Science to exploit the latest technological breakthroughs for use across Defence.

We are also working closely across Government with the Joint Security and Resilience Centre at the Home Office and UK Defence and Security Exports at DIT, to create a more resilient, more efficient, and more innovative security sector.

Conclusion

We have made significant progress in the first year of DSIS, but there is more to be done. The Defence Secretary and I, supported by other Government Ministers, will continue to review progress against commitments to make sure our Armed Forces will continue to get the equipment and capabilities they need to keep us safe and drive prosperity.

Attachments:

1. Land Industrial Strategy [20220517-ADR010387_LIS.pdf]

HOME OFFICE

■ **Fire Reform White Paper and improving Fire Safety for the public**

The Minister of State for Crime and Policing (Kit Malthouse):

[\[HCWS35\]](#)

My Noble Friend the Minister of State, Home Office and Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (Lord Greenhalgh) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

I am pleased to make a number of announcements to the House today that set out both the Government's fire reform agenda and the introduction of a package of fire safety measures that will protect the public for years to come. Taken together, this is about:

1. Driving forward reform of the Fire and Rescue Service by launching the Fire Reform White Paper and consultation (CP 670).
2. Implementing a package of measures to improve fire safety.
3. Improving transparency and engaging the public.

Fire Reform White Paper and Consultation

The Fire Reform White Paper and consultation seeks to introduce system-wide reform to strengthen fire and rescue services across England. The proposals are set out under three key themes: people; professionalism; and governance. The consultation is launching today to seek views and will be open for 10 weeks.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/reforming-our-fire-and-rescue-service>

Review of the National Joint Council

As set out in the White Paper the government will launch a review of the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services. The review, which will commence later this year, will consider whether the pay negotiation mechanism in England is fit for purpose.

The Fire Safety Act 2021

The Fire Safety Act 2021 was commenced in full on 16 May 2022. This will clarify that structure, external walls and flat entrance doors of blocks of flats are within scope of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the Fire Safety Order) and ensure that they are included in that building's fire risk assessment.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-safety-act-2021>

Fire Risk Assessment Prioritisation Tool

To support commencement of the Fire Safety Act 2021, the Home Office is publishing supporting guidance issued under article 50 of the Fire Safety Order and launching an online prioritisation tool. The new Fire Risk Assessment Prioritisation Tool has been developed to help Responsible Persons identify the priority for updating fire risk assessments.

[Fire Risk Assessment Prioritisation Tool](#)

Fire Safety (Regulations) 2022

The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 will require Responsible Persons to send information on high-rise residential buildings which will help fire and rescue services better plan for and respond to a fire. They will also improve fire safety in high-rise buildings by setting a baseline on safety checks on lifts for firefighters and other key pieces of firefighting equipment and, in mid-rise buildings, on doors. They will also make residents in all multi-occupied residential buildings feel safer by providing them with fire safety instructions and information on the importance of fire doors.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-safety-england-regulations-2022>

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) consultation response, and new consultation

We are publishing the responses to our PEEPs consultation which we ran from 8 June to 19 July 2021.

We have taken account of the substantial difficulties of mandating PEEPs in high rise residential buildings and have developed new proposals that we are confident deliver proportionality, practicality and improve safety for those vulnerable people living in the highest risk buildings. We will now consult and seek views on these proposals.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/personal-emergency-evacuation-plans>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/emergency-evacuation-information-sharing>

Fourth thematic update on Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 recommendations

We are publishing our latest update on progress against Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 recommendations. This shows progress made by Government departments, and relevant public authorities, including the London Fire Brigade, and National Fire Chiefs Council. The tracker provides a digestible, transparent way for the public to hold those responsible for delivering recommendations to account.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/quarterly-thematic-update-on-progress-against-the-grenfell-tower-inquiry-phase-1-recommendations>

Fires in high-rise residential buildings in England are rare, and thankfully deaths from fires in high-rise residential buildings are extremely rare. The Government, however, is committed to learning the lessons of the tragedy at Grenfell Tower.