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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

#### ■ Criminal Proceedings: Gangs

**Alex Cunningham:**

[\[8997\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, with reference to the guidance issued by the Crown Prosecution Service on 4 November 2021 entitled Gang related offences - Decision making in, whether she has made an assessment of the potential effect of the guidance on the use of the term gang by prosecutors during proceedings.

**Alex Chalk:**

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) guidance urges caution about the use of the word 'gang', explaining how it can properly be deployed in a prosecution, where substantiated by the evidence and relevant to a matter in issue in the proceedings. In drafting the guidance, the CPS assessed the potential effect of using 'gang' in proceedings and identified that the term is used in legislation and by criminal justice partners. The guidance clearly sets out that, given the negative connotations of the term 'gang', prosecutors should not refer to a group as a 'gang' in proceedings unless there is evidence to support the assertion. However, prosecutors must also ensure that where there is admissible evidence of gang membership, the case is put on a basis that reflects the often very serious gravity of the offending.

#### ■ Government Legal Department

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[7939\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, with reference to the readout of the Cabinet meeting by the Prime Minister's spokesman on 24 May 2022, who conducted the review into the performance of the Government Legal Department; what the terms of reference were for that review; and whether a copy of the review findings will be laid before Parliament.

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[7940\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, with reference to the readout of the Cabinet meeting by the Prime Minister's spokesman on 24 May 2022, if she will publish the (a) revised guidance given to the Government Legal Department on the type of service it is tasked with providing to other departments and (b) previous guidance that it has replaced.

**Alex Chalk:**

The Attorney General commissioned a review into the Government Legal Department in October 2020. This was an internal review and as such it is not suitable for publication.

The Legal Risk Guidance is a fundamental document lawyers in government use in all aspects of their work. It was recently refreshed in light of the collective experience of Ministers and lawyers of its practical application.



The updated guidance will be published shortly.

The previous version is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-note-on-legal-risk>

## BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

### ■ Animal Experiments

**Patrick Grady:**

**[8044]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps the Government is taking to steps to accelerate the transition from animal research to human relevant science.

**George Freeman:**

UK Research and Innovation is committed to ensuring that the UK remains at the forefront of global efforts to reduce, refine or replace the use of animals in research, and provides core funding to the National Centre for 3Rs of £49.1 million over 5 years.

The Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council has just launched £4 million of funding targeted at developing the next generation of non-animal technology and driving the uptake of existing non-animal technology.

The Medical Research Council launched the new Experimental Medicine Panel in 2020, which has an annual budget of £10 million, and is dedicated to investigating diseases directly in humans using non-invasive techniques.

### ■ Boiler Upgrade Scheme

**Dr Alan Whitehead:**

**[7884]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the Government's Boiler Upgrade Scheme is a low carbon electricity levy.

**Greg Hands:**

The Boiler Upgrade Scheme provides upfront capital grants for the installation of low carbon heating systems in homes and small non-domestic buildings in England and Wales. The scheme will be paid for through exchequer funding and has a budget of £450million over three years as announced at the Spending Review 2021.

### ■ Buildings: Carbon Emissions

**Olivia Blake:**

**[10051]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will provide details of the equalities impact assessment which will be undertaken for the heat and buildings strategy.

**Greg Hands:**

We consider the equalities impacts of all our individual policies, including preparing an equalities impact assessment wherever appropriate, once those policies reach a suitable point in their development. Equality analyses to fulfil the requirements of the Public Sector Equalities Duty are living documents that are updated as policies develop, and therefore, it is not common practice that these are shared publicly. However, as individual policies develop, impact assessments, which include consideration of public sector equalities duties, are published at an appropriate time in the policy lifecycle (for example, during a consultation).

**Olivia Blake:**[\[10052\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he plans to consult (a) civil society organisations representing people (i) with disabilities, (ii) by age groups and (iii) with other protected characteristics and (b) the public in the preparation of the equalities impact assessment for the heat and buildings strategy.

**Greg Hands:**

The Government considers the equalities impacts of all its individual policies, including preparing an equalities impact assessment wherever appropriate, once those policies reach a suitable point in their development. That is the case for the policies set out in the Heat and Buildings Strategy.

Engagement with industry and civil society groups was undertaken during the development of the Heat and Buildings Strategy, including through the process of policy consultation.

**■ Business: China****Catherine West:**[\[9083\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if the Government will make an assessment of the potential extent to which business profits from human rights abuses and forced labour in China are passed through UK companies.

**Paul Scully:**

The Government has taken steps to help ensure that no British organisations profit from, or contribute to, human rights violations against the Uyghurs or other minorities in China. This includes new guidance for UK businesses on the risks of doing business in Xinjiang and enhanced export controls, as well as the introduction of financial penalties under the Modern Slavery Act. Our overseas business risk guidance makes clear to UK companies the risks of operating in Xinjiang and urges them to consider their corporate responsibilities when making investment decisions.

**■ Business: Coventry****Colleen Fletcher:**[\[9900\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to help support small and medium sized businesses facing rises in business costs in (a) Coventry North East constituency and (b) Coventry.

**Paul Scully:**

The Government is providing a range of support to help SMEs. Fuel duty has been cut for 12 months, Employment Allowance raised to £5,000, and VAT has been zero-rated on energy-saving materials. This compliments existing support, including business rates relief worth £7 billion over five years, whilst the Help to Grow programmes enables SMEs across England to mitigate the effects of rising costs.

This work builds on support to businesses in Coventry North East and Coventry itself, including:

- Enabling Growth Hubs to support a total of 3,030 businesses of varying sizes. In addition, they helped 227 individuals to start a business;
- £6.09 million Getting Build Fund towards Completing the Cultural Capital;
- £131.84 million Local Growth Deals;
- £766,332 Community Renewal Fund.

**■ Clothing: Bangladesh and Cambodia****Patrick Grady:**[\[9914\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the impact of the covid-19 pandemic on garment workers in (a) Bangladesh and (b) Cambodia who are involved in UK supply chains.

**Paul Scully:**

No assessment has been made.

**■ Clothing: China****Catherine West:**[\[9079\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will conduct a review into the supply chain for fashion businesses in light of evidence of human rights abuses in China.

**Paul Scully:**

The Government has taken steps to help ensure that no British organisations profit from, or contribute to, human rights violations against the Uyghurs or other minorities in China. This includes new guidance for UK businesses on the risks of doing business in Xinjiang and enhanced export controls, as well as the introduction of financial penalties under the Modern Slavery Act. Organisations are expected to report on the action they are taking to tackle and prevent modern slavery risks in their supply chains as part of their annual modern slavery statement. Our overseas business risk guidance makes clear to UK companies the risks of operating in Xinjiang and urges them to consider their corporate responsibilities when making investment decisions.

## ■ Clothing: Manufacturing Industries

**Patrick Grady:** [\[9913\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if the Government will require fashion manufacturers operating in the UK to ensure high ethical and workplace standards for overseas garment workers.

**Patrick Grady:** [\[9915\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of creating a fashion watchdog to ensure that workers in overseas supply chains for fashion manufacturers operating in the UK are treated fairly and ethically.

**Paul Scully:**

The Government continues to engage with the enforcement bodies and industry partners to strengthen our understanding of levels of non-compliance across the garment trade. We will continue to review this issue and consider options to drive up standards across the sector.

## ■ Coal: Mining

**Dr Rupa Huq:** [\[9070\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of bringing forward legislative proposals to prevent the establishment of new coal mining sites.

**Greg Hands:**

The Government has committed to phase-out coal power by 2024 – a year earlier than planned. Coal mining in the UK has been in long term decline reflecting falling domestic demand. There are only a handful of operational mines remaining in the UK.

## ■ Electric Cables: Seas and Oceans

**Sir Bernard Jenkin:** [\[6661\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will estimate the likely (a) length of cabling, (b) transmission capacity, (c) financial cost of the proposed Sealink 1 undersea electrical cable from Sizewell to Kent, referred to as SCD1 in the latest National Grid Network Options Appraisal; and if he will make a statement.

**Greg Hands:**

National Grid Electricity Transmission is currently developing proposals for Sea Link, a new planned 2GW high voltage undersea electricity link between Suffolk and Kent.

(a) Length of cabling: ~150km, consisting of ~140km DC cable (of which 130km will be offshore and 10km onshore) and ~10km of onshore AC cables);

(b) Transmission capacity: 2GW High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC);

(c) Financial cost of the proposed Sea Link undersea electrical cable from Sizewell to Kent: This project is forecast to cost ~£1.2bn. This includes the cost to connect the link to the existing transmission system at either end, the converter stations and the cable required between the two. This figure is however subject to final engineering design, commodity prices, landowner agreements and mitigation.

**Sir Bernard Jenkin:**

**[7882]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much of the estimated cost of each of the following undersea electricity transmission cables will ultimately be funded through electricity bills to residential and commercial customers (a) western link (Hunterston to Flintshire Bridge), (b) eastern link (Peterhead to Drax) and (c) Sealink 1 (Sizewell to Kent).

**Greg Hands:**

All electricity network costs approved by the independent regulator Ofgem are funded through the network charges paid by electricity suppliers and generators. Ultimately, all such costs will be met by electricity consumers through their electricity bills.

## ■ Energy Bills Rebate

**Pat McFadden:**

**[9861]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy or Industrial Strategy, what proportion of a default energy tariff at the April 2022 price cap the £400 Energy Bills Support Scheme represents for customers that pay via (a) prepayment meters and (b) direct debit at typical usage levels.

**Greg Hands:**

The proportion for prepayment meters as well as direct debit would be 20%. This calculation is for an average household with a dual fuel tariff which uses 12,000 kWh of gas and 2,900 kWh of electricity and what proportion of this the £400 grant would thus make up.

**Rachel Reeves:**

**[9873]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy or Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Energy Bills Support Scheme, whether households who live in unmetered properties will receive support for the costs of energy in 2022-23.

**Greg Hands:**

Energy suppliers will deliver this support to households with a domestic electricity meter over six months from October. Other support for consumers who might not be eligible for the Energy Bills Support Scheme was announced by the Government on the 26 May.

**■ Energy Bills Rebate: Bed and Breakfast Accommodation**

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[9921\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy or Industrial Strategy, whether owners of properties used as bed and breakfast accommodation will be eligible to claim the energy bill discount relief announced on 26 May 2022 in respect of those properties.

**Greg Hands:**

Energy suppliers will deliver this grant to domestic electricity customers who meet the eligibility requirements over six months from October.

**■ Energy Bills Rebate: Holiday Accommodation**

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[9920\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy or Industrial Strategy, whether owners of properties used as short-term lets, such as Airbnbs, for which they pay council tax will be able to claim the energy bills discount announced on 26 May 2022 in respect of those properties.

**Greg Hands:**

Energy suppliers will deliver this grant to domestic electricity customers who meet the eligibility requirements over six months from October.

**■ Energy Bills Rebate: Leasehold**

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[9922\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy or Industrial Strategy, whether leaseholders who are part of shared energy schemes will be entitled to claim the energy bills discount announced on 26 May 2022.

**Greg Hands:**

Energy suppliers will deliver this support to domestic electricity customers over six months from October. The Government knows that there will be different considerations for consumers depending on their circumstances and the way in which they pay their energy bills. The Government held a technical consultation on the Energy Bills Support Scheme from 11 April to 23 May. The responses to this consultation are being analysed and a response will be published later in the summer.

**■ Energy Bills Rebate: Meters**

**Pat McFadden:** [\[9860\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy or Industrial Strategy, when prepayment meter customers will receive vouchers under the Energy Bills Support Scheme.

**Greg Hands:**

Energy suppliers will deliver this support to households with a domestic electricity meter over six months from October. Customers with pre-payment meters will have the money applied to their meter or paid via a voucher.

**■ Energy Bills Rebate: Private Rented Housing****Abena Oppong-Asare:**[\[10030\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy or Industrial Strategy, if he will implement safeguards to accompany the Energy Bills Support Scheme to ensure that all private rented sector tenants living in properties with a domestic electricity meter receive the £400 support and landlords are unable to withhold it.

**Greg Hands:**

The Government expect landlords with a domestic electricity connection where tenants' energy costs are included in their rental charges, to ensure that the £400 reduction is passed on to tenants. The Government held a technical consultation on the Energy Bills Support Scheme from 11 April to 23 May. The responses to this consultation are being analysed and a response will be published later in the summer.

**Rachael Maskell:**[\[9923\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy or Industrial Strategy, in cases where landlords pay Council Tax in respect of properties which they let out, whether tenants of those properties will be eligible for the energy bills discount announced on 26 May 2022.

**Greg Hands:**

The Government expect landlords with a domestic electricity connection, where tenants' energy costs are included in their rental charges, to ensure that the £400 reduction is passed on to tenants. The Government held a technical consultation on the Energy Bills Support Scheme from 11 April to 23 May. The responses to this consultation are being analysed and a response will be published later in the summer.

**Matthew Pennycook:**[\[9938\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy or Industrial Strategy, whether private renters whose energy bills are included in their rent payments will receive the £400 energy bills discount announced on 26 May 2022.

**Greg Hands:**

The Government expect landlords with a domestic electricity connection where tenants' energy costs are included in their rental charges, to ensure that the £400 reduction is passed on to tenants. The Government held a technical consultation on the Energy Bills Support Scheme from 11 April to 23 May. The responses to this consultation are being analysed and a response will be published later in the summer.

## ■ Energy Bills Rebate: Second Homes

**Rachel Reeves:** [9872]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy or Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Energy Bills Support Scheme, whether owners of multiple properties with a domestic electricity meter will receive £400 for each of those properties.

**Greg Hands:**

The £400 grant will be delivered to households via energy suppliers through electricity bills over six months from October.

The Government held a technical consultation on the Energy Bills Support Scheme from 11 April to 23 May. The responses to this consultation are being analysed and a response will be published later in the summer.

## ■ Energy: Billing

**Hilary Benn:** [7915]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what data his Department holds on the number of disconnections of customers in England for non-payment of (a) gas and (b) electricity bills in each of the last five years.

**Greg Hands:**

Ofgem, as the independent regulator of the gas and electricity markets, publishes details on the number of customer disconnections on their website:

<https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/energy-data-and-research/data-portal/all-available-charts?keyword=disconnection%20for%20non-payment&sort=relevance>.

This information is available up to Q2 2021 and dates back to Q1 2006. Ofgem regulates the market in Great Britain, so this data is for customers in Great Britain.

**Mr Laurence Robertson:** [8951]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what proportion of domestic consumers' energy bills are made up of green taxes on average; and if he will make a statement.

**Greg Hands:**

Environmental and social policy costs currently represent 8% of the average dual fuel bill. A full breakdown of these costs was published by Ofgem in April and is available at: <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/energy-data-and-research/data-portal>.

## ■ Energy: Taxation

**Mr Laurence Robertson:** [8952]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy or Industrial Strategy, what the total amount of revenue collected in green taxes placed on domestic energy bills has been in each of the years for which those taxes have been levied.



**Greg Hands:**

This information is available from the Office for Budget Responsibility:

<https://obr.uk/efo/economic-and-fiscal-outlook-march-2022/>.

**Fuel Poverty: Disability****Debbie Abrahams:****[9014]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Government Response to the Warm Home Discount: Better targeted support from 2022 consultation, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of the value and proportion of energy suppliers' spending through Industry Initiatives to support fuel poor disabled people.

**Greg Hands:**

Industry Initiatives provide valuable support to households in, or at risk of, fuel poverty through a range of measures, including energy advice, financial assistance, and energy efficiency improvements.

To date, energy suppliers have only been required to report on the overall spending on Industry Initiatives measures to Ofgem. From the 2022/23 scheme year, suppliers will be required to report on the estimated value and proportion of Industry Initiatives spending on fuel poor households where someone has a disability or significant health problems.

**Fuel Poverty: Liverpool City Region****Conor McGinn:****[8047]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate his Department has made of the effect of rising energy prices on the number of households in fuel poverty in (a) St Helens North constituency, (b) St Helens Metropolitan Borough and (c) the Liverpool City Region.

**Greg Hands:**

The estimated projections for fuel poverty in England in 2022 can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/annual-fuel-poverty-statistics-report-2022>.

The latest subregional statistics are for 2020, and can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sub-regional-fuel-poverty-2022>.

**Insolvency****Owen Thompson:****[9068]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will introduce new regulatory regimes to provide statutory protections for consumers aimed at strengthening protections for policy holders with companies in administration.

**Paul Scully:**

The insolvency regime strikes a balance when distributing funds from insolvent estates to ensure that all creditors in an insolvency are treated fairly. Changing that

balance, by giving a higher priority to certain customers, will have a detrimental impact on other unsecured creditors, as well as having wider implications (for example, on lending, credit terms, and other trade activity). Protection of policy holders is a matter for regulators in the sectors in which they operate rather than in the insolvency framework.

## ■ Nickel

**Angus Brendan MacNeil:** [\[8974\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what (a) materials and (b) capability there is within the UK to build nickel plate products for UK power stations.

**Angus Brendan MacNeil:** [\[8975\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what design approval is required for nickel plate products.

**Angus Brendan MacNeil:** [\[8976\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many craftsmen are available to build nickel plate products in the UK; and are there any university programmes available in the UK for nickel plate products.

**Angus Brendan MacNeil:** [\[8977\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the amount of time it takes to train a welder for nickel plate products to work on nuclear systems and nuclear power stations.

**Lee Rowley:**

BEIS does not collect or have access to this data.

## ■ Post Offices: Cash Dispensing

**Jonathan Edwards:** [\[7965\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what support the Government provides to Post Offices wishing to locate ATMs on the outside of their premises.

**Paul Scully:**

Over the past ten years, the Government has provided over £2.5 billion in funding to support the Post Office network. Government is providing a further £335 million for the Post Office over the next three years.

While the Government sets the strategic direction for the Post Office, it allows the company the commercial freedom to deliver this strategy as an independent business. The management of the Post Office network, including the provision for ATMs, is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd.

## ■ **Pregnancy and Maternity Discrimination Advisory Board**

**Anneliese Dodds:**

**[9997]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Answer of 23 March 2022 to Question 140547 on Employment: Pregnancy, if he will publish the (a) terms of reference and (b) minutes of the meetings of (i) 23 September 2021, (ii) 29 March 2022 and (iii) 11 May 2022 of the Pregnancy and Maternity Discrimination Advisory Board.

**Paul Scully:**

The Government does not routinely publish minutes of meetings or Terms of Reference. The papers referenced above can be made available on request to: [labourmarketparticipation@beis.gov.uk](mailto:labourmarketparticipation@beis.gov.uk).

## ■ **Public Houses: Codes of Practice**

**Sarah Olney:**

**[9091]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will publish a timeline of when he plans to undertake the next statutory review of the Pubs Code and the performance of the Pubs Code Adjudicator.

**Paul Scully:**

The second statutory review of the Pubs Code and the Pubs Code Adjudicator covers the period from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2022.

BEIS has already started the review by considering a range of publicly available evidence. On 26 May 2022, I published an invitation seeking stakeholders' views and evidence which will also be considered as part of this review.

This can be accessed through GOV.uk at [www.gov.uk/government/consultations/pubs-code-and-pubs-code-adjudicator-invitation-for-views-on-the-second-statutory-review-2019-to-2022](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/pubs-code-and-pubs-code-adjudicator-invitation-for-views-on-the-second-statutory-review-2019-to-2022) and stakeholders have until 17 August 2022 to respond.

A report on the findings of the review will be published as soon as practicable and laid before Parliament by the Secretary of State.

## ■ **Warm Home Discount Scheme: Disability**

**Debbie Abrahams:**

**[9011]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he plans to take steps to help mitigate the impact on disabled people of the forthcoming changes to the eligibility criteria for the Warm Home Discount, which will remove eligibility for people who receive Personal Independence Payment and Disability Living Allowance.

**Greg Hands:**

Around 62% of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and Disability Living Allowance (DLA) recipients also receive one of the qualifying means-tested benefits and so would be considered low-income under the Core Group 2 criteria. Those with

high energy costs would therefore be eligible for a rebate. The Government's analysis shows that 160,000 more households, where there is a person with a disability or long-term illness, will receive a rebate each winter compared to the previous scheme. My Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer has also announced a one-off £150 payment for people on disability benefits this year, alongside other cost of living support measures: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cost-of-living-support/cost-of-living-support-factsheet-26-may-2022>.

## CABINET OFFICE

### ■ 10 Downing Street

**Fleur Anderson:** [10027]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether all staff members employed by Number 10 who were asked to complete questionnaires by the Metropolitan Police as part of its investigation into breaches of covid-19 regulations completed them.

**Michael Ellis:**

Details of the Metropolitan Police Service's investigation are rightly an operational matter for the police, not the Government.

**Rachael Maskell:** [9060]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will make it his policy to require the proposed covid-19 inquiry to collect evidence on the impact of breaches of covid-19 restrictions at 10 Downing Street on people who were bereaved during covid-19.

**Rachael Maskell:** [9919]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will take steps to ensure that the scope of the Covid-19 Inquiry includes an assessment of the potential impact on people bereaved by covid-19 of the findings of the Cabinet Office report entitled Findings of Second Permanent Secretary's investigation into alleged gatherings on Government premises during covid restrictions.

**Michael Ellis:**

In March, the Prime Minister published the draft terms of reference for the public inquiry into COVID-19. The Prime Minister asked Baroness Hallett - the inquiry's chair - to consult publicly on the draft and to make proposals for further refinements. Following that consultation, Baroness Hallett has now published her recommendations. In accordance with the terms of the Inquiries Act, the Government will now consider her proposals fully, consult the devolved administrations, and will publish the inquiry's final terms of reference in due course.

**■ 10 Downing Street: Alcoholic Drinks****Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:****[9114]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether any alcohol consumed at Downing Street gatherings, for which fixed penalty notices were issued due to breaches of covid-19 regulations, was purchased from the public purse.

**Michael Ellis:**

No.

**■ 10 Downing Street: Taxis****Emily Thornberry:****[8972]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 24 May 2022 to Question 2427 on 10 Downing Street: Taxis, for what reason his Department does not maintain records for the costs incurred on Downing Street's travel account for mini-cabs; and what steps he is taking to effectively ensure value for public money in the use of that account in the absence of such records.

**Michael Ellis:**

As I outlined in my previous answer, the information requested by the Rt Hon Member is not centrally held in the form requested, and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

All expenditure is in line with the Cabinet Office's Travel and Expenses Policy. It states that such travel expenses may be claimed by staff where:

- "you are outside of normal working hours (before 6am and after 9pm)
- no other suitable method of public transport is available, and
- travel by private vehicle or self-drive hire car is not possible and/or is not cost-effective, and either:
- you are transporting heavy luggage or official business equipment, or
- the saving of official time is important and can be justified on cost grounds."

To assist the Rt Hon Member's scrutiny, as I have noted in previous answers, there was no such spending by Downing Street staff in relation to gatherings in the recent report by the Second Permanent Secretary.

**Emily Thornberry:****[8973]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to the Answer of 28 January 2022 to Question 111521 on 10 Downing Street: Taxis, whether any vehicles were ordered on Downing Street's mini-cab account to take Downing Street staff to their homes or other locations between 8pm and 4am on the nights of (a) 13 November and (b) 17 December 2020.

**Michael Ellis:**

There were no journeys other than one for a shift worker, similar to that outlined in my answer to the Rt Hon Member of 28 January 2022, [UIN 111521](#).

This was not related to any gathering covered in the report of the Second Permanent Secretary, and the journey was in line with Cabinet Office travel policy guidance.

#### ■ Cabinet Office: Buildings

**Mr Andrew Mitchell:**

[\[9844\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to his Answer of 18 May 2022 to Question 64 on 36 Whitehall, what the nature of the one-off urgent Health and Safety works was costing £724k carried out at 36 Whitehall; when and by whom those works were carried out; and what target date the Government Property Agency has been set for the re-occupation of 36 Whitehall by public servants.

**Mr Jacob Rees-Mogg:**

The urgent health and safety works comprised: surveys for the extent of structural damage of the building and assessment of repairs required to windows, brickwork and facades. Early risk mitigation works were undertaken. The external facades are Grade I listed and cannot be allowed to deteriorate. The majority of the works were completed between February 2022 and April 2022 by Mitie. No target date is set for the re-occupation of 36 Whitehall by public servants.

#### ■ Cabinet Office: Correspondence

**Jessica Morden:**

[\[9853\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer given on 26 May 2022 to Question 6731 on Cabinet Office: Correspondence, when the Department plans to publish data on volumes and timeliness of responses to correspondence from Members of the House of Commons and Lords for 2021.

**Mr Jacob Rees-Mogg:**

The Government attaches great importance to the effective and timely handling of correspondence, and so does Parliament.

Ministers and officials remain committed to providing timely and detailed replies.

As part of its ongoing commitment to transparency, the Cabinet Office has published data related to letters from MPs and Peers answered by Government in 2021. This was done via a Written Ministerial Statement in my name on 26 May 2022 (HCWS59).

#### ■ Government Departments: Buildings

**Mr Andrew Mitchell:**

[\[9845\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, which 10 Government buildings were scheduled to be exited during 2021-22 in accordance with the Whitehall Campus Programme plans referred to on page 17 of the Government Property Agency's 2021-22 Business Plan; which of those buildings have been exited; and what the status is of each of those building as at 26 May 2022.

*The answer failed to generate for this report, it can be found at <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-05-26/9845>*

## ■ Government Digital Service

**Angela Rayner:** [8010]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the cost to the public purse was of data and user insight work conducted by the Government Digital Service in 2021.

**Mrs Heather Wheeler:**

In 2021, the Government Digital Service spent £4.9m on data and user insights work.

## ■ Prime Minister: Bottles

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [9111]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how empty glass bottles in Number 10 Downing Street are recycled.

**Michael Ellis:**

As part of the Cabinet Office's Environmental Policy, glass receptacles, including bottles, collected from the Cabinet Office's central London estate, are recycled via the Government Property Agency's facilities management contract with Mitie FM.

## ■ Prime Minister: Staff

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [9123]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to the fixed-penalty notices issued to Downing Street staff for breaching covid-19 regulations, whether any staff (a) have been dismissed and (b) are being investigated for (i) misconduct or (ii) gross misconduct.

**Michael Ellis:**

Following the completion of the Metropolitan Police investigation and publication of the Second Permanent Secretary's Report, the Cabinet Office and other relevant Government departments are carefully considering findings in relation to allegations of misconduct by their staff, with proper regard to existing disciplinary processes.

## ■ Public Sector: Procurement

**Dan Carden:** [9123]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what plans he has to tackle potential enforcement loopholes to ensure the effectiveness of proposals for (a) failure to prevent offences, (b) deferred prosecution agreements and (c) other proposals for the exclusion of bidders from public procurement in respect of companies involved in (i) bribery, (ii) fraud, (iii) money laundering and (iv) tax evasion.

**Dan Carden:**

[\[9124\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps he (a) has taken and (b) plans to take to ensure effective parliamentary oversight of the use of emergency procurement measures.

**Dan Carden:**

[\[9125\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what recent estimate he has made of (a) length of time and (b) costs for resolving procurement challenges and disputes; and what plans he has to make the system faster and more efficient.

**Mr Jacob Rees-Mogg:**

Current procurement laws allow for the exclusion of suppliers from bidding for procurements where they have been convicted of, or there is evidence of, bribery, fraud, money laundering and tax evasion. The Procurement Bill, introduced to Parliament on 11 May, broadens and strengthens the exclusion grounds. It is for contracting authorities to consider whether suppliers must or may be excluded from each procurement. We intend to publish guidance to assist authorities in conducting due diligence, for instance by pointing to relevant sources of information.

The Procurement Bill also includes new, clearer and more transparent measures for how procurement can be conducted in an emergency. It makes provision for contracting in an emergency, for example where necessary to protect life. This will give people confidence that contracts are being let appropriately even when there is a need to procure at speed. New rules will also continue to allow buyers to run a quick informal competition in situations of extreme urgency (currently they are more likely to opt for a direct award to reduce the risk of delay).

The Government's response to the Green Paper on Transforming Public Procurement discussed the costs and duration of legal challenges and we are continuing to explore feasible options for faster and more accessible routes for valid challenge of procurement decisions. We intend to establish a new Procurement Review Unit to improve capability and compliance, thereby reducing the need for legal challenges, and providing an alternative mechanism for complaints to be addressed.

## ■ Whitehall: Government Departments: Buildings

**Mr Andrew Mitchell:**

[\[9846\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what plans he has for the use of (a) 55 Whitehall and (b) 3-8 Whitehall Place in the future.

**Mr Jacob Rees-Mogg:**

55 Whitehall and 3-8 Whitehall Place will be refurbished in advance of BEIS relocation from London, 1 Victoria St.



## ■ Written Questions

**Jessica Morden:**

[\[7944\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many and what proportion of written questions sent to each Government department received a response citing disproportionate cost as grounds upon which not to provide a substantive answer in (a) 2019, (b) 2020, (c) 2021 and (d) January-May 2022.

**Jessica Morden:**

[\[7945\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many and what proportion of written questions to each Government department received the response that information was not available in the format requested in (a) 2019, (b) 2020, (c) 2021 and (d) January to May 2022.

**Michael Ellis:**

Details of responses to written parliamentary questions from other government departments are not recorded centrally by the Cabinet Office. All questions that received responses that cited disproportionate costs or information not being available in the format requested can be found publicly on the parliament.uk website and can be searched for within the years requested.

## COP26

### ■ Offshore Industry: Carbon Emissions

**Liz Saville Roberts:**

[\[9944\]](#)

To ask the President of COP26, whether he has had discussions with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the implications for the UK's net-zero emissions target in the context of the super-deduction for UK oil and gas extraction through the Energy Profits Levy.

**Alok Sharma:**

The COP President meets Cabinet colleagues regularly on a wide range of issues.

### ■ UN Climate Conference 2021

**Angela Rayner:**

[\[9891\]](#)

To ask the President of COP26, pursuant to the Answer of 25 May 2022 to Question 5661 on Cabinet Office: Staff, how many officials in his Department were working on COP26 in October 2021.

**Alok Sharma:**

There were around 230 officials working in the COP26 unit in October 2021. The team worked closely with other government departments and the global diplomatic network to support the incoming COP presidency, plan and deliver the UK's negotiations strategy and deliver the operational requirements of the Glasgow summit including extensive COVID safety measures.

## DEFENCE

## ■ Arctic: Marines

**Jim Shannon:**[\[9005\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what military exercises the British Marines are undertaking in the Arctic.

**James Heappey:**

There are currently no Royal Marines' exercises underway in the Arctic. The next planned period of exercise in the Arctic will be late this year.

## ■ Armed Forces: Housing

**John Healey:**[\[8959\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many complaints his Department received on service accommodation in each month in (a) 2021 and (b) 2022.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The table below shows the number of complaints by month for UK Service Family Accommodation since January 2021:

MONTH	NO OF COMPLAINTS
Jan 21	534
Feb 21	578
Mar 21	491
Apr 21	477
May 21	486
Jun 21	578
Jul 21	548
Aug 21	561
Sept 21	585
Oct 21	590
Nov 21	646
Dec 21	603
Jan 22	559
Feb 22	519
Mar 22	577

MONTH	NO OF COMPLAINTS
Apr 22	867

The information for complaints received for Single Living Accommodation is not held centrally .

There was an increase in complaints in April 2022. This is because the new Future Defence Infrastructure Services (FDIS) Accommodation contracts came into service and legacy complaints from the previous National Housing Prime contract were transferred over.

Complaints are initially administered by the relevant industry partner, who will seek to find a resolution. If the complainant is not satisfied by the response and wishes to escalate or appeal against the outcome, they can escalate it to the Defence Infrastructure Organisation to be dealt with as a Stage 2 complaint. The average complaint conversion rate from Stage 1 to Stage 2 is 4.2%.

#### ■ Arms Trade: Russia

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

[\[7924\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to limit the number of western components reaching Russia for the purposes of arms manufacture, through the civil sectors of third countries.

**Jeremy Quin:**

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

Additional sanctions on the export of dual-use goods to Russia came into force on 1 March 2022.

#### ■ Army: Recruitment

**John Healey:**

[\[7907\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, for what reason the data breach of the defence recruitment system was not reported to the Information Commissioner's Office until seven days after the breach was known to officials in his Department.

**Leo Docherty:**

To report a notifiable incident to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) requires an element of investigation. Before reporting, the investigation team had to clearly determine the source and that it met the threshold for reporting. The harm threshold was assessed to not have been met, however the Department notified the ICO of the incident, for transparency, on 21 March 2022.

**John Healey:** [7908]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department to help provide support to the Army recruits affected by the data breach of the Defence Recruitment System.

**Leo Docherty:**

The Army reached out to all affected individuals, in relation to the compromised data set leaked from the Defence Recruitment System, and offered security advice, along with a contact within the Army, to provide any additional security support they required.

**John Healey:** [7909]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the Defence Recruitment System data breach on 14 March 2022, for what reason the Defence Recruitment System not taken down until 16 March 2022.

**Leo Docherty:**

The Army places the highest importance on the security of its data and the data of those who may wish to apply to join.

Following the discovery of the unauthorised disclosure of personally identifiable information pertaining to Army recruitment candidates, the Army initiated an urgent security investigation to understand exactly what had happened, including the extent of the incident. The decision to take the Defence Recruitment System offline was made at the earliest opportunity, following all of the necessary steps to validate the compromised data set and understand the possible causes of the data leak.

**John Healey:** [7910]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Army recruits applied to join the Army between 14 and 16 March 2022.

**Leo Docherty:**

875 applications to join the British Army were received from 14 to 16 March 2022.

Notes/caveats:

1. This figure is a single Service estimate and will not be comparable to official published statistics.
2. This figure represents both Regular and Reserve officer and soldier applications.

**John Healey:** [7911]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether (a) his Department or (b) Capita were ransomed by the hackers that breached the Defence Recruitment System and stole data on Army recruits from the system.

**Leo Docherty:**

Neither the Ministry of Defence, nor Capita, were ransomed by the hackers who leaked data from the Defence Recruitment System.

## ■ Developing Countries: Military Aid

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[9049]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether he is taking steps with Cabinet colleagues to ensure that the armed forces can contribute to helping ending food scarcity in developing countries.

**James Heappey:**

In December 2021, Joint Service Publication (JSP) 985 on Human Security in Defence was published. JSP 985 recognised the need to consider the multiple and intersecting ways in which people face insecurity and provided guidance on how the UK Armed Forces can take account of this across all Defence activity. One of these forms of insecurity is food insecurity, which includes both physical and economic access to food that meets people's dietary needs.

The implementation of JSP 985 will ensure that the UK Armed Forces are better placed to protect people at home and overseas through a more detailed understanding of the root causes of crisis and conflict.

It is important that this is part of a coherent, cross-Government response to food security. Ministry of Defence officials regularly engage with colleagues from the Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office, Office for Conflict Stabilisation and Mediation and the Department for International Trade on this issue to ensure this is the case.

## ■ Military Aid

**John Healey:**

**[8961]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Military Aid to Civilian Authority requests have (a) been made to and (b) undertaken by his Department in each year since 2010.

**James Heappey:**

The Ministry of Defence has received and undertaken the following Military Aid to the Civil Authorities (MACA) taskings in each year since 2016:

YEAR	MACA REQUESTS RECEIVED	MACAS EXECUTED / COMPLETED
2016	123	115
2017	129	117
2018	136	115
2019	157	123
2020	550	314
2021	332	182

YEAR	MACA REQUESTS RECEIVED	MACAS EXECUTED / COMPLETED
2022 (to 26 May)	76	31

With regard to the data requested for the period prior to 2016, the information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

#### ■ Multi Role Ocean Surveillance Ship: Procurement

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[7932\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment his Department has made of whether there is sufficient time to hold a competitive tendering process for MROS in the context of the need for it to become operational in 2024.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The new Multi Role Ocean Surveillance programme is in its concept and assessment phase. Options for the procurement strategy and the project schedule are under development, but no firm decisions have yet been made.

No precise date has yet been set for the entry into service of the Multi Role Ocean Surveillance Ship.

#### ■ National Flagship: Procurement

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[9849\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department has awarded design contracts for the National Flagship contract.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

The National Flagship programme remains in its Design Stage, with a competitive procurement process in progress. A separate competition for the construction of the National Flagship will be launched in due course. The detailed construction schedule will be subject to the successful bidder's build strategy. It is the intention to build the National Flagship in the UK.

#### ■ Navy: Procurement

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[7923\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when the Special Purpose Vessel is expected to be operational.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The Special Purpose Vessel is currently scheduled to arrive in Portsmouth in late July 2022. She will then be prepared for her role as a trials platform.

## ■ Veterans UK: Telephone Services

**John Healey:**

**[8960]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many calls the Veterans UK helpline has received on assistance with (a) paying bills, (b) paying rents and (c) unemployment in each month in (a) 2021 and (b) 2022 to 25 May.

**Leo Docherty:**

This information is not held in the format requested. The Veterans UK Helpline is the point of contact for Armed Forces Compensation Scheme and War Pension claims. Each call is dealt with individually and where a call relates to something other than a claim, Helpline operators are trained to provide signposting information which is relevant to the particular enquiry being made.

## DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

### ■ Arts: Business

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[8067]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of increasing Government support for partnerships between local businesses and community arts projects, events and venues, to assist with costs, volunteering and wider support.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

The Government welcomes partnerships between local businesses and community arts organisations. Collaborations such as this offer many benefits by promoting health and wellbeing; creating social cohesion and connectivity; and fostering civic engagement, including volunteering.

DCMS provides funding to community arts projects in England through our arm's-length body, Arts Council England (ACE), who are currently working with partners – including businesses – to strengthen cultural and creative opportunities in communities across the country. Government investment in the Creative People and Places programme, the Cultural Development Fund, and the City of Culture programme are central to this.

Alongside this, the innovative DCMS and ACE funded Cultural Compact model – a recommendation from the independent Cultural Cities Enquiry – has created partnerships that bring together a city or town's cultural sector, and extend out to sectors and stakeholders beyond culture to provide leadership and strategic capacity helping urban areas make a step change in their strategic governance of culture.

In addition, ACE's Reset Programme, which launches in Spring 2023, will encourage applicants to consider ways of developing their business models with other arts and culture organisations as well as those in other sectors.

**■ Digital Markets Unit: Powers****Chris Elmore:****[8097]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether the Government has plans to bring forward legislative proposals to provide the Digital Markets Unit with statutory powers in the parliamentary session 2022-23.

**Chris Philp:**

We will legislate to put the Digital Markets Unit (DMU) on a statutory footing as soon as parliamentary time allows. The Draft Digital Markets, Competition and Consumer Bill was announced as part of the Queen's Speech in May this year. This draft legislation will set out new competition rules for digital markets and the largest digital firms.

**■ Internet: Hate Crime****Catherine McKinnell:****[8999]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the adequacy of the protections provided by Schedule 7 of the Online Safety Bill against online hate speech specifically targeted at (a) women and (b) disabled people; and if she will make a statement.

**Chris Philp:**

The Online Safety Bill contains robust protections for women, girls and disabled people online, who face disproportionate volumes of abuse.

All services in scope will need to put in place proportionate systems and processes to minimise the risk of priority illegal content appearing on their service and to swiftly remove it when it does appear. This will protect all online users, including from content which could constitute hate speech under the Public Order Act 1986. This includes behaviours that are threatening and abusive and result in harassment, alarm or distress. The list of priority offences includes a number of offences which disproportionately affect women and girls, such as revenge pornography and cyberstalking, which companies must tackle.

Beyond the priority offences, all services will need to ensure that they have quickly taken down other illegal content directed at women and girls and disabled people once it has been reported or they become aware of its presence. Women, girls and disabled users will also be able to report abuse, and should expect to receive an appropriate response from the platform. Ofcom will also have a duty to consider the vulnerability of users whose circumstances appear to put them in need of special protection when performing its duties.

If major platforms don't fulfil their own standards to keep people safe, they could face an investigation and enforcement action.



## ■ Internet: Safety

**Fleur Anderson:**

**[9185]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the potential effects of the Online Safety Bill on requirements for voice recognition or other voice services to (a) remove illegal content from their services and (b) set terms and conditions to address legal but harmful content.

**Chris Philp:**

The Online Safety Bill will apply to all companies that allow users to post content online or to interact with each other. This will include a broad range of websites, apps and services, some of which will enable voice recognition. The Bill will make sure that the UK is the safest place to be online, requiring all in-scope companies to take robust action against illegal content.

Additionally, the largest and riskiest services will face additional duties, including specifying in their terms and conditions what measures they are taking for the most harmful content to adults, and must enforce these rules consistently.

## ■ Nuisance Calls: Foreign Companies

**Alberto Costa:**

**[9917]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department is taking to stop the spoofing of UK telephone numbers by foreign companies to make nuisance calls.

**Julia Lopez:**

The DCMS works closely with the independent regulator, Ofcom who is responsible for consumer protection, as well as the telecoms industry and the Home Office to address telephone-enabled fraud and nuisance calls.

In February 2022, Ofcom published a consultation which proposed a range of changes to address the specific issue of spoofing. This included proposals to strengthen guidance for operators on the detection and blocking of spoofed numbers by improving accuracy in Calling Line Identification (CLI) data, as well as reviewing practices in the reselling of allocated and assigned numbers. We will consider next steps following the publication of Ofcom's response.

## ■ Social Media: Abuse

**Catherine McKinnell:**

**[9000]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will make it her policy to (a) issue fines, or (b) otherwise sanction social media platforms that fail to prevent users previously banned from a platform for abusive behaviour from creating new accounts on the platform; and if she will make a statement.

**Chris Philp:**

The Online Safety Bill will require social media platforms to tackle illegal content, including illegal abuse. The largest, high risk platforms will also need to set clear

terms of service for such content and ensure they are properly enforced. Ofcom will set out steps that companies can take to fulfil their duties in codes of practice, and these could include measures such as preventing banned users from creating new accounts.

OFCOM will be able to sanction companies where they fail to adequately fulfil their new duties under the Bill. OFCOM will have a range of enforcement powers available to it, including: powers to issue substantial fines, require operators to take steps to remedy breaches and/or come into compliance with their duties, and to apply to the court for business disruption measures (including blocking) where appropriate.

## ■ Tourism: Databases

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[8066]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will create a listings directory of community events occurring across the country, including York's community Viking Festival, to encourage staycations and visits from families across the UK.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

Currently, we are focusing on tourism recovery and returning to pre-pandemic domestic tourism levels of 99 million overnight trips and spend of £19 billion by the end of 2022. Tourism Recovery targets set out in the Tourism Recovery Plan were deliberately ambitious in an effort to do as much as possible to return to pre-pandemic levels ahead of independent forecasts.

VisitEngland launched the next phase of its domestic marketing campaign, Escape the Everyday, in February. The campaign will focus on cities as they are impacted by lower numbers of international visitors and it will target a 'pre-nester' audience (18-34 year olds), encouraging them to book a short city-break.

2022 also promises a host of unmissable events, including Her Majesty's Jubilee, with a programme of events over the extended Jubilee Bank holiday; Unboxed, which aims to engage millions of people through in person and digital events; as well as the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, which will drive domestic and international visitors to the region.

## ■ World Heritage Sites

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[9929]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what (a) funding and (b) other resources her Department provides to support locations to prepare bids for the UNESCO World Heritage Site Tentative List.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

My officials, supported by Historic England and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, have run open information sessions and workshops to provide advice and support for locations that are preparing bids for the UNESCO World Heritage Site Tentative List.

The department does not provide direct funding to sites applying for World Heritage Site status. We encourage heritage related projects to apply to grant schemes available through the Government's Arm's Length Bodies and partners where eligible, such as Historic England, or through the National Lottery Heritage Fund and National Heritage Memorial Fund.

#### ■ Youth Services: Standards

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[9983\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether she has made a recent assessment of the adequacy of the provision of youth services by local authorities.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[9984\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether she has taken recent steps to help ensure young people have access to youth services.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[9985\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment has she made of the adequacy of funding made for youth services.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer I gave on 28/04/22 to Question [159010](#).

### EDUCATION

#### ■ Apprentices: Environment Protection

**Mr Andrew Mitchell:** [\[7919\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Net Zero strategy, what steps the Government is taking to help promote apprenticeships in the environmental sector.

**Alex Burghart:**

I refer my hon. Friend, the Member for Sutton Coldfield to the answer I gave on 24 May 2022 to Question [3482](#).

#### ■ Care Leavers

**Mike Amesbury:** [\[8145\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps the Government plans to take to improve outcomes for care experienced young people.

**Will Quince:**

Every local authority in England must appoint a Virtual School Head who has a statutory duty to promote the educational attainment of all children in their care. Looked-after children have priority in school admissions and attract Pupil Premium Plus funding of £2,410 per child, up to age 16. This is managed by the Virtual School

Head, who works with the child's school to deliver objectives in the child's Personal Education Plan.

In October 2021, the department launched a £3 million pilot in 30 local authorities to extend Pupil Premium Plus funding to looked-after children and care leavers in post-16 education. This initially ran until March 2022, and we are committed to continuing the pilot to support looked-after children and care leavers in further education.

Care leavers also receive financial support to help them engage in education, employment or training, including bursaries of £1,000 to undertake an apprenticeship and £2,000 to go to university, and they are also a priority group for the 16-19 further education bursary.

The department has launched the care leaver covenant, which supports care leavers into employment, and established the Civil Service care leaver internship scheme, which has seen over 700 young people being offered 12 month paid internships across government.

#### ■ Carers: Government Assistance

**Daisy Cooper:** [\[8172\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of support available to kinship carers.

**Daisy Cooper:** [\[8173\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans his Department has to encourage local authorities to increase their support for kinship carers in the context of the varying levels of support under different local authorities.

**Daisy Cooper:** [\[8174\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment his Department has made of the level of need for respite breaks for kinship carers.

**Will Quince:**

The government recognises the important role that kinship carers play in caring for children who are unable to live with their parents. We know that most children benefit from living with someone they already know and trust. Therefore, in recent years we have improved the support to these families.

The government issued statutory guidance in 2011 for local authorities about support for kinship carers. The guidance makes it clear that children and young people should receive the support that they and their carers need to safeguard and promote their welfare. The local authority should also have in place clear eligibility criteria in relation to the provision of support services. This can include providing short breaks (respite) for families where they need this.

The government has also extended funding for the Family and Friends helpline, run by the Family Rights Group, which offers kinship families support, advice and guidance. In 2021 the government added kinship carers to the priority groups that

local authorities must include in their school admissions Fair Access Protocols to include children in kinship care arrangements, and this year the government are providing funding of £1 million for the organisation Kinship to deliver more peer to peer support groups to kinship carers across England.

The department is aware from feedback from carers that the provision of support is mixed, and the Independent Review of Social Care, published on 23 May 2022, sets out a compelling case for more support for these families. The department is now looking at the recommendations, including those in kinship care, which will inform an ambitious and detailed government response and implementation strategy, to be published before the end of 2022.

### ■ Carew Academy

**Elliot Colburn:**

[\[8187\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will publish his revised timetable for the (a) delivery of The Futures Academy school on the Sheen Way site and (b) decamp of staff and pupils from the Carew Manor site.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The department is working closely with the Orchard Hill College and Academy Trust and the local authority to build the new special free school, Carew Academy (formerly known as The Futures Academy). The school will provide high quality, modern facilities that will give young people with special needs in Sutton the best possible start to their lives.

The department will be able to provide greater certainty on the delivery of the school and proposed opening date once the outstanding planning conditions have been satisfactorily resolved with the local authority.

### ■ Children: Day Care

**Mike Amesbury:**

[\[8139\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if his Department will undertake urgent reforms to the childcare sector, including allocating adequate funding to ensure that staff are sufficiently well paid to provide high-quality, affordable childcare.

**Will Quince:**

The department continues to look at ways to improve the cost, choice and availability of high-quality childcare and early education, in order to support parents and provide children with the best start in life.

The department has spent over £3.5 billion in each of the past three years on early education entitlements, and we are investing additional funding for those entitlements worth £160 million in the 2022/23 financial year, £180 million in the 2023/24 financial year and £170 million in the 2024/25 financial year, compared to the 2021/22 financial year. This is for local authorities to increase hourly rates paid to childcare providers and reflects cost pressures and changes in the number of eligible children anticipated at the time of the Spending Review.

With safety and quality at the heart, as a first step, the department will consult on ratio requirements to give childcare providers more flexibility and autonomy to make decisions about their settings and needs of their children.

The department recognises the huge contribution the early years workforce makes to giving every child the best start in life. Supporting this workforce continues to be a priority and we are in regular contact with local authorities and sector bodies to understand the pressures on childcare providers, including any issues related to recruitment and retention.

We are continuing to work proactively with the sector to build our understanding of the situation and how the department might support childcare providers in this area.

### ■ Children: Social Services

**Mike Amesbury:** [\[8140\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how membership of the Care Review Implementation Board of experts will be decided.

**Mike Amesbury:** [\[8141\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many people will sit on the Care Review Implementation Board of experts.

**Will Quince:**

The National Implementation Board will include people with experience of leading transformational change and those with their own experience of the care system. We will set out more details about the board in due course.

**Mike Amesbury:** [\[8142\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on funding for the care system in response to the independent review of children's social care.

**Mike Amesbury:** [\[8144\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether the Government has plans to bring forward legislative proposals in response to the independent review of children's social care.

**Mike Amesbury:** [\[8146\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment the Government has made of the potential implications for its policies of the funding recommendations made by the independent review of children's social care.

**Will Quince:**

On 23 May 2022, the Independent Review of Children's Social Care published its final recommendations. On the same day, the department set out the actions it is taking to improve children's social care and committed to publishing a detailed and ambitious implementation strategy in due course.

As the department develops an implementation strategy, we will consider the recommendations carefully, including cost implications and where legislation might be required.

**Mike Amesbury:**

**[8143]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment the Government has made of the potential merits of refocusing the care system on early intervention as recommended by the independent review of children's social care.

**Will Quince:**

The department recognises how important early help and intervention is to transforming children's lives. In April we announced a £1 billion package to support vulnerable families, including funding for Family Hubs, investment in the Holiday, Activity and Food programme, and funding so that the Supporting Families programme can work with up to 300,000 more families.

The department will closely consider the recommendations from the Independent Review of Children's Social Care's final report and will set out an implementation strategy by the end of the year, which also takes into account the National Panel Review into the tragic deaths of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson, and the Competition and Markets Authority's study into children's social care placements.

**Damien Moore:**

**[8149]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of Sefton Council's Children's Social Care department.

**Damien Moore:**

**[8150]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment his Department has made of the capability of Sefton Council's political leadership to run an effective Children's Social Care department.

**Will Quince:**

Keeping children safe is vital, and the government takes tough measures when councils are failing them.

A Statutory Direction was issued to Sefton Council on 24 May 2022, following the 9 May 2022 Ofsted report that judged children's services to be inadequate. The direction requires the Council to work with a commissioner appointed by my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, who will issue any necessary instructions to the local authority for the purpose of securing immediate improvement. In addition, the commissioner will conduct a three-month assessment of the Council's capacity and capability to improve itself. This report will help determine the best next steps to ensure improvements are made for vulnerable children and families.



## ■ Family Hubs

**Catherine McKinnell:** [\[8998\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to his Department's press release of 2 April 2022, Infants, children and families to benefit from boost in support, when the 75 local authorities announced as eligible for Family Hubs funding will be contacted and provided with further details on next steps.

**Will Quince:**

Since the announcement on 2 April 2022, the Department for Education and Department of Health and Social Care officials have been engaging with nominated officers from the 75 eligible local authorities. Departmental officials held a series of webinars and focus groups to provide an overview of the programme, and to respond to questions. The discussions were also used to seek information and views from the local authority officers on various elements of the detailed programme design, to ensure that the funding is used effectively.

Local authorities have been provided with a dedicated email address where they can contact departmental officials working on the programme. Local authorities will receive further detailed information once this process concludes.

## ■ Free School Meals: Finance

**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:** [\[5621\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if his Department will make an assessment of the potential merits of ring-fencing the Universal Free School Meals allowance for catering use only.

**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:** [\[5622\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment his Department has made of the potential challenges facing the food supply industry in respect of the supply of free school meals; and whether he plans to take steps to re-evaluate funding allocated by his Department to those meals.

**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:** [\[5623\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will ask schools to (a) keep a record of the average meals service and (b) submit a return to his Department each school term to help reduce the cost of the Universal Free School Meals overall.

**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:** [\[5624\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment his Department has made of the implications for his policies of recent reports that school meal suppliers are reducing portion sizes or reducing quality of ingredients to continue to supply Universal Free School Meals with the current funding.



**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:**

[\[5625\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if his Department will increase the allowance for Universal Free School Meals in line with rising inflation.

**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:**

[\[5627\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment his Department has made of the impact of the Government's 1.7 per cent increase in funding for Universal Free School Meals on suppliers of those meals who are facing a 9 per cent increase in food prices.

**Will Quince:**

The provision of free school meals (FSM) to children who are eligible for them is of the utmost importance to this government. We recognise the cost pressures that some schools and suppliers may be facing, and as usual are holding regular meetings with other government departments and with food industry representatives, covering a variety of issues including public sector food supplies.

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

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. Schools fund benefit-related FSM from their core funding which they receive through the schools block of the dedicated schools grant (DSG) and is derived from the national funding formula (NFF). For the 2022/23 financial year, the funding schools attract through the 'FSM factor' in the NFF is increasing to £470 per eligible pupil.

In recognition of cost pressures, after the NFF rates were set, the department received additional funding from HM Treasury for core schools funding in the 2022/23 financial year, which we distributed through a schools supplementary grant. As a result of this additional funding, core schools funding for mainstream schools is increasing by £2.5 billion in the 2022/23 financial year, compared to last year. We have also given schools the autonomy to agree individual contracts with school food suppliers and caterers, using their increased core funding.

UIFSM is funded via a direct grant to schools. The allocations are calculated using data recorded in the termly school census. This includes the number of meals taken on the census day, as well as the number of FSM-eligible children. We are mindful of the reporting burden on schools and feel that recording school meals taken through the school census is a proportionate and appropriate method of recording this data, whilst having controls in place to provide assurance that the data is accurate and reliable for funding purposes.

Head teachers and senior leaders are best placed to determine the use of their school's budget, including how much to spend on school food provision. Subject to meeting their statutory duty to provide a free meal that meets the school food standards to all infants who are not otherwise eligible for benefits-related FSM children, schools may spend the grant for the purposes of the school or for a charitable purpose for the benefit of the pupils. This is set out in the conditions of grant: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-infant-free-school-meals-uifsm-2021-to-2022/universal-infant-free-school-meals-uifsm-conditions-of-grant-2021-to-2022>.

Compliance with the school food standards is mandatory for all maintained schools including academies and free schools. It is for schools and caterers to decide what is an appropriate portion and to balance the food served across the school week. The guidance to accompany the school food standards includes guidance on portion sizes and food groups and is available on GOV.UK at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-food-standards-resources-for-schools>.

If a parent or guardian is concerned about the quality of school lunches, they should in the first instance contact the headteacher or consider using the school's complaints policy.

#### ■ Free Schools: Sutton

**Elliot Colburn:**

**[8189]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he plans to revisit the decision on funding for Sutton Free School 1 in the event that data demonstrates a need for further secondary school places in the London Borough of Sutton.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

Sutton Free School 1 was cancelled because opening the school would have resulted in a large surplus of secondary places over the medium to long term, undermining the viability of other good schools in the area. Once a project has been formally cancelled by ministers, that decision cannot be revisited.

However, should pupil forecasts change and demonstrate the need for a new school there is still the opportunity for a new secondary free school to be established in Sutton. Indeed, where a local authority thinks there is a demographic need for a new school in its area, it must seek proposals to establish an academy. This is known as the free school presumption process. The department also approves new academies through a central free school application route. The Schools White Paper set out our intention to seek proposals for new mainstream free schools in the areas of greatest need for additional places, prioritising proposals located in Education Investment Areas. This process will take account of the latest data on the need for additional school places. We will set out more details on this process in due course.

## ■ Further Education: Equality

**Tom Hunt:**

[8176]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the impact on pupils' learning of inclusive learning teams in each further education college.

**Alex Burghart:**

The government is committed to ensuring that all learners, including learners with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), have access to a world-class education that sets them up for life and supports them to achieve positive outcomes.

Whilst it is for individual colleges to decide how best to support learners with SEND, they must have regard to the SEND code of practice and use their best endeavours to secure the special educational provision called for by the student's special educational needs.

Ofsted is the body responsible for assessing the quality of further education colleges, rather than my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education. The quality of provision for learners with special educational needs and/or SEND is always considered by Ofsted on inspection.

As of 31 August 2021, 80% of colleges inspected by Ofsted are rated Good or Outstanding.

## ■ John Fisher School

**Elliot Colburn:**

[8182]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with the Archdiocese of Southwark on the diocese's decision to (a) remove foundational governors from the Governing Board of The John Fisher School in Purley and (b) to cancel the visit of an LGBT+ author from visiting that school; and what discussion he has had with the diocese to encourage it to engage with meditation with that school.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The department is working with the Archdiocese, the Catholic Education Service, and the local authority to agree a way forward to ensure continuing stable governance and pupil education at John Fisher School in Purley.

The governing body and the National Education Union entered talks mediated by the Advisory, Conciliation, and Arbitration Service with the aim of halting further disruption to pupils' education. Agreement was reached and there is no further planned industrial action at the school.

## ■ Pupils: Bullying

**Steve McCabe:**

[7894]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to tackle bullying in schools.

**Steve McCabe:**

**[7895]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of support available for victims of bullying in schools.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The department has sent a clear message that bullying should never be tolerated and we are committed to supporting schools to tackle it. The department provides advice for schools, outlining their responsibilities. The advice makes clear that schools should make appropriate provision for a bullied child's social, emotional and mental health needs. The advice is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>.

The department is providing over £2 million of funding, between 10 August 2021 and 31 March 2023, to five anti-bullying organisations to support schools to tackle bullying. This includes projects targeting bullying of particular groups, such as those who are victims of hate-related bullying and homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying.

The department is also making sure that all children in England will learn about respectful relationships, in person and online, as part of mandatory relationships, sex and health education. This includes content on the different types of bullying, the impact it has, the responsibility of bystanders, and how to get help.

The department has published 'Respectful School Communities', a self-review and signposting tool to support schools to develop a whole-school approach which promotes respect and discipline, available here:

<https://educateagainsthate.com/resources/respectful-school-communities-self-review-signposting-tool-2/>. This can combat bullying, harassment and prejudice of any kind, including hate-based bullying.

The department is also committed to ensuring all schools should be calm, safe and supportive environments for pupils to learn and thrive in. To this end, we are investing £10 million through behaviour hubs so that schools that want and need to turn around their behaviour can work closely with schools with exemplary positive behaviour cultures, alongside a central offer of support and a taskforce of advisers, to improve their culture, and spread good practice across the country. The behaviour hubs programme includes mandatory modules on consequences, including sanctions and rewards and creating systems and social norms which are vital in enabling children to generate and maintain behavioural standards.

The department has not made an assessment of the adequacy of support in schools for victims of bullying. All schools should set clear, reasonable and proportionate expectations of pupil behaviour in line with the department's 'behaviour and discipline in schools' guidance, available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-and-discipline-in-schools>. It is for individual schools to develop their own best practice for managing behaviour in their school.

## ■ Pupils: Coronavirus

**Andy Carter:**

**[8202]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that pre-reception and post-reception children can recover their ability to speak and understand language during the covid-19 recovery.

**Will Quince:**

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

As part of education recovery, the department is investing up to £180 million of recovery support in the early years sector. Strengthening understanding of speech and language development is an important part of this support.

The recovery includes investing in continuous professional development for early years practitioners, through the national expansion of the early years Professional Development Programme, which has a focus on upskilling practitioners to support the early development of literacy and language and early mathematics, alongside personal, social, and emotional development. The department is also investing over £24 million for local authorities to select and train early years practitioners in the best programmes to support parents with the home learning environment. This aims to improve children's early language and social and emotional development, giving priority to families that will benefit the most.

Additionally, the department is investing £17 million for the Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI), which is a proven programme aimed at the reception aged children needing extra support with their speech and language development. We are also increasing the number of qualified special educational needs coordinators in early years settings.

The Recovery Premium, providing £1.3 billion for the 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24 academic years, is additional funding to help schools deliver evidence-based approaches to support education recovery. Recovery Premium eligibility builds on that of the pupil premium. However, school leaders have flexibility to use the funding to support any pupil where a need is identified, including those with speech and language difficulties. Schools can use their funding to assess and address immediate needs, such as those relating to speech and language difficulties, as well as longer-term strategic improvements, such as boosting the quality of oracy teaching.

The Parent Pledge in the Schools White Paper will also make the department's vision clear that any child who falls behind in English or mathematics will receive the right evidence-based targeted support to get them back on track.

## ■ Schools: Asbestos

**Ian Lavery:**

**[7996]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will make it his policy to increase annual capital expenditure on schools in order to fund the removal of all dangerous asbestos from school buildings within 40 years.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The department expect all local authorities, governing bodies and academy trusts to have robust plans in place to manage asbestos in school buildings effectively, in line with their legal duties.

The department has followed expert advice from the Health and Safety Executive, that, if asbestos-containing materials are in good condition, well protected, and unlikely to be damaged or disturbed, it is usually safer to manage them in place. We have noted the recommendations in the Work and Pensions Committee's report on the management of asbestos and the government will respond in due course.

The department has allocated over £13 billion since 2015 to improve the condition of school buildings, including £1.8 billion committed for the 2022/23 financial year. Asbestos is often removed as part of wider routine works or upgrades to school buildings. Where asbestos can no longer be managed safely in situ, it should be removed or encapsulated.

In addition, the new School Rebuilding Programme will rebuild or significantly refurbish buildings in the poorest condition at 500 schools over the next decade. The nomination process for the next round closed in March 2022. Evidence of severe need and safety issues was able to be submitted for consideration by the programme, including extensive asbestos that can no longer be safely managed in situ, and needs a rebuilding project to resolve.

The department has taken significant steps to support the school sector in strengthening asbestos management and meeting their legal duties, including publishing updated guidance on effective management of asbestos in autumn 2020 and launching the Asbestos Management Assurance Process in March 2018. The assurance process found no indication of systemic failures in the management of asbestos across the state-funded school estate.

## ■ Schools: Expenditure

**Stephen Morgan:**

**[9128]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding was given to each local authority area to meet the National Funding Formula funding floor in 2021-22.

**Stephen Morgan:**

**[9129]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, for how many schools in each local authority area did the local authority receive additional funding as a result of their core national funding formula being below the schools national funding formula floor in 2021-22.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

In the attached spreadsheet the department has provided:

- a local authority breakdown of floor funding through the National Funding Formula (NFF).
- a local authority breakdown of the number of schools attracting floor funding.

It is important to note the differences in floor funding allocated to local authorities and minimum funding guarantee (MFG) funding allocated to schools through local funding formulae.

The NFF does not currently determine individual schools' funding directly. NFF funding calculated through the floor is given to local authorities as part of their overall Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocations. Individual schools' budgets are determined by local funding formulae, which must include an MFG. The MFG acts, within local formulae, in a similar manner to the funding floor in the NFF. Because schools' individual budgets are set by reference to the local formula, not the NFF, the number of schools attracting floor funding provided is not the same as the number of schools receiving MFG funding.

The total floor funding allocation figures provided here are the allocations calculated in July 2020. These allocations were used in the calculation of primary units of funding and secondary units of funding for each local authority, which are then multiplied by pupil numbers from the October 2020 census to give local authorities their final, overall DSG allocations published in December 2020.

Published notional school budgets in the NFF for local authority maintained schools are based on the 2020/21 academic year Authority Proforma Tool (APT) data. Published notional NFF school budgets for academies and free schools are based on the 2020/21 academic year General Annual Grant (GAG) data. Published local authority budgets are based on the 2020/21 financial year APT data for all schools, including academies and free schools. The figures used in this response are based on APT data for all schools, and will therefore differ from APT and GAG data which is used in the total spend figures in the 2021/22 financial year NFF policy document published here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-funding-formula-for-schools-and-high-needs>.

Chapter 6 of the 2018/19 academic year schools block national funding formula, available here:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/647789/Schools\\_block\\_national\\_funding\\_formula\\_technical\\_note.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/647789/Schools_block_national_funding_formula_technical_note.pdf), explains the reason for this use of data.

**Attachments:**

1. [9128\\_9129\\_table \[9128\\_9129\\_floor\\_funding.xlsx\]](#)



**■ Secondary Education: Tameside****Andrew Gwynne:****[8970]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 23 May 2022 to Question 3510 on Secondary Education: Tameside, whether he will take steps to improve secondary school attainment by children in (a) Tameside and (b) Denton.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The department was pleased to announce the borough of Tameside, including Denton, as a Priority Education Investment Area (EIA) as part of the recent Schools White Paper.

The Schools White Paper sets out our vision for a school system that helps every child to fulfil their potential founded on achieving word-class standards of literacy and numeracy and confirmed our headline ambitions, including at key stage 4, to increase the GCSE average grade in English language and maths from 4.5 to 5.

In Priority EIAs, the department will offer intensive investment in addition to the significant support available to all EIAs, so that we can drive improvement further and faster. This has the potential to transform pupils' outcomes at both primary and secondary school, by overcoming entrenched barriers to improvement and strengthening the school's system in these areas.

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. Our additional support to Priority EIAs includes a share of around £40 million worth of funding to address local needs, such as those acting as a barrier to improvement at primary and priority access to a number of the department's other programmes.

My noble Friend, the Minister for School System, has written to all Members of Parliament with Priority EIAs in their constituencies to update them on our next steps for the programme.

**■ Special Educational Needs****Helen Hayes:****[8076]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to his Department's data release of on Education, health and care plans, how many EHC plans were (a) issued or (b) revised following a request for a review in that period.

**Helen Hayes:****[8077]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to his Department's data release of 12 May 2022 on Education, health and care plans, for what reason data on EHC plan reviews was not included in that release.



**Will Quince:**

The information requested is not held. The data published on 12 May 2022 on education, health and care plans is collated from the special educational needs 2 local authority aggregated data collection. This collection does not contain the information requested. A person level data collection replacing the aggregated data collection will be introduced from 2023 and include information on annual reviews.

**Special Educational Needs: Sutton****Elliot Colburn:**[\[8188\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what his revised timetable is for the delivery of a special educational needs school at the Rose Hill site in Sutton.

**Will Quince:**

The forecast opening date for the special educational needs school in Rosehill, Sutton, is September 2024, subject to planning approval. The academy trust and local authority are aware that the department is working towards this date.

**Turing Scheme: Labour Mobility****Wendy Chamberlain:**[\[10015\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with relevant stakeholders on the decision to exclude staff mobility from the Turing Scheme; and what assessment he has made of the impact of that decision on staff and participants under the scheme.

**Alex Burghart:**

Teaching and college staff mobility will not be funded as part of the Turing Scheme in the 2022/23 academic year, to maximise the amount of student, learner, and pupils' access to life-changing mobilities. The department will continue to keep this decision under review and plans to assess the impact of the scheme following its first year of delivery.

**Vocational Education****Bob Seely:**[\[8162\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will introduce skilled, sustainable and vocationally appropriate courses to replace the low-quality courses he plans to remove.

**Alex Burghart:**

The department is revitalising the technical education system by introducing T Levels that are backed and designed by employers to get people into skilled work and further training. T Levels are at the centre of our long-term reforms to technical education, building on the recommendations in the Sainsbury Report, published in 2016. Alongside the introduction of T Levels, the department is reviewing post-16 qualifications at level 3 and below. We have withdrawn funding approval for more than 5,000 qualifications that had no or low enrolments. The next phase of our

reforms is to remove qualifications that overlap with T Levels for 16 to 19 year olds, which will reduce complexity for young people and employers.

The department is also reviewing the qualifications that sit alongside A levels and T Levels at level 3 and below. Our reforms will ensure that all students have confidence that every qualification is a high-quality option, and that it supports their progression to employment or further study, including higher education.

## ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

### ■ Agriculture: Developing Countries

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[9046\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions he has had with the Foreign Secretary on the role of research into productive farming in (a) creating better farming techniques and (b) expanding land yield to support with food shortages in developing countries.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[9047\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will invest in research to improve crop yield in the UK to produce crops for developing countries where food is scarce.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[9048\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he has had recent discussions with (a) Cabinet colleagues and (b) his international counterparts on the role the UK can play in helping to alleviate food scarcity in developing countries by increasing production on UK farms.

**Victoria Prentis:**

Research, innovation and its take-up into practice are integral to supporting a thriving productive and sustainable food and farming sector, and to helping address the global challenges we face on food security. Defra engages with other Government departments, including the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), through the UK Research and Innovation-led Global Food Security Programme, which coordinates research and innovation activity of public funders to address food security challenges.

Defra's investment in industry-led research and development (R&D) through the Farming Innovation Programme will drive innovation in agriculture and horticulture to boost domestic productivity, including by helping to improve crop yield sustainability in the UK, and by driving the take up of new technologies, processes and practices by farmers and growers.

Defra's Genetic Improvement Networks (GINs) on Wheat, Oilseed Rape, Pulses and Vegetable crops aim to improve the main UK crops by identifying genetic traits to improve their productivity, sustainability, resilience and nutritional quality. Across the

GINs we have already successfully identified genetic traits that have improved resilience to climate change and common pests and diseases, and we are working with breeders to incorporate these traits into elite UK crop varieties. Ongoing work is also investigating the capacity for nutritional improvement of our crops, such as improved pulse protein quality and nutritionally fortified rapeseed oil.

The Government is also taking steps to unlock the innovation potential of genetic technologies such as gene editing which can help increase crop yield more efficiently, and increase resilience to pests and disease which will benefit developing countries.

Further funding to support R&D for improved agricultural productivity in developing countries is administered by FCDO as part of the UK's overall Overseas Development Assistance (ODA). The UK's ODA R&D spend supports climate-resilient and nature positive food systems, combining 'upstream' science, technology and innovation with 'downstream' delivery, through partnerships with public sector, agribusinesses, and impact investors.

This includes support to the CGIAR, the world's leading agricultural science and innovation organisation (formerly the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research). The CGIAR has a strong track record in delivering tangible climate and development impacts in countries which are a priority for FCDO.

- In Sudan, heat tolerant wheat led to a doubling of wheat production levels in just five years.
- In Southern Africa, we partner with the CGIAR to develop over 200 new maize varieties that can withstand droughts and give farmers 30% greater yields under climate change.
- In Ethiopia, in 2017, higher-yielding, disease-resistant varieties of wheat have been adopted at scale, covering more than 60% of the farming area.
- Between 4.1 and 11.0 million Ethiopian households have been reached by agricultural innovations linked to CGIAR research (i.e. between 35% and 80% of rural households) – including drought resilient crops, improved soil and water conservation practices., with substantial adoption amongst poor households, young and female farmers.

FCDO's Agriculture Research programmes include our major joint research initiatives with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, including work in Cambridge which uses biological nitrogen fixation to sustainably increase yields for small-holder farmers in Africa, and Edinburgh-based research on livestock health.

## ■ Agriculture: Subsidies

**Daniel Zeichner:**

**[9903]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, where the funds removed from the basic payment scheme in (a) 2021 and (b) 2022 were reallocated.

**Victoria Prentis:**

Defra reports expenditure under agricultural support schemes by financial year rather than calendar year.

The Department, as required by section 5 of chapter 1 of the Agriculture Act 2020, will prepare an annual report about the financial assistance given during each financial year, starting with financial year 2021-22. The first report will be laid before Parliament and published before 1 October 2022. It will contain details of where funds freed up from BPS have been spent.

We will have the same requirement in 2022-23, where the reduction in basic payments will enable the launch of the Sustainable Farming Incentive in June 2022, an increase of Countryside Stewardship payment rates and a rise in demand for the scheme from farmers, and the continued rollout of other schemes to improve prosperity and reward environmental delivery including forthcoming grants for slurry stores.

**■ Animals****Ben Lake:****[8104]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what progress he has made on (a) tackling the issue of dogs attacking livestock and (b) introducing protections for dogs, cats and ferrets being imported into the UK.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The Government takes the issue of livestock worrying 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 introduced through the Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill, which was introduced in Parliament on 8 June 2021 and reintroduced following the Queen's speech. The Bill has passed Committee stage in the House of Commons and will progress to Report stage as soon as Parliamentary time allows.

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 – making it easier for them to collect evidence and, in the most serious cases, seize and detain dogs to reduce the risk of further incidents. The scope of livestock species covered by the legislation will be extended to include animals such as llamas, emus, enclosed deer and donkeys. New locations will include roads and paths, as long as the livestock have not strayed into a road.

All reported instances of livestock worrying should be taken seriously, investigated and, where appropriate, taken through the courts and met with tough sentences. The Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill includes a range of ancillary orders available to the court following conviction, such as control, disqualification and destruction orders. These orders are aimed at targeting and reducing reoffending.

With regards to protections for imported animals, the Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill also allows us to protect the welfare of pets by introducing restrictions to crack down on the low welfare movements of cats, dogs and ferrets into Great Britain and includes powers to introduce new restrictions on pet travel and the commercial import of pets on welfare grounds, via secondary legislation.

In August 2021, the Government launched an eight-week consultation on our proposed restrictions to the commercial and non-commercial movement of pets into Great Britain, which could be introduced under these Bill powers. We are currently analysing the responses to the consultation and will publish a summary response in due course. This will allow us to take on board the views of the public and interested groups on puppy smuggling and low welfare imports in order to shape our future policy.

## ■ **Bovine Tuberculosis: Disease Control**

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[7961\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the email dated 5 May 2022 from his Department's Bovine TB Programme to authors of a report cited in the Veterinary Record containing a correction and apology from his Department for a data error on the incidence of bovine TB in areas where badgers were not culled, if he will issue a (a) public apology for, and retraction of his Department's blog issued by his Department's press office on 18 March 2022, entitled Rebuttal of claims on TB cull effectiveness and (b) correction to all journalists and independent parties briefed on the contents of that press statement; and if he will make a statement.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Veterinary Record has published a correction to the data error in the letter from the UK Chief Veterinary Officer and Defra's Chief Scientific Adviser published on 19 March 2022. This does not alter the conclusions in the original letter. We have also corrected the corresponding Government Vets blog post. Thus, we have no plans to make a public apology for, or retraction of, Defra's statements in response to the paper by Thomas Langton and others published on 18 March 2022.

## ■ **Business: Waste**

**Dan Carden:**

[\[9126\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what progress his Department has made on introducing mandatory business food waste reporting.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Government plans to consult on mandatory food waste reporting later this year.

## ■ **Clean Air Zones**

**Andrew Gwynne:**

[\[8971\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether it is his policy that a Clean Air Zone can be a (a) category B zone and (b) non-charging zone.

**Jo Churchill:**

Air pollution is the most significant environmental threat to public health, and so we have an ambitious programme of work to deliver cleaner air. Our 2017 UK Plan for tackling nitrogen dioxide concentrations sets out that if a local authority can identify measures other than charging zones that are at least as effective at reducing NO<sub>2</sub>, and are at the same or lower cost, those measures should be preferred. Our Clean Air Zone framework sets out the principles for setting up a zone in England to give councils maximum flexibility to fit their local context.

**■ Dogs: Electronic Training Aids****Lloyd Russell-Moyle:****[8102]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 9 March 2020 to Question 24232 on Dogs: Electronic Training Aids, what the merits for animal welfare are of (a) not banning electronic collars used to stop dogs barking of (b) banning electronic collars used to stop dogs chasing livestock.

**Victoria Prentis:**

Following a consultation in 2018, and as set out in our Action Plan for Animal Welfare, the Government decided to ban electric shock collars controlled by hand-held devices in England, under new legislation which should be introduced this year, given their scope to harm cats and dogs.

We have listened carefully to a range of views from pet owners and respondents, as well as consulting key stakeholders including animal welfare charities, e-collar manufacturers, and trainers who use e-collars.

The proposed ban on the use of electric shock collars controlled by hand-held devices was developed after considering a broad range of factors, including the impact of a ban. When considered alongside the academic research, the public consultation responses, and direct engagement with the sector, the Government concluded that these types of electric shock collars present an unacceptable risk to the welfare of dogs and cats and that their use should not be permitted.

The research revealed that many e-collar users were not using them properly and in compliance with the manufacturers' instructions. As well as being misused to inflict unnecessary harm, there is also concern that e-collars can redirect aggression or generate anxiety-based behaviour in pets, making underlying behavioural and health problems worse.

We appreciate that the right approach for pet owners to take in managing and controlling their dog's behaviour differs from both person to person and from pet to pet. Defra would advise all owners who are concerned about controlling their dog's behaviour, for whatever reason, to take advice from their vet or a suitably qualified dog behaviourist or trainer. Such specialists would be best positioned to advise on the best approach for their specific case. The Animal Behaviour and Training Council maintains national registers of appropriately qualified trainers and behaviourists.

The statutory Code of Practice for the Welfare of Dogs includes guidance and reminders for owners about their responsibilities to provide for the welfare needs of their animal, but also to keep their dogs safe and under control.

The Code of Practice applies to handling dogs in the vicinity of livestock and taking action to prevent dogs from escaping to reduce the occurrence of attacks or chasing. The best proven method of preventing a dog from attacking livestock is to keep the dog on a lead when exercising around other animals, as advised by farmers and other keepers of livestock.

Natural England has also published a refreshed version of the Countryside Code, which 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 Countryside 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.

## ■ Dogs: Imports

**Munira Wilson:**

**[8197]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he plans to take steps to ban the import of puppies under 24 weeks of age.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill was reintroduced following the Queen's speech and will progress to Report stage in the commons as soon as parliamentary time allows. The Bill allows us to protect the welfare of pets by introducing restrictions to crack down on the low welfare movements of pets into Great Britain and includes powers to introduce new restrictions on pet travel and the commercial import of pets on welfare grounds, via secondary legislation.

In August 2021, the Government launched an 8-week consultation on our proposed restrictions to the commercial and non-commercial movement of pets into Great Britain. This included proposals to ban the import of puppies under the age of six months. We are currently analysing the responses to the consultation and will publish a summary in due course. This will allow us to take on board the views of the public and interested groups in order to shape our future policy.

## ■ Dredging: Port of Tyne

**Kate Osborne:**

**[10024]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of evidence from the Port of Tyne's Response to Proposed Changes in CEFAS Action Levels for Sea Disposal of Dredged Sediment (January 2022), and the British Ports Association's Proposed Cefas Guideline Action Levels - Review of Cost Implications (May 2021) both of which suggest that the proposed Action Levels would have an adverse impact on the region.



**Kate Osborne:**

**[10025]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, in the context of the Proposed Changes in Cefas Action Levels for Sea Disposal of Dredged Sediment, what recent assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of evidence (a) within the Port of Tyne's Response to Proposed Changes in CEFAS Action Levels for Sea Disposal of Dredged Sediment (January 2022) including research work undertaken by Newcastle University suggesting that the naturally occurring contaminants, especially zinc and lead, are not in a form which is adversely affecting marine rivers organisms and (b) from the Environment Agency, who are working in partnership with the Coal Authority and Defra to implement measures to control inputs of naturally occurring contaminants in the headwaters as part of the Water and Abandoned Metal Mines Programme.

**Kate Osborne:**

**[10026]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what progress he has made on the potential merits of revising the action levels for the disposal of dredged material; and when a decision will be made on the outcome.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Defra is reviewing information provided from the Port of Tyne and other stakeholders in response to proposals for changes to Action Levels for sea disposal of dredged sediment, as well as evidence from work carried out by Cefas, and no decision has yet been made. Officials will continue to engage with stakeholders including those from the River Tyne to ensure we fully understand the impacts of the proposals for the region. Before implementing any proposed changes, an impact assessment will be completed. We will communicate the next steps in the review of Action Levels shortly.

The sediment transport pathways in the Tyne means that there is both a legacy contamination issue and transport of pollutants down the catchment where they are contributing to the issues. Action is therefore being taken via the Water and Abandoned Metal Mines Programme to control inputs of metals which pollute more than 150kms of rivers in the Tyne catchment and to alleviate problems in the estuary. This is supported by our proposed target tackling metal pollution under the Environment Act to reduce the length of rivers and estuaries polluted by target substances from abandoned metal mines, which we are currently consulting on.

## ■ **Foot and Mouth Disease: Disease Control**

**Daniel Zeichner:**

**[8019]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure that the recent outbreak of foot and mouth in Southeast Asia does not spread to the UK.

**Jo Churchill:**

Measures are in place to reduce the risk of foot and mouth disease (FMD) virus entering the UK and to prevent its introduction to livestock. These measures include:



- monitoring of international surveillance reports to inform Defra's assessment of the threat presented by different trade routes;
- working with our National Reference Laboratory and international networks and partners, including Australia and New Zealand, to better assess risks. This informs targeting of measures at the border, domestic disease surveillance and communications to raise the awareness of livestock keepers;
- only permitting imports from countries which meet our import conditions, including compliance with measures to prevent and detect FMD in those countries;
- requiring imported meat and dairy products to be accompanied by animal and public health certification confirming that they come from an area that is free from FMD;
- strict rules for the movement of animals and genetic material, including specific rules for limiting trade with any regions affected by FMD;
- veterinary certification of the health of the animals to be imported prior to departure and confirming compliance with the trade conditions;
- post-import checks on a proportion of imported animals; and
- a ban on the feeding of certain animal products that might introduce FMD to livestock in the UK.

Our FMD contingency plan describes the measures we take to prevent and, in the event of an incursion of FMD, control outbreaks of FMD. The plan is reviewed annually and tested regularly, including national response exercises. (

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/69456/fmd-control-strategy111128.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69456/fmd-control-strategy111128.pdf) )

## ■ Glass: Recycling

**Paula Barker:** [10031]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the impact of excluding glass from the forthcoming Deposit Return Scheme on the (a) proportion of street litter that is glass and (b) glass recycling rate.

**Paula Barker:** [10032]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department plans to take to increase the glass recycling rate.

**Paula Barker:** [10033]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will reconsider excluding glass from the forthcoming Deposit Return Scheme.

**Paula Barker:** [10034]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of glass recycling for reducing CO2 emissions.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Government has consulted twice on the introduction of a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) and given careful consideration to the materials that should be part of the scheme. Feedback from stakeholders including representatives of the glass industry, raised concerns that including glass in a DRS could reduce recycling, reduce the products that can be made from recycled glass and increase overall carbon emissions, as well as requiring more complex reverse vending machines, and causing a handling risk to both residents and shop workers. Instead we will capture glass under Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging and continue to collect and recycle high levels from the kerbside. We assess this will deliver a recycling rate for all glass packaging of 84% by 2033.

**■ Gun Sports: Lead****Jim Shannon:**[\[7989\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he is taking steps to encourage game hunters the change from lead-shot to steel-shot ammunition for shotguns.

**Jo Churchill:**

Defra welcomed the 2020 joint statement by shooting organisations calling for the phasing out of lead shot in ammunition for live quarry by 2025. Earlier this month the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) published a dossier setting out options for restrictions on lead ammunition. This is now subject to consultation until 6 November and we will carefully consider HSE's recommendations following the outcome of that consultation.

**■ Waste Disposal: Environment Protection****Geraint Davies:**[\[9830\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the average length of time was for the Environment Agency to process a waste operation permit application from point of first application to final determination for the 2021-22 financial year; and what proportion of those applications took longer than six months to process.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Environment Agency determined 221 new bespoke (tailored to a specific business activity) and standard rules waste permits (a set of fixed rules for common activities) for the financial year 2021-22.

The average period from when the permit application was received to when a permit was issued was 226 days. Of the 221 applications determined - 48% took over 6 months (180 days).

**Geraint Davies:**[\[9831\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the average length of time was for the Environment Agency to process a waste installation permit

application from point of first application to final determination for the 2021-22 financial year; and what proportion of those applications took longer than six months to process.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Environment Agency (EA) determined 28 new waste installation permits for the financial year 2021-22. Waste installation permits are required for activities such as incineration and co-incineration of waste, landfills, other forms of disposal of waste, recovery of waste, temporary or underground storage of hazardous waste and treatment of wastewater.

The average period from the point the EA received a permit application to when a permit was issued was 378 days. Of the 28 applications determined - 89% took over 6 months (180 days).

These are some of the most complex and highest risk activities the EA regulates. These activities have the potential to cause significant harm to the environment and communities if not appropriately assessed and managed.

**Geraint Davies:**

[\[9833\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how the Environment Agency applies the polluter pays principle as part of the environmental permitting process for municipal waste incinerators when balancing the (a) cost to the public of increased pollution with (b) any additional cost to the applicant of additional or alternative measures, technologies or techniques that would lower emissions.

**Jo Churchill:**

The polluter pays principle is applied through the permit application fee and subsequent operational subsistence fees. An operator will face incremental increases in their subsistence fees if they breach the conditions of their permit. The EA also has an enforcement and sanctions policy which includes the use of monetary penalties for offences.

The EA will only issue a permit for a municipal waste incinerator if the applicant can demonstrate that they will use best available techniques to prevent and minimise emissions, and that the plant would not give rise to significant pollution of the environment or harm to human health.

## FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

### ■ Afghanistan: Humanitarian Aid and Human Rights

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[\[9956\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much and what proportion of the £286 million of the Government's humanitarian assistance for Afghanistan announced on 31 March 2022 has been disbursed to date; and what recent discussions she has had with the Taliban on upholding international human rights.

**James Cleverly:**

The FCDO delivered in full on the Prime Minister's commitment to double assistance for Afghanistan in financial year 2021/22, disbursing £286 million and delivering humanitarian assistance to over 6.1 million people. To the end of May, the FCDO has disbursed £4.2 million of the £286 million allocation for Afghanistan this financial year.

FCDO officials regularly raise human rights issues with the Taliban, including minorities, rights of women and girls such as access to education, jobs and services, and freedom of expression. The Government has also made clear our serious concerns about the human rights situation in Afghanistan through statements from the UN Security Council, the G7 and other foreign ministers.

**■ Afghanistan: Official Visits****Preet Kaur Gill:**[\[9955\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, when (a) she and (b) her Ministers last visited Afghanistan.

**James Cleverly:**

The Foreign Secretary and FCDO Ministers have not visited Afghanistan in their current roles. Officials are engaging pragmatically with the Taliban to further UK objectives, including human rights and counter-terrorism.

**■ Alaa Abdel Fattah****Dr Rupa Huq:**[\[9069\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions she has had with her Egyptian counterpart on the ongoing detainment of Alaa Abdel Fattah in Egypt.

**James Cleverly:**

Since his sentencing on December 2021, FCDO officials have consistently called on the Egyptian government to urgently grant consular access to visit Alaa Abdel Fatah. The Minister of State for North Africa raised the case with Foreign Minister Shoukry during a call on 21 May, and during his recent visit to Cairo. The UK Government regularly raises human rights concerns with the Egyptian authorities, including with regard to political prisoners in the Egyptian system, both privately and in forums such as the UN Human Rights Council.

**■ Argentina: G7****Fabian Hamilton:**[\[8964\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she has had discussions with her Argentine counterpart on Argentina's intention to participate in the Summit of G7 leaders in June 2022.

**Vicky Ford:**

Invitations to the Summit of G7 leaders are handled by the organisers of the event. The UK Government has not had discussions on this topic with the Government of Argentina.

**■ Bahrain: Political Prisoners****Layla Moran:**[\[9995\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if the Government will make representations to the Bahrain Government on (a) ending punitive measures against Hassan Mushaima and (b) his immediate and unconditional release.

**Amanda Milling:**

We continue to monitor and discuss the case of Hassan Mushaima and others with the Bahraini Government as well as with the independent oversight bodies. We encourage those with concerns to raise them directly with the relevant oversight bodies.

**■ Bahrain: Politics and Government****Layla Moran:**[\[9130\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, on what date her Department has most recently raised the case of Dr Abduljalil al-Singace with the Government of Bahrain.

**Layla Moran:**[\[9131\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to meeting of 27 April 2022 between the Bahraini Minister of Interior, Sheikh Rashid bin Abdullah AlKhalifa and the HM Ambassador to Bahrain, Roddy Drummond, whether (a) human rights, (b) Gulf Strategy Fund programmes and (c) cases of individuals including (i) Dr Abduljalil AlSingace, (ii) Hassan Mushaima, (iii) Mohammed Ramadhan and (iv) Husain Moosa were discussed during that meeting.

**Layla Moran:**[\[9132\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the 27 April 2022 meeting between the Bahraini Minister of Interior, Sheikh Rashid bin Abdullah AlKhalifa, and the UK Ambassador to Bahrain, Roddy Drummond, if he will publish a list of the positions of Government officials in attendance at that meeting.

**Amanda Milling:**

Officials and ministers have regular discussions with their Bahraini counterparts on a range of issues, including human rights. We continue to follow and regularly discuss the cases of Dr Abduljalil al-Singace, Hassan Mushaima, Mohammed Ramadhan, Husain Moosa and others with the Bahraini Government as well as with the independent oversight bodies. We continue to encourage those with concerns to raise them directly with the relevant oversight bodies.

## ■ Bilateral Aid

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

**[9966]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will make it her policy to meet the Aid Transparency Index standard of good or very good on all bilateral Official Development Assistance expenditure.

**Amanda Milling:**

The FCDO is committed to meeting the Aid Transparency Index rating of "Good" or "Very Good" on its Official Development Assistance expenditure. Publish What You Fund will publish the results of the latest Index in July 2022, which will be the first time the new Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office has been assessed. The FCDO hold ourselves accountable to Parliament and the public for how we spend aid. As we continue to publish to the International Aid Transparency Initiative standard, within publicly agreed timelines, our systems allow the public to see how British taxpayer money is delivering our aid objectives across the world.

The FCDO is considering (with Cabinet Office) whether it will be possible to further develop the aid transparency commitment in the January 2022 Open Government Partnership National Action Plan, for the August 2022 deadline.

## ■ China: Politics and Government

**Catherine West:**

**[9081]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will take steps with Cabinet colleagues to ensure all officials across Government working on policy areas in respect of China are trained in atrocity prevention.

**Amanda Milling:**

The FCDO ensures that all geographical departments have access to relevant expertise on atrocity prevention when formulating policy. Departments work closely with our overseas network and are able to draw on expertise from thematic leads and consult the FCDO conflict centre and other government departments. We continue to invest in the capability of our staff, including dedicated training modules and guidance materials and we run training courses for officials on themes which contribute to atrocity prevention, including Sanctions, Human Rights and Conflict. In addition to our offer for FCDO staff, other government departments are able to access a number of training resources.

## ■ China: Sanctions

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[8050]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions she has had with her Chinese counterpart on the potential merits of escalating sanctions against the Chinese authorities, including in the Xinjiang Province for the actions they are taking in defiling individuals human rights.

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[8055]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she is considering additional sanctions against people associated with the persecution of Uyghur Muslims in China.

**Amanda Milling:**

The Government has previously imposed sanctions against Chinese Government officials and an entity responsible for enforcing China's repressive policies in Xinjiang. These measures were taken alongside the US, EU and Canada in an unprecedented joint action. While we do not speculate about possible future designations, as to do so may undermine their effectiveness, we will continue to keep all potential listings and evidence under review.

■ **China: Uyghurs**

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[8049]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, for what reason the Government has not formally designated actions by the Chinese state against the Uyghur Muslim communities as genocide.

**Amanda Milling:**

We are clear that China's actions in Xinjiang represent gross violations of human rights, for which China must be held to account. However it is the long-standing policy of the British Government not to make determinations in relation to genocide. Genocide is a crime and there must be no impunity for it. As with other crimes, judgment should be made after all available evidence has been considered by a competent court. The UK has led international efforts to hold China to account at the UN, imposed sanctions on senior Chinese Government officials, and announced measures to help ensure no UK organisations are complicit in these violations through their supply chains. We will continue to act with our international partners to increase the pressure on China to change its behaviour.

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[8056]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she is considering imposing additional sanctions on China due to the continued persecution of Uyghur Muslims in that country.

**Amanda Milling:**

The Government has previously imposed sanctions against Chinese Government officials and an entity responsible for enforcing China's repressive policies in Xinjiang. These measures were taken alongside the US, EU and Canada in an unprecedented joint action. While we do not speculate about possible future designations, as to do so may undermine their effectiveness, we will continue to keep all potential listings and evidence under review.



## ■ Coronavirus: Vaccination

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[\[9952\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many and what proportion of the 100 million doses of covid-19 vaccines that the UK committed to donating to countries in need by June 2022 have been delivered as of 26 May 2022.

**Amanda Milling:**

As of 26 May, the UK had donated 82.7 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines, of which 36.5 million had already been deployed in country and the rest were with COVAX in the process of being allocated and delivered.

The UK has made available 100 million doses. However, global supply now far outstrips demand and countries around the world have greater access to and choice of vaccines. Dose donations are no longer critical. The challenge now is to ensure that developing countries can effectively administer vaccines and the UK supports the work of the COVID-19 Vaccine Delivery Partnership to deliver on this.

## ■ Development Aid

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[\[9959\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, when she plans to publish the (a) 2022 Official Development Assistance (ODA) budget allocations and (b) ODA budget allocations for institutions including the (i) Global Fund and (ii) African Development Fund.

**Amanda Milling:**

The FCDO's Annual Report and Accounts will be laid in Parliament before the Summer recess and will include further detail on FCDO's ODA spending.

Multilateral programmes are designed, renewed or replenished on a regular basis, all on different timescales. Annual funding to multilaterals is published in Statistics for International Development. We are considering future contributions to the Global Fund and the African Development Fund in line with the International Development Strategy and will communicate funding allocations when those replenishments take place later this year.

## ■ Ethiopia: Journalism

**Mr Laurence Robertson:**

[\[8949\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions she has had with the government of Ethiopia on the recent reported arrest of journalists in that country; and if she will make a statement.

**Vicky Ford:**

We are concerned by restrictions to media freedom in Ethiopia, including the arrest of many journalists. The UK has consistently called for an end to infringements on media freedom - journalists must have the right to report freely. I raised the issue of



large-scale detentions in Ethiopia with Minister for Justice Gedion on 20 January and plan to write to Justice Minister Gedion regarding arrests of journalists and the recent expulsion of a British journalist. The British Embassy in Addis Ababa tweeted on 18 May urging the Government of Ethiopia to protect and uphold media freedom.

■ **Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Public Finance**

**Sarah Champion:**

**[9016]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will provide her Department's budget allocations for the financial years (a) 2022-23, (b) 2023-24 and (c) 2024-25 prior to the publication of that information in her Department's forthcoming Annual Report and Accounts for the financial year 2021-22; and if she will make a statement.

**Vicky Ford:**

As stated at the International Development Committee meeting on 18 May, the FCDO's Annual Report and Accounts will be laid in Parliament before the Summer recess and will include further detail on the FCDO's Overseas Development Assistance spending.

■ **Horn of Africa and East Africa: Development Aid**

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

**[8100]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to support the East and Horn of Africa in (a) preparing for future droughts, (b) building more resilient systems and (c) ending exacerbating factors such as conflict.

**Vicky Ford:**

The humanitarian situation across East Africa and the Horn of Africa is extremely concerning. Conflict and drought are the main causes of humanitarian need with tens of millions of people affected.

Our response to the current drought builds on long-established resilience building programmes in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. In Kenya this includes support to the Hunger Safety Programme, which has provided 600,000 people in drought prone areas with regular financial assistance. In Ethiopia, the UK funded Productive Safety Net Programme has benefitted some 8 million people via financial welfare provision and community public works projects. In Somalia the UK has been supporting over 220 rural communities in three large urban cities through sustainable initiatives targeting internally displaced persons. These programmes, coupled with additional investments we have made in more drought resilient infrastructure, have enabled the UK to reach nearly 8 million people. The UK is also committed to promoting peace and security across the Horn of Africa. In Ethiopia, for example, through the 'Civil Society Support Programme' the UK funded efforts to: promote good governance; strengthen citizen accountability; challenge societal attitudes on gender-based violence.

**■ Horn of Africa: Food Poverty**

**Stephen Timms:** [8943]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the current hunger crisis in the Horn of Africa; and if she will make a statement.

**Stephen Timms:** [8944]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she plans to provide new and additional funding in the context of high levels of hunger in the Horn of Africa.

**Vicky Ford:**

The humanitarian situation across the Horn of Africa is extremely concerning. Conflict and drought are the main causes of humanitarian need. The region is experiencing one of its most severe droughts in history with more than 15 million people in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia assessed to be acutely food insecure, according to the UN. A fourth consecutive - and unprecedented - season of failed rains is contributing to growing water scarcity, alarming rates of malnutrition and huge numbers of livestock deaths. Needs are grave in Somalia where an estimated 81,000 people are experiencing famine-like conditions. In Ethiopia 8 million people are affected by drought with 3.5 million people in Kenya.

The UK is a major humanitarian donor to the East Africa region. In 2022 the UK has provided £72 million to support more than one million people in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and South Sudan affected by conflict, drought and flooding. Across the region UK-funded humanitarian activities are making a difference and saving lives. In Kenya the UK is providing 26,000 children with life-saving nutritional support. In Ethiopia a further 200,000 children and pregnant and lactating women in southern and eastern regions will receive similar aid.

The UK also played a critical role in convening the recent UN Horn of Africa Drought Roundtable which took place in late April in Geneva. This included working with states in the region and the UN to ensure appropriate levels of participation. It helped to bring much needed focus on the drought and it mobilised roughly US\$400 million in new funding.

Our response to the drought builds on long-established resilience building programmes in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. In Kenya this includes support to the Hunger Safety Programme, which has provided 600,000 people in drought prone areas with regular financial assistance. In Ethiopia, the UK funded Productive Safety Net Programme has benefitted some 8 million people via financial welfare provision and community public works projects. In Somalia the UK has been supporting over 220 rural communities in three large urban cities with durable solutions initiatives for internally displaced persons. These programmes, coupled with additional investments, have enabled the UK to reach nearly 8 million individuals as a part of its emergency humanitarian response.

## ■ Jagtar Singh Johal

**Dan Jarvis:**

[\[9878\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made for the implications of her policies of the determination of the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention of 4 May 2022 that Jagtar Singh Johal is arbitrarily detained and should be released.

**Vicky Ford:**

We take the opinion of the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention on Mr Johal very seriously. The British Government has consistently raised its concerns about Mr Johal's case with the Government of India, including his allegations of torture and mistreatment and his right to a fair trial.

The Prime Minister raised the case with his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi when they met in Delhi on 22 April 2022. The Foreign Secretary raised Mr Johal's detention with India's Minister of External Affairs, Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, when they met in Delhi on 31 March 2022. Ministers and officials raise Mr Johal's case regularly and will continue to do so.

## ■ Latin America

**Fabian Hamilton:**

[\[8963\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policy of the exclusion of Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua from the Summit of the Americas in Los Angeles in June 2022.

**Vicky Ford:**

UK policy towards Cuba and Nicaragua is not affected by their Summit participation and we will continue to engage in support of our priorities. The UK does not recognise the result of the illegitimate National Assembly election in Venezuela held on 6 December 2020.

## ■ MI6: Environment Protection

**Kenny MacAskill:**

[\[9182\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, to whom MI6 presents its environmental sustainability reports required under those regulations.

**James Cleverly:**

The National Audit Office.

## ■ Pakistan: Religious Freedom

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

[\[8107\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions she has had with her Pakistani counterpart on the shooting of two shopkeepers in Peshawar on 15 May 2022.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [8108]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions she has had with her counterpart in Pakistan on the protection and wellbeing of minority communities in that country.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [8109]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she has had recent discussions with her Pakistani counterpart on the promotion of (a) community cohesion and (b) right to freedom of religion and belief in that country.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [8110]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions she has had with her counterpart in Pakistan on the efforts the Pakistani Government has made to prevent religious extremists from targeting minority groups in that country.

**James Cleverly:**

The UK Government made clear its condemnation of the murder of two members of the Sikh community last month, in statements by Lord Ahmad, Minister of State for South Asia, and by the British High Commissioner to Pakistan. We regularly raise our concerns about Freedom of Religion or Belief at a senior level with the Government of Pakistan. Lord Ahmad discussed the need to promote respect for all religions with then Governor of Punjab Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar on 28 November and with Shaikh Hasan Haseeb Ur Rehman of the Council of Islamic Ideology, and Pir Nageeb, Custodian of the Eidgah Sharif Shrine in Rawalpindi on 6 January.

## ■ Saudi Arabia: Capital Punishment

**Layla Moran:** [9994]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will make immediate representations to the King of Saudi Arabia calling for the executions of Sadiq Thamer and Jaafar Sultan to be urgently halted.

**Amanda Milling:**

The United Kingdom strongly opposes the death penalty in all countries and in all circumstances, as a matter of principle. I raised UK concerns about the death penalty with the Saudi Ambassador on 23 May 2022. The British Embassy in Riyadh raised concern regarding recent executions with the Saudi Ministry of Justice on 26 May 2022. Ministers and senior officials will continue to raise UK concerns about the death penalty with the Saudi authorities.

## ■ Shireen Abu Aqleh

**Abena Oppong-Asare:** [10029]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions she has had with her Israeli counterpart on holding an independent investigation into the killing of Shireen Abu Aqleh.

**Amanda Milling:**

During a call with the Israeli Ambassador on 19 May, I made clear the UK's sadness at the recent death of Shireen Abu Aqleh and the disturbing scenes at her funeral in Jerusalem. I urged a thorough, impartial and transparent investigation into the events. The UK Ambassador to Israel has reiterated the importance of an investigation with the Israeli authorities. We call for urgent steps to de-escalate tensions and for restraint in the use of force. The safety of journalists across the globe is vital and they must be protected when carrying out their critical work.

**■ Sovico Group: Linacre College****Dr Julian Lewis:**[\[7883\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the Answer of 23 February 2022 to Question 124937 on Sovico Group: Linacre College, if she will publish (a) correspondence, (b) advice, (c) emails and (d) notes held by her Department on Linacre College and the University of Oxford working with Vietnamese entities in each of the last 2 years, including background information supplied to (i) Linacre College and (ii) the University of Oxford on working with those entities relating to (A) the Sovico Group and (B) Nguyen Thi Phurong Thao.

**Amanda Milling:**

FCDO Officials have given background information to Linacre College and the University of Oxford, at the request of these institutions, in line with the advice we offer UK organisations and businesses looking to work with Vietnamese entities. The offer would be the same globally.

It would not be appropriate to publish background advice given to any third party institution.

**■ Spain: Travellers****Dr Rupa Huq:**[\[8081\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions she has had with her Spanish counterpart on the level of checks required of UK travellers entering Spain; and what steps she is taking alongside her Spanish counterpart to minimise the number of checks required of UK travellers entering Spain.

**James Cleverly:**

The Schengen Borders Code and Schengen Visa Code govern the rules for entry and exit in the Schengen Area and the rules on short stays for third country nationals. Schengen States are responsible for implementation of the Schengen rules. The UK's Trade and Cooperation Agreement with the EU provides for visa-free travel for short-term visits for each other's nationals in accordance with their respective laws. The detail of those arrangements is set by domestic law, reflecting the UK's position as a non-EU Member State. We continue to monitor the implementation of border checks and raise any issues with the Spanish authorities.

**■ Taiwan: Development Aid****Rachael Maskell:****[8054]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the comments of the President of the United States on US support for Taiwan in the event of Chinese military action on 23 May 2022, what assessment she has made of implications for those comments for her policies on UK support for Taiwan.

**Amanda Milling:**

The UK's longstanding position on Taiwan has not changed. We consider the Taiwan issue one to be settled peacefully by the people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait through constructive dialogue. We are concerned by any activity that risks destabilising the status quo.

**■ Tigray: Armed Conflict****Mr Laurence Robertson:****[8950]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she has had recent discussions with the government of Ethiopia on (a) ending the conflict in Tigray and (b) the role that will play in encouraging businesses to return to and expand their operations in that country.

**Vicky Ford:**

We welcome the cessation of hostilities announced on 24 March and the subsequent commitment to scale-up the delivery of life-saving humanitarian aid to Tigray. There can be no military solution to the conflict. We have consistently called on all parties to the conflict to stop fighting and find a political solution to the conflict through negotiations. I have underlined this message in meetings in the past weeks with the Ethiopian Finance Minister and Education Minister. I also raised this issue with Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy during our meeting on 29 January.

The conflict has contributed to a challenging economic situation in Ethiopia. Bringing the conflict to an end will help to return Ethiopia's economy to rapid growth, and give British businesses the confidence that they need to invest. Once peace is secured, the UK stands ready to support Ethiopia's recovery from the conflict, supporting economic stability and growing the pipeline of potential UK investments.

**■ Tigray: Humanitarian Situation****Mr Laurence Robertson:****[8948]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of the humanitarian situation in Tigray.

**Vicky Ford:**

The humanitarian situation in Tigray is grave. An estimated 5.2 million people require life-saving aid including 400,000 people who are experiencing catastrophic famine conditions. The UK welcomes the resumption of overland humanitarian delivery to Tigray on 1 April. However, aid delivery remains insufficient and there is an urgent

requirement for sustained and unimpeded humanitarian access. Since 1 April approximately 875 humanitarian trucks have reached Tigray including a convoy of 163 trucks which arrived in Mekelle on 23 May. The UN assess that more than 100 trucks are required each day.

## ■ UNRWA: Finance

**Caroline Ansell:**

**[8085]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the implications for her Department's stated zero tolerance approach to antisemitism of the UK's financial support for the UN Relief and Works Agency which utilises the official Palestinian Authority school curriculum in its schools in the West Bank and Gaza; and if she will make a statement.

**Amanda Milling:**

The UK is committed to combatting the rise of antisemitism in all its forms. We accompany our support for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) with stringent attention to implementation of their neutrality policy, including how they apply this to textbooks and other learning material to ensure they reflect UN values. In Gaza and the West Bank, UNRWA uses the Palestinian Authority's (PA's) curriculum in their schools after rigorously reviewing that it is in line with UN values. Officials from the British Consulate General Jerusalem regularly discuss the curriculum with counterparts in UNRWA and the PA.

## ■ Uyghurs: Concentration Camps

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[8051]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions she has held with her Chinese counterpart on the reported shoot to kill policies at Uyghur concentration camps.

**Amanda Milling:**

As the Foreign Secretary made clear in her statement of 24 May (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/foreign-secretary-statement-on-xinjiang-24-may-2022>), these latest reports provide further shocking details of China's gross human rights violations in Xinjiang. We have raised our serious concerns about this new and compelling evidence with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing and the Chinese Embassy in London.

We will continue to raise our deep concern about the situation in Xinjiang directly with the Chinese authorities at the highest levels. The Prime Minister did so most recently in a telephone call with President Xi on 25 March.



**■ Xinjiang: Genocide****Catherine West:****[9080]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will make a determination in relation to whether genocide is taking place in Xinjiang in light of recent evidence obtained from security forces operating in that region.

**Amanda Milling:**

As the Foreign Secretary made clear in her statement of 24th May, these latest reports provide further shocking details of China's gross human rights violations in Xinjiang, adding to the already extensive body of evidence from Chinese government documents, first-hand testimony, satellite imagery and visits by our own diplomats to the region.

However, it remains the long-standing policy of the British Government not to make determinations in relation to genocide. Genocide is a crime and there must be no impunity for it. As with other crimes, judgment should be made after all available evidence has been considered by a competent court. The UK has led international efforts to hold China to account at the UN, imposed sanctions on senior Chinese government officials, and announced measures to help ensure no UK organisations are complicit in these violations through their supply chains. We will continue to act with our international partners to increase the pressure on China to change its behaviour.

**HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE****■ Air Ambulance Services: Finance****Munira Wilson:****[8198]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has made a recent assessment of the potential merits of providing funding to regional air ambulance services in England.

**Edward Argar:**

No recent assessment has been made. In 2019, the Department launched a three-year capital grant programme which allocated £10 million to nine air ambulance charities in England. A further £6 million was provided in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which was allocated to Air Ambulances UK to distribute to the 21 air ambulance charities in the United Kingdom. We continue to support a charitable model for the funding of air ambulance services. Decisions on the provision of services are made locally and maintaining a charitable model allows charities the independence to deliver specialised services tailored to the needs of patients.



## ■ Alzheimer's Disease: Diagnosis

**Dame Diana Johnson:**

[\[9852\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what additional support his Department has put in place to tackle the backlog in Alzheimer's diagnoses consultations since 2020.

**Gillian Keegan:**

In 2021/22, we allocated £17 million to address dementia waiting lists and increase the number of diagnoses. In 2022/23, NHS England will provide funding to general practitioners in specific areas to pilot approaches to improve the dementia diagnosis rate and access to post diagnostic support.

We will set out plans for dementia in England for the next 10 years later this year, which will include a focus on dementia diagnoses.

## ■ Asthma: Medical Treatments

**Liz Twist:**

[\[9972\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has plans to include a primary care incentive within the Investment and Impact Fund to help ensure that asthma patients receiving frequent courses of oral corticosteroids are referred to specialist care in line with clinical guidelines.

**Maria Caulfield:**

While there are no current plans to do so, there are two existing indicators within the Investment and Impact Fund (IIF) aimed at improving the care of people with asthma. NHS England and NHS Improvement will continue to work with representatives of general practitioners (GPs) to refine the IIF. Within the Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF), practices are incentivised to establish and maintain a register of patients with an asthma diagnosis. The QOF also incentivises GPs to develop a written, personalised asthma plan for each patient to identify the best courses of treatment.

## ■ Atrial Fibrillation

**Chris Green:**

[\[9035\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will request updated atrial fibrillation prevalence estimates, which were last published in April 2020.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The National Cardiovascular Intelligence Network intends to review the methodology for estimates of atrial fibrillation in 2022/23.

## ■ Blood Cancer: Health Services

**Damien Moore:** [\[10001\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate his Department has made of the level of funding available to the NHS to tackle waiting lists for blood cancer treatment.

**Maria Caulfield:**

In 2021, we announced an additional £5.9 billion to support elective recovery, diagnostics and technology in the next three years. This includes £2.3 billion to increase the volume of diagnostic activity and launch community diagnostic centres to increase capacity for clinical tests, such as phlebotomy for the diagnosis of suspected blood cancers.

We have also committed an additional £15.7 billion from April 2022 to March 2025 for managing the ongoing impact of COVID-19, while reducing waiting times for elective care, including cancer treatments.

## ■ Cancer: Diagnosis

**Damien Moore:** [\[10003\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assurances his Department has received from NHS England that the increase in provision of care in the community and remote consultations as a result of the covid-19 outbreak will not result in missed cancer diagnoses.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The National Health Service in England continued to prioritise cancer diagnosis and treatment throughout the pandemic. In March 2022, over 250,000 urgent cancer referrals were made by general practitioners in England – an increase of 70,000 compared to March 2020. With NHS England, we are increasing diagnostic capacity and connectivity by investing in more than 160 community diagnostic centres, to improve access to tests for cancer. Online consultations and telemedicine are also providing flexibility for patients.

## ■ Carers

**Virginia Crosbie:** [\[8227\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will (a) make and (b) publish a plan to reform support for (i) breaks, (ii) respite and care services, (iii) infection control, (iv) identification, (v) financial help, and (vi) support to manage work and care for unpaid carers.

**Gillian Keegan:**

The white paper 'People at the Heart of Care' sets out how we will invest up to £25 million in the services provided to unpaid carers, which could include respite, breaks, peer group and wellbeing support. Local authorities are required to undertake a Carer's Assessment for any carer who appears to have a need for support. If a carer

is assessed as having eligible needs, the local authority has a legal duty to meet these needs on request from the carer.

Since February 2021, free personal protective equipment (PPE) for COVID-19 needs has been provided to unpaid carers who do not live with the person they care for. This is available for unpaid carers until March 2023. The Carer's Allowance and income-related benefits, such as Universal Credit and Pension Credit, can also provide financial support to carers on low incomes. Legislation to introduce one week of unpaid leave for unpaid carers in work will be brought forward when Parliamentary time allows. In addition, all employees with 26 weeks continuous service have the statutory right to request flexible working which can assist unpaid carers to balance caring and work.

## ■ Coronanvirus: Vaccination

**Catherine West:**

[\[9945\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to increase the uptake of the covid-19 vaccine for children aged between five and 12 years old.

**Maggie Throup:**

Local vaccination sites are providing longer appointment times for families to allow greater flexibility and an opportunity to discuss the vaccination process. Sites are also ensuring that facilities can accommodate families and young children.

We are continuing to provide information to the parents and carers of eligible children and issued invitations explaining how vaccination appointments can be made through the National Booking Service. The Service can be accessed online or via 119, which offers flexibility and a larger number of vaccination sites for children. Alternatively, COVID-19 vaccines can also be accessed at walk-in sites without an appointment.

**Catherine West:**

[\[9946\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate his Department has made of the proportion of children aged between five and 12 years old who have had one dose of the covid-19 vaccine as of 26 May 2022.

**Catherine West:**

[\[9947\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of trends in the uptake of the covid-19 vaccine amongst children aged five and 12 years old since that programme was rolled out.

**Maggie Throup:**

Uptake has gradually increased in this age cohort although it remains low compared to other age groups. As of 26 May 2022, 8.1% of children aged five to 12 years old have received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine in England.

## ■ Coronavirus: Quarantine and Vaccination

**Daisy Cooper:**

[6917]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the ways his Department communicated with clinically extremely vulnerable people during the covid-19 outbreak with reference to (a) shielding and (b) the vaccination programme; and if he will publish any lessons learned.

**Maggie Throup:**

No specific assessment has been made. However, the Office for National Statistics' (ONS) recent survey 'Coronavirus and clinically extremely vulnerable people in England' includes information on the effectiveness of communications aimed at the clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV), which is available at the following link:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/datasets/coronavirusandclinicallyextremelyvulnerablepeopleinengland>

Data from January to October 2021 shows that 87% of respondents said they had a good or complete understanding of the Government's guidance. Data from October 2021 showed that 95% of eligible CEV people were fairly likely or very likely to receive the third primary dose for the severely immunosuppressed. While there are no plans to undertake a specific lesson learned exercise on communications, the Government will continue to identify lessons from the pandemic response.

## ■ Coronavirus: Screening

**Jim Shannon:**

[9006]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has made a recent estimate of the number and proportion of covid-19 lateral flow test results that are not registered with the NHS.

**Maggie Throup:**

No recent estimate has been made.

**Caroline Ansell:**

[9071]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to work with private covid-19 lateral flow test providers to ensure that tests are affordable; and if he will make a statement.

**Maggie Throup:**

Manufacturers and retailers of devices have autonomy to determine the pricing of lateral flow device tests and the pack sizes available. However, the Government has engaged with manufacturers and retailers on setting affordable prices to ensure a private market exists and flourishes.

**Layla Moran:**

[9996]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of providing third sector contractors carrying out NHS contracts with free lateral flow covid-19 test kits.

**Maggie Throup:**

Free symptomatic and asymptomatic testing is available in the health sector based on clinical risk factors. Those who regularly work with National Health Service patients are eligible for free lateral flow tests through the staff testing programme. This includes individuals not directly employed by a NHS organisation, such as volunteers in vaccination centres in patient-facing roles. The decision on whether a role is patient-facing is made locally.

**■ Coronavirus: Vaccination****Sir Christopher Chope:****[2325]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the Government accepts that some people have died as a direct result of having received a covid-19 vaccination; and if he will make a statement.

**Maggie Throup:**

*[Holding answer 19 May 2022]:* All vaccines deployed in the United Kingdom have been authorised through a rigorous and expert review process by the independent regulator, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Authority (MHRA). The MHRA continues to monitor the safety and effectiveness of authorised COVID-19 vaccines, including reviewing all suspected Adverse Drug Reaction reports relating to COVID-19 vaccines where the patient died shortly after vaccination. The MHRA publishes a weekly report covering adverse reactions to approved COVID-19 vaccines which is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-vaccine-adverse-reactions>

These reports summarise the outcome of a number of detailed safety assessments and provide the appropriate context. Vaccines remain the most effective way to protect people from COVID-19 and have saved tens of thousands of lives.

**Ruth Cadbury:****[9024]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when his Department plans to make a fourth covid-19 vaccination available to people aged between 60 and 75.

**Maggie Throup:**

On 19 May 2022, the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) published interim advice on an autumn COVID-19 booster programme. The JCVI advised that a COVID-19 vaccine should be offered to residents and staff in care homes for older adults; frontline health and social care workers; all those aged 65 years old and over; and adults aged 16 to 64 years old in clinical risk groups. The JCVI will continue to review the vaccination programme and the epidemiological situation, particularly in relation to the timing and value of doses for less vulnerable older adults and those in clinical risk groups before autumn 2022. The Government will consider the JCVI's final recommendations later this year.

## ■ Dementia: Diagnosis

**Ian Byrne:** [\[8219\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent discussions he has had with organisations representing ethnic minority communities on the dementia diagnosis process.

**Gillian Keegan:**

We have had no specific discussions. However, NHS England and NHS Improvement have commissioned the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities' Dementia Intelligence Network to investigate the underlying variation in dementia diagnosis rates in targeted areas in England. This will include a focus on social and economic deprivation, rurality, demographic characteristics including age, ethnicity and educational attainment and general health/life expectancy.

We will set out plans for dementia in England for the next 10 years later this year, which will include a focus on dementia diagnosis.

**Ian Byrne:** [\[8220\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to ensure that care home records are accessible to diagnosing clinicians to support the identification, assessment and diagnosis of dementia.

**Gillian Keegan:**

We are supporting integrated care systems to implement a person-based shared care record involving the local health and care partners. The initial focus has been on the sharing of information between National Health Service trusts and general practice, which will be extended to other partners involved in the delivery of health and care services. Developments such as Digital Social Care Records will allow care home records to be accessible to diagnosing clinicians, supporting the identification, assessment and diagnosis of dementia.

## ■ Dementia: Research

**Virginia Crosbie:** [\[8228\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if his Department will make an assessment of the potential merits of using its experience of the Vaccines Taskforce during the covid-19 outbreak to establish a dementia medicines taskforce to speed up progress in dementia research.

**Gillian Keegan:**

*[Holding answer 6 June 2022]:* Officials have met Alzheimer's Research UK to discuss this proposal and considered routes for accelerating access to such medicines for patients with NHS England and NHS Improvement, including the experiences of the Vaccines Taskforce.

We will set out plans for dementia in England for the next 10 years later this year, including on diagnosis, risk reduction and prevention and research. The strategy will include ambitions for research to develop new disease-modifying treatments. We will

continue to engage with stakeholders, including Alzheimer's Research UK, throughout the development of the strategy.

■ **Dental Services: Private Sector**

**Steve McCabe:**

[\[7898\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate he has made of the number of former NHS dentist patients using private dental care.

**Maria Caulfield:**

No specific estimate has been made.

■ **Department of Health and Social Care: North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust**

**Wes Streeting:**

[\[8069\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, which (a) Minister, (b) civil servant or (c) external partner is leading on his Department's investigation into the North East Ambulance Service.

**Wes Streeting:**

[\[8070\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many full time equivalent staff are working on his Department's investigation into the North East Ambulance Service.

**Wes Streeting:**

[\[8071\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the duration of his Department's investigation into the North East Ambulance Service.

**Wes Streeting:**

[\[8072\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish an outline of the scope of his Department's investigation into the North East Ambulance Service.

**Maria Caulfield:**

I have Ministerial responsibility for investigating the concerns raised related to the North East Ambulance Service. We are working with NHS England and NHS Improvement to determine the appropriate next steps and further information will be available in due course.

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

**Wes Streeting:**

[\[6834\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what his Department's projected spend is on recruitment consultants for 2022-23.

**Edward Argar:**

The information requested is not collected centrally and to obtain it would incur disproportionate cost.



## ■ Diabetes: Ophthalmic Services

**Mr Gregory Campbell:** [\[7922\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of trends in the level of people with diabetes receiving diabetic retinopathy screening between 2016 and 2021.

**Maria Caulfield:**

Between April 2016 and March 2020, levels of routine digital screening for diabetic retinopathy in England were approximately 82%. Due to the impact of the pandemic, this rate reduced to 67.7% between January and March 2021.

The National Health Service and its partners are ensuring that participation in diabetic eye screening participation returns to pre-pandemic levels and we will continue to monitor progress.

## ■ Diabetes: Podiatry

**Sarah Champion:** [\[9882\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has in place to ensure diabetic foot screening within primary care returns pre-covid-19 pandemic levels.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The '2022/23 priorities and operational planning guidance' asks integrated care systems (ICSs) to restore diabetes care processes to pre-pandemic levels by the end of 2022/23. In 2022/23, £36 million has been allocated to ICSs to support the restoration of routine diabetes care, including foot checks. Each ICS will set out its recovery activity in a one year operational plan.

In April 2022, performance-based payments for the Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) were reinstated in full. Alongside other indicators promoting the management of patients with diabetes, the 2022/23 QOF includes an indicator which promotes an annual foot examination of registered patients with diabetes.

## ■ Dialysis Machines

**Vicky Foxcroft:** [\[2570\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what meetings officials in his Department have had with (a) commissioners and (b) providers on ensuring that patients with chronic kidney disease receiving haemodialysis treatment at home are reimbursed for the energy costs incurred from operating the dialysis treatment, as stated in the relevant NHS England Service Specification.

**Vicky Foxcroft:** [\[2571\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether officials in his Department have had meetings with their counterparts in the Department for Work and Pensions on ensuring that patients with chronic kidney disease receiving haemodialysis



treatment at home are reimbursed for the energy costs incurred from operating the dialysis treatment, as stated in the relevant NHS England Service Specification.

**Vicky Foxcroft:**

[\[2572\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress NHS England has made on reviewing the NHS Guidance in relation to home dialysis patient reimbursement.

**Maria Caulfield:**

Officials have not had specific meetings on this issue. Provisions are in place for patients receiving haemodialysis treatment at home to be reimbursed for additional direct energy costs as a result of their treatment. NHS England meets these additional direct utility costs through the payment of the national tariff to the patient's usual dialysis provider.

NHS England is promoting awareness of these arrangements, including communicating directly to all commissioned providers and renal clinical networks to ensure that eligible patients are alerted to the reimbursement. NHS England plans to review renal national service specifications for haemodialysis and peritoneal dialysis within the next one to two years as part of the Renal Services Transformation Programme.

#### ■ **Foetal Anticonvulsant Syndrome: Wales**

**Virginia Crosbie:**

[\[10046\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department holds data on the number of babies in Wales who are born with foetal valproate syndrome.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The information requested is not held centrally, as this is a devolved matter.

#### ■ **Food: Advertising**

**Mr Steve Baker:**

[\[9876\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the impact of HFSS placement restrictions on the cost of living.

**Maggie Throup:**

The Government's impact assessment shows the placement of products within stores significantly affects household spending, with end of aisle displays increasing sales of soft drinks by over 50%.

#### ■ **General Practitioners**

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[9007\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent discussions he has had with health officials on GPs returning to face-to-face appointments.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The Department has regular discussions on the provision of primary care services. NHS England and NHS Improvement's guidance states that general practitioner (GP) practices must provide face to face appointments, alongside remote consultations. Patients' preferences for face-to-face care should be respected unless there are good clinical reasons to the contrary. In March 2022, 62% of appointments, excluding COVID-19 vaccinations, were conducted face-to-face.

■ **General Practitioners: Bath****Wera Hobhouse:**[\[9092\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to reduce GP waiting times in Bath.

**Maria Caulfield:**

Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is developing a communications plan to assist patients to select the most appropriate service to meet their needs and self-care where appropriate. Each Primary Care Network (PCN) is recruiting staff through the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme to increase capacity. Reception staff undertake training to direct patients to the appropriate member of the practice's multi-disciplinary team. The CCG has commissioned Lantum to create a pool of multidisciplinary primary care staff to support PCNs to increase workforce capacity in general practice and enable local general practitioners to work flexibly.

■ **General Practitioners: Chickerell****Chris Loder:**[\[9158\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department is taking steps to re-open the Abbotsbury Road GP surgery in Chickerell.

**Maria Caulfield:**

Abbotsbury Road Surgery closed to patients in March 2019 and the contract was returned. Registered patients were assigned to local practices to ensure the continuity of care. Since the closure of Abbotsbury Road surgery, there have been discussions on a potential new building at Chickerell, although this is currently on hold.

■ **General Practitioners: Recruitment and Waiting Lists****Wera Hobhouse:**[\[9093\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to (a) reduce national waiting times for GP appointments and (b) increase the number of GPs.

**Maria Caulfield:**

We have made £520 million available to improve access and expand general practice capacity during the pandemic. This is in addition to £1.5 billion announced in 2020 to

create an additional 50 million general practice appointments by 2024. In April 2022 45.2% of appointments took place on the same day as the booking was made, with 72.8% taking place within seven days. We have also put in place a short-term solution to assist practices to provide additional capacity to respond to telephone calls from patients, while a long-term approach is developed.

We are working with NHS England and NHS Improvement, Health Education England and the profession to increase recruitment, address the reasons why doctors leave the profession and encourage them to return to practice. In March 2022, there were 1,462 more full-time equivalent doctors in general practice compared to March 2019.

## ■ Health Professions: Regulation

**Jessica Morden:**

[\[7942\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when his Department plans to respond to the consultation entitled Regulating healthcare professionals, protecting the public, which closed on 24 March 2021.

**Jessica Morden:**

[\[7943\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what his planned timetable is for bringing forward draft legislation to regulate physician associates and anaesthesia associates.

**Edward Argar:**

We are analysing the responses to the 'Regulating healthcare professionals, protecting the public' consultation and working with stakeholders on the approach to reforming the legal framework for the regulation of healthcare professionals in the United Kingdom. We plan to publish the consultation response in due course, setting out further detail on the proposals, including the timing and sequencing of these reforms. Work to bring physician associates into regulation continues and we plan to consult on draft legislation later this year.

## ■ HIV Infection: Integrated Care Systems

**Luke Pollard:**

[\[9145\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what (a) targets and (b) other expectations he has of Integrated Care Systems in relation to (i) HIV prevention and (ii) care and treatment of people with HIV.

**Luke Pollard:**

[\[9146\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many Integrated Care Systems have HIV in their priority plans.

**Maggie Throup:**

Integrated care systems (ICS) will be established in England on a statutory basis on 1 July 2022. No specific targets have been set as ICSs will be responsible for developing and implementing appropriate plans to meet the needs of their local

communities, including for HIV prevention, treatment and care. Individual ICSs plans will be available following the creation of these bodies on 1 July.

■ **Hormone Replacement Therapy: Prescriptions**

**Navendu Mishra:**

[\[8209\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an estimate of the (a) number of women accessing testosterone through a private prescription and (b) average cost of those private prescriptions.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The Department does not hold information on prescribing in the private sector.

■ **Hormone Replacement Therapy: Supply Chains**

**Steve McCabe:**

[\[6696\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure hormone replacement therapy suppliers can meet the current level of demand for those medications.

**Maria Caulfield:**

There are over 70 hormone replacement therapy (HRT) products available in the United Kingdom and most remain in good supply. Due to a range of factors including an increase in demand, there have been supply issues with a limited number of products. However, alternatives to those experiencing supply issues are available.

On 5 May 2022, the Department met with suppliers, wholesalers and representatives from community pharmacy, including those affected by shortages, to discuss HRT availability. The Department is regularly engaging with suppliers to expedite resupply dates of the disrupted HRT products and with other suppliers to source alternatives and prevent future shortages. The HRT Supply Taskforce is working with the sector on measures to ensure the efficient use of current stock and increase supply in the immediate future and the long term.

■ **Miscarriage: Health Services**

**Bell Ribeiro-Addy:**

[\[8167\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the Government's forthcoming Women's Health Strategy will include a review of the support available for women and couples who experience a miscarriage.

**Maria Caulfield:**

Fertility, pregnancy, pregnancy loss and post-natal support will be included in the forthcoming Women's Health Strategy, which will be published later this year.

**Olivia Blake:**

[\[9207\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the Women's Health Strategy will include The Lancet series recommendations from Miscarriage Matters, published April 2021, that (a) every miscarriage should be acknowledged and recorded,

and the figures should be published and (b) there should be consistent miscarriage care available 24 hours a day in every area of the country.

**Maria Caulfield:**

We will consider the Lancet Series' recommendations on miscarriage during the development of the Women's Health Strategy. Fertility, pregnancy, pregnancy loss and post-natal support will be included in the forthcoming Women's Health Strategy for England, which will be published later this year.

■ **Monkeypox: Contact Tracing**

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

[\[7946\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the average (a) time to trace a contact of a person infected with monkeypox in the UK and (b) proportion of contacts of people infected with monkeypox in the UK traced, since 4 May 2022.

**Maggie Throup:**

No specific estimate has been made. All known contacts are being informed by the UK Health Security Agency's local health protection teams and hospital infection prevention and control teams. Contacts are categorised by tracing teams following a verbal assessment based on the level of contact with an infected individual and the likelihood a contact may have contracted the infection.

The maximum isolation period for the highest category of contact is 21 days from the date of interaction with a person infected with monkeypox. However, isolation advice is given on a case-by-case basis depending on the specific exposure circumstances of an individual, which will differ among different contacts.

■ **Monkeypox: Disease Control**

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

[\[7950\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits, in advance of the organisation of any smallpox vaccination programme, of a business support scheme to enable venues which may expose clients to a higher risk of exposure to monkeypox in the UK outbreak to temporarily close with no loss of revenues to interrupt chains of transmission.

**Maggie Throup:**

Monkeypox does not spread easily between people and the risk to the United Kingdom's population remains low. Work to understand the data and the clustering of cases is continuing which will inform any targeted vaccination beyond those directly infected. Emerging data shows that there are specific clusters of transmission in certain demographics in the community.

Guidance for venues and other locations where there is a higher risk of transmission is currently under consideration. This will include appropriate public health advice on cleaning and decontamination to limit the potential spread of infection.

## ■ Monkeypox: Health Education

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

[7949]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to prevent the emergence of stigma around monkeypox transmission in the UK for (a) LGBT+ communities and (b) communities with close links to African countries where monkeypox is endemic in rodents.

**Maggie Throup:**

The United Kingdom monkeypox incident currently has a high proportion of cases identifying as gay and bisexual men and men who have sex with men. We are asking these groups to be aware of the symptoms and organisations such as the Terrence Higgins Trust, are working with the UK Health Security Agency to develop specific health communications.

The majority of recently confirmed monkeypox cases in the UK have no travel links to a country where monkeypox is endemic. This has been reflected in information shared with the media, public and other stakeholders. As the nature of this cluster differs from those previously reported in the UK, we are ensuring all communications are updated and more diverse imagery is sourced.

## ■ Monkeypox: Vaccination

**Lloyd Russell-Moyle:**

[6877]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department has taken to secure supplies of Jynneos, also known as Imvanex and Imvamune, or other vaccines used for monkeypox.

**Maggie Throup:**

Although it is not specifically licensed for the prevention of monkeypox in Europe, the smallpox vaccine Imvanex has been used in the United Kingdom in response to previous incidents. This vaccine has demonstrated that it is highly effective at preventing infection when administered within four days of exposure and reducing severe illness between four and 14 days of exposure. The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) has recommended the use of the vaccination for named close contacts of cases and eligibility is kept under review. The UKHSA is working with suppliers, including Bavarian Nordic, which manufactures Imvanex, to ensure a consistent supply.

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

[7947]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of offering groups at higher risk of exposure to monkeypox in the UK outbreak a smallpox vaccine immediately upon notification of contact with an infected person.

**Maggie Throup:**

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) is currently considering a potential vaccine strategy and the associated procurement options. Vaccines are offered to any named

close contacts identified, with eligibility kept under review. Imvanex, a smallpox vaccine, has been recommended for post-exposure prophylaxis against monkeypox by an expert group. As monkeypox is caused by a virus similar to that of smallpox, this vaccine is considered effective in preventing or reducing the severity of monkeypox.

Monkeypox has low transmissibility and is spread from person to person through direct contact, with clothing or linens used by an infected person or potentially by close respiratory contact via coughing or sneezing by an infected individual.

## ■ **Mortality Rates: Energy**

**Mick Whitley:**

[\[9159\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his policies of the evidence given by the Chief Executive Officer of Energy Action Scotland to the Scottish Parliament's Net Zero, Energy, and Transport Committee on 26 April 2022 in relation to excess winter mortality and the energy price cap rise from October 2022.

**Maggie Throup:**

While we have no plans to make a specific assessment, the UK Health Security Agency's (UKHSA) Cold Weather Plan for England provides actions for organisations, communities and individuals, including health and care services, to protect against extreme cold. The UKHSA is also working with partners on cold weather public health campaigns, including the 'Stay Well This Winter' campaign and efforts to focus existing schemes to support those facing fuel poverty.

## ■ **NHS: Dental Services**

**Steve McCabe:**

[\[7896\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the proportion of NHS dental practices currently accepting new patients.

**Maria Caulfield:**

No specific estimate has been made. Practices are responsible for regularly updating the NHS.UK profile which informs the public whether new patients are accepted at that location.

**Steve McCabe:**

[\[7897\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to help expand the capacity of NHS dental practices.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The Department and NHS England and NHS Improvement are working with stakeholders, including the British Dental Association (BDA), to improve the National Health Service dental system. This aims to improve patient access, reduce health inequalities and make the NHS a more attractive place to work for dentists. We are currently negotiating with the BDA and further information will be available when



these negotiations have concluded. Between April and June 2022 NHS England and NHS Improvement have asked practices to deliver at least 95% of contracted units of dental activity to safely improve access for patients.

**Luke Pollard:** [9148]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the number of hours worked by NHS dentists in each of the last five years in each region of England.

**Maria Caulfield:**

No specific assessment has been made as data on the number of hours worked by National Health Service dentists is not held centrally.

#### ■ NHS: Disclosure of Information

**Wes Streeting:** [8073]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many non-disclosure agreements have been signed within the NHS in each year since 2014.

**Edward Argar:**

The information requested is not held centrally.

#### ■ NHS: Vacancies

**Beth Winter:** [8203]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish the number of full-time equivalent workforce vacancies in the NHS in each year since 2010.

**Edward Argar:**

National Health Service workforce vacancy statistics are published quarterly at the following link:

<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/nhs-vacancies-survey>

This information includes the NHS Vacancies Survey, which pre-dates the NHS Vacancy Statistics series, which collected data from 2005 to 31 March 2010.

Following the discontinuation of the Survey, data on vacancies between 2010 and 2015 is not held centrally. As the data collected in each survey is based on different methodologies, the data is not comparable.

**Beth Winter:** [8204]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish the number of full-time equivalent workforce vacancies by NHS trust in the most recent reporting period.

**Edward Argar:**

We have no current plans to do so.



**Beth Winter:**

[8205]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish any modelling on the annual reduction of vacancies in full-time equivalent workforce vacancies over each of the next five years.

**Edward Argar:**

The Department has not produced any modelling on the annual reduction of vacancies in each of the next five years.

## ■ **Pregnancy Loss Review**

**Olivia Blake:**

[8234]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the scope of the Pregnancy Loss Review is; and how that review will relate to the Women's Health Strategy.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The Pregnancy Loss Review was commissioned to consider the registration and certification of pregnancy loss occurring before 24 weeks gestation and on the quality of National Health Service care. The Review will make recommendations on improving the care and support women and families receive when experiencing a pre-24 week gestation baby loss. The Review's terms of reference are available at the following link:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/693820/Pregnancy\\_Loss\\_Review\\_ToR\\_gov.uk.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693820/Pregnancy_Loss_Review_ToR_gov.uk.pdf)

The Pregnancy Loss Review will be published in due course. The forthcoming Women's Health Strategy will also consider pregnancy loss.

## ■ **Pregnancy: Thromboembolism**

**Fiona Bruce:**

[7966]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to raise awareness of (a) the potentially fatal clotting conditions that may occur during pregnancy and (b) how early intervention can prevent fatal outcomes.

**Maria Caulfield:**

Midwives discuss venous thromboembolism (VTE) with all women during pregnancy, advising them if they are at increased risk, explaining the signs and symptoms and sources of advice. Women will often be provided with a printed or digital information leaflet and NHS.UK provides accessible advice and guidance, emphasising the urgency if they have any symptoms of a VTE.

Clinicians assess a woman's risk factors for VTE at the first antenatal appointment and following any hospital admission or significant health event during pregnancy. A referral to an obstetrician may be made if risk factors are present. Prophylactic treatment from early pregnancy is recommended by the National Institute for Health

and Care Excellence if the risk of thromboembolism is very high or later in pregnancy if the risk is lower.

## ■ Preventive Medicine

**Luke Pollard:** [\[9142\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to roll out the distribution of PrEP through community pharmacies.

**Luke Pollard:** [\[9144\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he is taking steps to help increase the access to PrEP among (a) gay men, (b) bisexual men, (c) Black African communities, (d) women, (e) migrant communities and (f) other groups.

**Maggie Throup:**

The HIV Action Plan commits to the development of a plan to improve access to pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for groups including gay men, bisexual men, black African communities, women and migrant communities. This plan will consider provision in settings beyond sexual and reproductive health services, such as in community pharmacy. Work on the plan will commence in the autumn and will be informed by evidence such as the research currently being undertaken by the English HIV and Sexual Health Commissioners' Group on potential barriers to the uptake of PrEP in these groups.

## ■ Primodos: Compensation

**Damien Moore:** [\[10005\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to support people who have experienced harm as a result of hormone pregnancy drug Primodos.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency has established The Safer Medicines in Pregnancy and Breastfeeding Consortium of 16 organisations to meet the information needs of women and healthcare professionals, through accessible and consistent advice.

We have established the role of Patient Safety Commissioner to work with regulatory bodies to improve the safety of medicines and medical devices. The forthcoming Women's Health Strategy will also address the health and wellbeing of women in England. A Women's Health Ambassador will lead the programme to deliver outcomes of the Women's Health Strategy, which will be published later this year.

## ■ Protective Clothing: Contracts

**Nick Smith:** [\[8985\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the cost to his Department has been of legal advice given to resolve contractual disputes in regard to personal

protective equipment contracts, in particular the cost of (a) external legal advice and (b) consultants.

**Edward Argar:**

In 2021/22, the costs of external legal advice to support the personal protective equipment (PPE) programme was £2.5 million, which includes advice relating to the resolution of disputed contracts. This excludes the cost of advice provided by the Government Legal Department. The cost of consultants employed in the PPE programme was £15.2 million, including the costs associated with the resolution of disputed contracts.

■ **Respiratory System: Infectious Diseases**

**Daisy Cooper:**

[\[9169\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the role of pharmacies in supporting the surveillance, diagnosis, and timely treatment of respiratory illnesses with overlapping symptoms such as (a) covid-19, (b) influenza and (c) Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) in order to reduce rates of transmission.

**Maria Caulfield:**

No specific assessment has been made. However, community pharmacies provide advice and appropriate treatments for a range of minor illnesses, such as common respiratory viruses. Community pharmacies have also participated in the COVID-19 and flu vaccination programmes. Pharmacists also work with patients to develop personalised asthma action plans and deliver inhaler technique checks for patients prescribed a new inhaler to prevent the exacerbation of the existing condition due to common respiratory illnesses.

■ **Sleep Apnoea: Medical Equipment**

**Olivia Blake:**

[\[8230\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of the NHS's stock of Philips CPAP machines for home treatment of sleep apnoea are (a) with patients as of 24 May 2022 and (b) affected by the worldwide field safety notice in place relating to certain Philips machines.

**Olivia Blake:**

[\[8231\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many and what proportion of the NHS's stock of Phillips CPAP machines affected by the worldwide field safety notice in place relating to certain Philips machines are to be (a) replaced and (b) refurbished in the next 12 months.

**Olivia Blake:**

[\[8232\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many sleep apnoea patients using Phillips CPAP machines that are affected by the worldwide field safety

notice relating to Philips machines are being provided with in line filters to mitigate the potential risks of degraded foam producing carcinogenic particles.

**Olivia Blake:**

[\[8233\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department has taken to accelerate the procurement of new Phillips CPAP machines, for the home treatment of sleep apnoea, in response to the worldwide field safety notice in place relating to certain Philips machines.

**Gillian Keegan:**

The most recent data available from Philips shows that as of 23 May 2022, 7% of the Philips continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) machines for the home treatment of sleep apnoea registered as being in use by National Health Service patients have been replaced with new devices as part of the Philips ongoing remediation programme, with 93% of affected devices still in use. The Philips remediation programme aims to replace or repair all affected Philips CPAP machines affected by the field safety notice and registered as being in use within the next 12 months, with the proportions projected to be 50% replacement and 50% repair.

NHS England and NHS Improvement's clinical respiratory networks will assist with the coordination of the repair and replace programme at regional level with Philips and local providers. The decision to apply filters is subject to clinical review with each patient. Data on the number of filters provided for use with affected Philips CPAP devices is not collected centrally. New Philips CPAP machines for the home treatment of sleep apnoea will be unavailable for purchase in the United Kingdom until Philips has completed the remediation programme. CPAP machines from alternative suppliers have been procured and are being supplied to NHS sleep services.

## ■ Smoking: Reviews

**Wes Streeting:**

[\[6836\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much the Government spent on the Independent review of Smokefree 2030 policies.

**Maggie Throup:**

Expenditure on the Review is approximately £45,000.

**Wes Streeting:**

[\[6837\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many full time equivalent staff from his Department worked on the Independent review of Smokefree 2030 policies.

**Maggie Throup:**

The Department assigned one full-time equivalent Grade 7 to the Review. Other Departmental staff have also supported the Review with policy, evidence and analytical expertise.

**HOME OFFICE****■ Asylum****Stephen Kinnock:****[8016]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum decisions have been made each week since 1 April 2022.

**Stephen Kinnock:****[8017]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, based on full-time equivalency, how many asylum decision makers are currently employed in her Department to process asylum cases.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Home Office are unable to report how many asylum decisions have been made each week since 1 April 2022 as this is not published information.

However, the Home Office publishes data on asylum in the ‘ [Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release](#) ’. Data on outcomes of asylum applications at initial decision can be found in table Asy\_D02 of the ‘ [asylum and resettlement detailed datasets](#) ’. Information on how to use the dataset can be found in the ‘Notes’ page of the workbook. The latest data relate to the year ending March 2022. Data for April 2022 will be published on 25 August 2022. Information on future Home Office statistical release dates can be found in the ‘ [Research and statistics calendar](#) ’.

Asylum Operations currently have c.820 asylum decision makers employed in their department to process asylum cases. However, some are completing their foundation training programme and mentoring period. We anticipate a further increase in the number of decisions per week once their training is complete. Recruitment is continuing to increase the number of Asylum Decision Makers in post to 1,000.

**Olivia Blake:****[9208]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish information on the nationalities of people who have been granted Humanitarian Protection Leave within the last year.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The Home Office publishes data on asylum and resettlement in the ‘ [Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release](#) ’. Data on the number of grants of Humanitarian Protection leave broken down by nationality are published in table Asy\_D02 of the ‘ [asylum and resettlement detailed datasets](#) ’.

Information on how to use the datasets can be found in the ‘Notes’ page of the workbook. The latest data relates to March 2022. Additionally, the Home Office publishes a high-level overview of the data in the ‘ [summary tables](#) ’. The ‘contents’ sheet contains an overview of all available data on asylum and resettlement.

Information on future Home Office statistical release dates can be found in the ‘ [Research and statistics calendar](#) ’.

## ■ Asylum: Applications

**Stephen Kinnock:** [9023]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum applications were processed to the point of either rejection or leave-to-remain granted in the 12 months leading up to 31 March (a) 2019, (b) 2020, (c) 2021 and (d) 2022.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Home Office publishes data on asylum in the '[Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release](#)'. Data on the outcomes of asylum applications at initial decision are published in table Asy\_D02 of the '[asylum and resettlement detailed datasets](#)'. Information on how to use the datasets can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook. The latest data relates to the end of March 2022.

Information on future Home Office statistical release dates can be found in the '[Research and statistics calendar](#)'.

## ■ Asylum: Children

**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:** [8005]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, who is supervising unaccompanied asylum seeking children placed in hotels; and whether that supervision is 24 hours a day.

**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:** [8006]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if there have been paying guests present in any of the hotel sites used to accommodate unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in the last three months.

**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:** [8007]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an estimate of whether the companies who own the hotel sites used to accommodate unaccompanied asylum-seeking children have made a profit from this provision in the last 12 months.

**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:** [8009]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average length of time was that unaccompanied asylum-seeking children spent in hotels after arriving in the UK during the period from 14 July 2021 to 24 May 2022.

**Tom Pursglove:**

UASC being temporarily accommodated in hotels are supported with wrap around care, including from professional care workers, social workers, and nurses. Activity is supported by SACC (Safeguarding Advice and Children's Champion) a Home Office team led by professional advisers who are registered social workers with extensive strategic and frontline experience in safeguarding the vulnerable.

The Home Office have sole occupancy of all of the hotels in which UASC are temporarily accommodated

Accommodation costs are considered to be commercially confidential, therefore the Home Office does not publish this information.

The average length of time that unaccompanied asylum-seeking children spent in hotels after arriving in the UK during the period from 14 July 2021 to 24 May 2022 was 15.5 days. These figures are taken from a live operational database. As such, numbers may change as information on that system is updated.

**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:**

**[8008]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure that age assessments are accurate enough to prevent unaccompanied asylum-seeking children being relocated to Rwanda.

**Tom Pursglove:**

Everyone considered for relocations to Rwanda will be screened and have access to legal advice. Decisions will be taken on a case-by-case basis, and nobody will be removed if it is unsafe or inappropriate for them.

The measures the Government is bringing forward through the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 will address the current weaknesses in the age assessment system and ensure decision making is more robust.

Our reforms aim to make assessments more consistent and robust from the outset, with any disputed decisions resolved quickly and conclusively. We will create a power to enable the Home Secretary to introduce secondary legislation specifying scientific techniques of age assessment, which would widen the breadth of evidence on which to base decisions.

We will also establish a decision-making function in the Home Office, referred to as the National Age Assessment Board (NAAB). The NAAB will primarily consist of expert social workers whose task will be to conduct full age assessments, upon referral from a local authority. Local authorities will also retain the ability to conduct age assessments themselves.

We believe the measures we're planning to introduce will make the system more robust and result in higher quality decisions on people's age.

As part of these measures, in due course, individuals will also have a full right of appeal (including access to legal aid) to the First Tier Tribunal where they have been assessed as an age other than that claimed. This will provide for independent judicial oversight of the process ensuring the highest standards of decision making are adhered to. In the meantime, individuals will still be able to pursue the existing judicial review process.

## ■ Asylum: Employment

**Angela Crawley:**

**[5431]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 18 May 2022 to Question 847, on Asylum: Employment, what steps her Department is taking



to promote employment support to (a) refugees and b) people entering the UK as part of a resettlement scheme.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 27 May 2022]:* Those granted refugee status or humanitarian protection, as well as those arriving under one of the UK's resettlement schemes, have immediate access to the labour market and welfare benefits. If in receipt of Universal Credit, they can receive employment support from the Department for Work and Pensions.

For those arriving through one of the UK's resettlement schemes, the Home Office funds local and regional authorities to provide a package of support. As part of this, authorities are responsible for ensuring that arrivals are provided with a dedicated source of advice and support to assist with registering for mainstream benefits and services, including assistance with access to employment.

For those who were asylum seekers, we provide a further 28 days' support after the grant of refugee status to help with the transition to the mainstream benefits system. This Move-On service includes advice and assistance in relation to applying for Universal Credit and employment support.

■ **Asylum: Finance**

**Dr Rupa Huq:**

[\[4640\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 18 March 2022 to Question 371, what proportion of Section 95 applications are resolved within the target time periods set out in that answer, in the most recent period for which data is available.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 27 May 2022]:* These figures are not available in a reportable format and to provide the information could only be done at disproportionate cost. This is because we only hold operational data and it would need manual analysis and reporting.

■ **Asylum: Northern Ireland**

**Claire Hanna:**

[\[9201\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum seekers who claimed asylum in Northern Ireland in the last 12 months have been moved to another region of the UK while their claim is processed.

**Kevin Foster:**

Accommodation can be provided anywhere in the United Kingdom. The information requested is not routinely captured. To capture numbers would require a manual trawl of data and to do so would incur disproportionate cost.

**■ Asylum: Rwanda**

**Olivia Blake:** [\[10048\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she will publish the terms of reference for the UK-Rwanda partnership's monitoring committee.

**Olivia Blake:** [\[10049\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on what criteria will individuals be chosen to sit on the UK-Rwanda partnership's monitoring committee.

**Olivia Blake:** [\[10050\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether it is her policy to make public minutes of all future meetings of the UK-Rwanda partnership's monitoring committee.

**Tom Pursglove:**

An independent Monitoring Committee will monitor the entire relocation process and compliance with assurances in the Memorandum of Understanding, including the processing of asylum claims and provision of support in Rwanda.

The terms of reference and membership of the Monitoring Committee for the Migration and Economic Development Partnership are in the process of being developed. The Monitoring Committee is due to become operational in the coming months. More details on this will be set out in due course.

Membership of the Monitoring Committee will be decided upon and shared in due course.

**Olivia Blake:** [\[9209\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she will make available information on the contractors the UK government is working with to transport people to Rwanda under the UK Rwanda Economic and Migration partnership.

**Olivia Blake:** [\[9210\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish information on the contractors that will provide accommodation in Rwanda for people transported there as part of the UK Rwanda Migration Economic partnership agreement.

**Tom Pursglove:**

The UK Government will be utilising existing contracts where appropriate for these services. The information related to this is already in the public domain.

Accommodation in Rwanda will be for the Government of Rwanda to procure.

The Home Office will not provide infrastructure directly.

## ■ Aviation: Travel Requirements

**Hywel Williams:**

[\[4493\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has made a recent assessment of the potential merits of introducing greater flexibility on the use of diacritics beyond the guidelines set by the International Civil Aviation Organisation.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 26 May 2022]:* The British passport continues to be issued in line with international standards.

British passports are not currently issued with a name using numbers, symbols or punctuation marks other than hyphens or apostrophes; or any diacritical marks such as accents.

We have no current plans to revisit this issue.

## ■ Catalytic Converters: Theft

**Elliot Colburn:**

[\[8185\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to reduce catalytic converter thefts in (a) Carshalton and Wallington, (b) London and (c) the rest of the UK.

**Elliot Colburn:**

[\[8186\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to reduce (a) theft of a vehicle, (b) theft from a vehicle, (c) trespass on public or private land with a vehicle, (d) alteration of a vehicle with the intent to cause anti-social behaviour and (e) other crimes and anti-social behaviours involving vehicles.

**Tom Pursglove:**

The Government is working closely with police and motor manufacturers through the National Vehicle Crime Working Group, chaired by the National Police Chiefs' Council lead for vehicle crime, to tackle theft of, and from, vehicles, including catalytic converters. The Metropolitan Police Service is represented on the Working Group, and a network of vehicle crime specialists from every force in England and Wales shares information about emerging trends and how to tackle regional issues.

The Home Office funded the set-up of the National Infrastructure Crime Reduction Partnership, which is ensuring the national co-ordination of policing and law enforcement partners to tackle metal and other theft. The partnership shares intelligence to target offenders, and implements crime prevention measures. The British Transport Police, through the NICRP, has conducted three national weeks of actions resulting in 92 arrests, over 2,000 site visits, over 1,000 stolen catalytic converters recovered, and the catalytic converters of over 3,000 vehicles forensically marked. This has helped to promote awareness, with over 1,000 officers trained in enforcement powers to deal with scrap metal dealers, and has seen a significant reduction in catalytic converter thefts. The Metropolitan Police Service have also co-ordinated their own operations to tackle these thefts.

The Government is working with partner agencies to ensure effective use of powers in the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, to tackle all forms of anti-social behaviour including involving vehicles. The statutory guidance was updated last year to ensure a victim-centered approach to tackling ASB. ASB is one of the primary crime and issue types being targeted in the fourth round of the Safer Streets Fund.

### Seema Malhotra:

**[9879]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent steps she has taken to help reduce catalytic converter theft.

### Kit Malthouse:

The Government is working closely with police and motor manufacturers through the National Vehicle Crime Working Group, chaired by the National Police Chiefs' Council lead for vehicle crime, to tackle theft of catalytic converters. All police forces are represented on the Working Group, and a network of vehicle crime specialists from every force in England and Wales shares information about emerging trends and how to tackle regional issues.

The Home Office funded the set-up of the National Infrastructure Crime Reduction Partnership, which is ensuring the national co-ordination of policing and law enforcement partners to tackle metal and other theft. The partnership shares intelligence to target offenders, and implements crime prevention measures. The British Transport Police, through the NICRP, has conducted three national weeks of actions resulting in 92 arrests, over 2,000 site visits, over 1,000 stolen catalytic converters recovered, and the catalytic converters of over 3,000 vehicles forensically marked. This has helped to promote awareness, with over 1,000 officers trained in enforcement powers to deal with scrap metal dealers, and has seen a significant reduction in catalytic converter thefts.

## Coronavirus: Fines

**Fleur Anderson:**

**[8200]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the total number of fines issued for breaches of covid-19 restrictions was in each month in 2020.

**Fleur Anderson:**

**[8201]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what was the total value of fines issued by the police for breaches of the covid-19 regulations in each month of 2020.

### Kit Malthouse:

The data requested on Fixed Penalty Notices issued under the Covid 19 regulations is not held centrally by the Home Office. These figures were collected by police forces and published monthly by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC).

The final tranche of figures relating to coronavirus breaches were published on 16 March 2022 and can be found on the NPCC website at [Update on Coronavirus FPNs issued by forces in England and Wales, and the payment of FPNs \(npcc.police.uk\)](https://www.npcc.police.uk/news/2022/march/16/coronavirus-fines)

These figures include the number of FPN letters issued by ACRO, FPNs paid, FPNs contested and those not complied with, broken down by force area.

## ■ Coronavirus: Fixed Penalties

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

[9112]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which postcode received the highest number of fixed-penalty notices for breaching covid-19 regulations since the beginning of the outbreak.

**Kit Malthouse:**

Data on the number of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued under the COVID-19 regulations by police forces in England and Wales is not held centrally by the Home Office. These figures were collected by police forces and published monthly by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC).

The final tranche of figures relating to coronavirus breaches was published on 16 March 2022 and can be found here on the NPCC website at [Update on Coronavirus FPNs issued by forces in England and Wales, and the payment of FPNs \(npcc.police.uk\)](https://npcc.police.uk/update-on-coronavirus-fpn-issuance)

The data includes the number of FPN letters issued by ACRO, FPNs paid, FPNs contested, and those not complied with, broken down by force area. Further details outside of this data set were not published.

## ■ Cuba: Migration

**Jim Shannon:**

[7992]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department is taking steps to support people who wish to migrate from Cuba to the UK.

**Kevin Foster:**

Following our exit from the European Union we have established a new global points-based immigration system focused on the skills and contributions that people have to offer the UK, not where their passport is from. This means Cuban nationals can apply for a range of our visa routes, including Skilled Worker and Student, provided they meet the relevant criteria for them.

Help and support for those seeking to come to the United Kingdom is available on gov.uk at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-immigration-system-what-you-need-to-know>

## ■ Cybercrime

**Catherine McKinnell:**

[9002]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans the Government has to increase the resources available to the police to investigate online communications offences.

**Kit Malthouse:**

We are recruiting an additional 20,000 police officers by March 2023, the biggest recruitment drive in decades. As at 31 March 2022, 13,576 additional officers have been recruited as part of the Police Uplift Programme in England and Wales, 68% of the 20,000 officer target.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2022, the Government published a total police funding settlement of up to £16.9 billion in 2022/23, an increase of up to £1.1 billion when compared to 2021/22. This includes funding for national priorities, such as tackling serious violence and county lines.

This significant investment shows the Government is committed to supporting the entire policing sector.

It is for Chief Constables and directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), and Mayors with PCC functions to make operational decisions including how to allocate resource based on their local knowledge and experience.

**■ Deportation: China****Catherine West:**[\[9082\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will review deportations to China in light of human rights concerns relating to that country.

**Tom Pursglove:**

All asylum and human rights claims are carefully considered on their individual merits in accordance with our international obligations. Each individual assessment is made against the background of any relevant caselaw and the latest available country information. Our position on the Uyghurs in China is set out in the relevant country policy and information note on the gov.uk website.

Where someone establishes a well-founded fear of persecution or serious harm in their country, they are normally granted protection and are not expected to return there. The Home Office only seeks to return those whose asylum claim have been unsuccessful. By definition, they do not need protection and not at risk on return.

**■ Firearms: Licensing****Rachael Maskell:**[\[9057\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has made a recent assessment of the adequacy of the strictness of legislation on firearms in the UK.

**Rachael Maskell:**[\[9058\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department takes to conduct regular assessments of the suitability of people who own firearms to have a license to own such a weapon.

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[9059]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will increase the age at which someone in the UK can legally own a firearm.

**Kit Malthouse:**

While the UK has some of the toughest firearms legislation in the world, we keep these controls under constant review to ensure they support public safety. In recent years we have taken action on firearms in the Offensive Weapons Act 2019, tightened controls on antique weapons, consulted on further changes to support firearms safety, tightened restrictions on registered firearms dealers, and introduced Statutory Guidance to Chief Officers of Police on firearms licensing. We have no plans though to introduce changes to the age at which someone can own a firearm legally.

Police forces are responsible for issuing firearm and shotgun certificates. A certificate will only be granted after the application has been carefully assessed and a number of checks completed, including medical checks, to ensure that the certificate holder does not pose a risk to themselves or the wider public.

We have taken steps to strengthen these arrangements by issuing Statutory Guidance for the police on firearms licensing, to ensure greater consistency and improved standards across all police forces.

The Statutory Guidance, which came into effect on 1 November 2021, not only sets out the checks that must be undertaken at the time of application, but it also requires the police to maintain continuous assessment of certificate holders. The police have the power to revoke certificates and seize the holder's shotguns or firearms if they assess that there is a risk to public safety. We are keeping the Statutory Guidance under review, and will strengthen it further, if circumstances so require.

## ■ Foreign Influence Registration Scheme

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

**[7935]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the Government plans to bring forward a foreign influence registration scheme as part of the National Security Bill.

**Damian Hinds:**

The Foreign Influence Registration Scheme will be brought forward by Government amendment to the National Security Bill as soon as possible.

## ■ HM Passport Office: Income

**Nick Smith:**

**[8984]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much income has been received by HM Passport Office in the last three months from (a) premium passport and (b) fast-track passport applications.



**Kevin Foster:**

Her Majesty's Passport Office does not hold data on passport income by application or channel type. Full passport income is published annually in the Home Office Annual Report and Accounts. For 2021/22, this is planned for publication prior to the summer recess, and will be laid in the House.

**■ Immigration****Christine Jardine:****[4665]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many (a) applications and (b) appeals for indefinite leave to remain have been awaiting a final decision for longer than six months as of 18 May 2022.

**Christine Jardine:****[4666]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many further leave to remain (a) applications and (b) appeals have been awaiting a final decision for longer than six months.

**Christine Jardine:****[4667]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people who have been waiting longer than six months for a decision on an application for further leave to remain have no recourse to public funds as of 18 May 2022.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 24 May 2022]:* The Home Office does not publish data on the number of applications which have been outstanding for longer than six months awaiting a final decision, nor does it hold data on those who do not have recourse to public funds awaiting a decision. To capture this data would exceed the cost threshold.

The Home Office does publish data of its performance against its service level agreement, which can be found on the GOV.UK webpage: [Migration transparency data - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/migration-transparency-data)

The appeals information requested is not readily available or published. Her Majesty's Court and Tribunal Service manage the appeals system and publish high level timeliness information.

The most recent publication is here: [Tribunal Statistics Quarterly: October to December 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/tribunal-statistics-quarterly)

**■ Immigration: Children****Patrick Grady:****[5422]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many young people under 18 who hold limited leave to remain status are resident in each of the nations of the UK; and what estimate she has made of the number of under 18s holding limited leave to remain who will be resident in each of the nations of the UK in the next 12 months.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 24 May 2022]:* The information requested could not be obtained without disproportionate cost as a manual trawl would have to take place.

## ■ Immigration: EU Nationals

**Kate Green:**

[R] [4572]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what is the average processing time for (a) applications to the EU Settlement Scheme and (b) a family permit under the EU Settlement Scheme in each of the last 12 months.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 27 May 2022]:* Our aim is to process all applications to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) as quickly as possible. Each individual case is considered on its own facts, which means some cases will inevitably take longer than others to conclude. Cases may take longer dependent on the circumstances of the case, for example, if the applicant is facing an impending prosecution or has a criminal record.

The following link lists the expected processing times for EU Settlement Scheme applications, based upon current performance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-application-processing-times/eu-settlement-scheme-pilot-current-expected-processing-times-for-applications>(opens in a new tab)(opens in a new tab)

Our aim is to conclude applications for an EEA family permit or an EUSS family permit as soon as possible after identity and supporting documents are submitted. More information can be found here;

[Visa decision waiting times: applications outside the UK - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/visa-decision-waiting-times)

Decisions are made in accordance with this service standard where possible.

## ■ Immigration: Fees and Charges

**Peter Kyle:**

[8075]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 13 January 2022 to Question 100624 on Immigration: Fees and Charges, when he plans to publish the revised policy on overseas fee waivers.

**Kevin Foster:**

We expect to publish the new guidance by the summer of 2022.

## ■ Internet: Abuse

**Catherine McKinnell:**

[9001]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps the Government has taken to assess whether the current powers available to law enforcement are sufficient to tackle illegal anonymous abuse online; and if she will make a statement.

**Tom Pursglove:**

If an offence is committed law enforcement can request data relating to the use of anonymous social media accounts through the communications data powers available to them under the Investigatory Powers Act 2016.

The Home Office will be reviewing and publishing a report on the operation of the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 which provides the statutory basis for the use of investigatory powers.

**Iran: Espionage and Terrorism****Mr Toby Perkins:**[\[8987\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if her Department will make an assessment of the level of potential risk of Iran facilitating and engaging in acts of terrorism and espionage against Iranian dissidents and activists living in the UK.

**Tom Pursglove:**

We do not routinely comment on intelligence matters or specific threats.

The safety and security of our citizens is the Government's top priority. As we made clear in the 2021 Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy, we are committed to addressing growing threats from Iran, as well as other states. We will continue to use all tools at our disposal to protect the UK and our interests from any Iran-linked threats

**Members: Correspondence****Gareth Thomas:**[\[4456\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what (a) number of enquiries were received in her Department's dedicated inbox for hon. Members and (b) proportion of those were responded to within 20 working days in each of the last three months; and if she will make a statement.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 27 May 2022]:* The Department works to a target of responding to 95% of Hon. Members written correspondence within 20 working days.

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

The Department continues to prioritise enquiries related to Ukraine and recognises it has not been able to meet service standard in other cases. An action plan has been implemented to clear backlogs and drive-up performance.

The Department continues to recruit additional resources and has recently been loaned staff from non-operational areas to assist in clearing the backlogs. A detailed recovery plan to support a return to an acceptable service standard is being prepared.

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

**David Linden:** [8113]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the correspondence of 30 March 2022 from the hon. Member for Glasgow East, reference DL8349.

**Kevin Foster:**

MPAM reference: MPAM/0288738/22 – The Home Office will respond shortly.

**David Linden:** [8115]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the correspondence of (a) 9 February and (b) 17 March 2022 from the hon. Member for Glasgow East, reference DL11291.

**Kevin Foster:**

MPAM reference: MPAM/0264261/22 – The Home Office responded on 25 May 2022.

**David Linden:** [8116]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the correspondence of 23 March 2022 from the hon. Member for Glasgow East, reference DL11393.

**Kevin Foster:**

MPAM reference: MPAM/0271928/22 – I will respond shortly.

**David Linden:** [8122]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the correspondence of 11 February 2022 from the hon. Member for Glasgow East, reference DL10748.

**Kevin Foster:**

MPAM reference: MPAM/0246991/22 – The Home Office responded on 25 May 2022.

**David Linden:** [8123]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the correspondence of 22 February 2022 from the hon. Member for Glasgow East, reference DL11383.

**Kevin Foster:**

MPAM reference: MPAM/0251612/22 – The Home Office responded on 25 May 2022.

**David Linden:**

[\[8132\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the correspondence of (a) 7 April and (b) 5 May 2022 from the hon. Member for Glasgow East, reference DL11296.

**Kevin Foster:**

MPAM reference: MPAM/0301654/22 – The Home Office responded on 25 May 2022.

■ **Migrant Workers: Doctors**

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

[\[9982\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has had discussions with the General Medical Council on the potential implications for her policies of Professional and Linguistic Assessments (a) Board 1 and (b) Board 2 candidates whose exams have been cancelled as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Home Office is not involved in the administration of the General Medical Council's PLAB test in any way.

■ **Migrant Workers: Visas**

**Layla Moran:**

[\[5487\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average time taken for a defined certificate of sponsorship to be approved is; what assessment she has made of backlogs for defined certificate of sponsorship applications; and what steps she is taking to resolve those backlogs.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 24 May 2022]:* The Home Office does not routinely capture data on the processing times for defined certificates of sponsorship.

UK Visas and Immigration has been experiencing an unprecedented high volume of applications, with around 30% referred back to the sponsor to provide further information which also contributes to the time taken to process them.

Significant additional resource has been allocated to the case work team, to progress outstanding cases.

**Layla Moran:**

[\[5488\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average time taken for a skilled worker application linked to a defined certificate of sponsorship to be approved is; what assessment she has made of backlogs for skilled worker applications linked to defined certificate of sponsorship applications; and what steps she is taking to resolve those backlogs.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 24 May 2022]:* Performance and efficiency of visa and sponsor licence processing is continually reviewed to ensure performance is as strong as possible.

Information on our immigration routes with service standards and whether they have been processed against these standards is available as part of our transparency data, at: [Migration transparency data - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/migration-transparency-data)

We are, however, currently flexing resources across all routes to ensure a robust response to the Ukrainian crisis while still processing standard applications within service standard wherever possible. As a result, customers with standard applications in study, work, and family routes may experience some temporary impacts to the processing of their application.

**■ Migrants: Detainees****Dan Carden:****[9127]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the value for money of legal costs incurred by her Department as a result of people who are wrongly held in immigration detention.

**Tom Pursglove:**

Decisions to detain people are not taken lightly and subject to regular reviews to ensure it remains appropriate. We will robustly defend decisions subject to legal challenge, when appropriate to do so and each decision is reviewed on an individual basis, with a decision to defend or concede based on the merits of the individual case.

**■ Migrants: Employment****Sarah Green:****[9230]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many requests submitted to the Employed Checking Service are awaiting response as of 25 May 2022.

**Kit Malthouse:**

Digital status has been an overwhelming success. Millions of customers have used the Home Office's digital services which enable customers to prove their immigration status immediately. Data on the usage of our digital services can be found on the GOV.UK webpage: [Migration transparency data - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/migration-transparency-data).

As part of the continuing transformation of the border and immigration system, we will phase out physical and paper-based products and services and replace them with accessible, easy to use online and digital services. These new services, alongside new technologies, will remove certain scenarios where customers have to rely on the Employer Checking Service to prove their permission to work, helping reduce the need for employers to submit queries in future.

The Home Office is currently recruiting additional staff to reduce the time taken to respond to requests on the Employer Checking Service, information on the number of requests submitted to the Employer Checking Service and awaiting a response as of 25 May 2022 is not publicly available.

## ■ Migrants: Employment and Private Rented Housing

**Kate Green:**

[R] [\[4571\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether an (a) equalities or (b) data impact assessment was undertaken before the introduction of changes to a digital-only portal for (i) right to work and (ii) rent checks relating to immigration status.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 27 May 2022]:* On 12 October 2021, an Equality Impact Assessment was completed in respect of the possible removal of the use of physical biometric cards for use within the Right to Work and Right to Rent Schemes, demonstrating due regard to our obligations under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

Data Protection Impact Assessments for the Home Office online checking services have been updated to reflect the changes.

## ■ Nationality and Borders Act 2022

**Paul Blomfield:**

[\[7969\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department plans to take to consult stakeholders on the development of statutory guidance for the Nationality and Borders Act 2022; and what her timeframe is for holding that consultation.

**Tom Pursglove:**

Any statutory guidance will be developed in line with the usual process, which includes any engagement, as required, with stakeholders over the coming months.

## ■ Naturalisation

**Gareth Thomas:**

[\[4457\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what (a) number of recorded incidents there have been of errors on naturalisation certificates and (b) the average time for a corrected certificate to be issued was in each of the last six months; what steps she is taking to help prevent certificates containing errors being issued in future; and if she will make a statement.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 27 May 2022]:* The Home Office does not publish data in relation to the amendment of details on naturalisation certificates or the time taken for amended certificates to be issued. A request to amend a naturalisation certificate is not counted as a new application and current IT systems do not provide the specific data.



We have robust quality assurance measures in place and are continuously reviewing our processes to ensure we provide a high-quality service to our customers.

■ **Passports: Applications**

**Gareth Thomas:**

**[1079]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many passport applications processed by her Department missed the 10-week processing target since 1 January 2022; and if she will make a statement.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 20 May 2022]:* Since April 2021, people have been advised to allow up to ten weeks when applying for their British passport as more than 5 million people delayed applying due to the pandemic. The vast majority of all passport applications continue to be dealt with well within 10 weeks

HM Passport Office has increased its staffing numbers by 650 since April 2021 and is in the process of recruiting a further 550. This has helped to ensure that passport applications continue to be processed in higher numbers than ever before, with the processing of almost two million applications being completed across March and April 2022.

**Nick Smith:**

**[2447]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of passport applications, where no additional information was needed to be requested from the applicant after receipt, were processed within 10 working days in each month in each of the last 12 months.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 23 May 2022]:* 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, which include the recruitment of 650 additional staff since April 2021 and with plans in place to recruit a further 550 by this summer, have ensured that passport applications can be processed in higher numbers than ever before. This was demonstrated in March and April 2022 when HM Passport Office achieved record outputs by completing the processing of two million applications.

Since April 2021, HM Passport Office has been advising people to allow up to 10 weeks when applying for their passport from the UK. However, Her Majesty's Passport Office will always endeavor to process applications as quickly as possible, and in the simplest of cases requiring fewer manual interventions these may be processed much more quickly.

**Sir Greg Knight:**

**[7916]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to help ensure HM Passport Office is effectively tackling the current administrative delays that are impacting the time taken to process (a) new and (b) renewal passport applications.

**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, which include the recruitment of 650 additional staff since April 2021 and with plans in place to recruit a further 550 by this summer, have ensured that passport applications can be processed in higher numbers than ever before. This was demonstrated in March and April 2022 when HM Passport Office achieved record outputs by completing the processing of 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.

**Mr Gregory Campbell:**[\[7920\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to reduce waiting times for passport applications.

**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, which include the recruitment of 650 additional staff since April 2021 and with plans in place to recruit a further 550 by this summer, have ensured passport applications can be processed in higher numbers than ever before. This was demonstrated in March and April 2022 when HM Passport Office achieved a record monthly high by completing 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 people receive their passports in good time.

**Mr Gregory Campbell:**[\[7921\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many passport applications remained pending two months after they were initially submitted in (a) January 2022 and (b) April 2022.

**Kevin Foster:**

A British passport cannot be issued until all checks are satisfactorily completed. If further information is required to enable an application to be progressed, then it will take longer.

Approximately 250,000 passport applications are being processed each week.

**Stephen Kinnock:**[\[8014\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many discussions Ministers in her Department had with the senior management of TNT in (a) 2020, (b) 2021 and (c)

2022 on plans for responding to the increase in passport renewal applications that was likely to result from the re-opening of the travel industry once covid-19 lockdowns ended.

**Kevin Foster:**

Senior Officials regularly meet with senior management of TNT and provide Ministerial feedback regarding supplier performance as part of their regular engagement.

**Nick Smith:**

[\[8983\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the size of the backlog of passport applications was within HM Passport Office for each of the four-week periods where data has been reported since 1 January 2022.

**Kevin Foster:**

Since April 2021, people have been advised to allow up to ten weeks when applying for their British passport as more than 5 million people delayed applying due to the pandemic. The vast majority of all passport applications continue to be dealt with well within 10 weeks.

Her Majesty's Passport Office carries work in progress across the year as part of normal operational planning, and approximately 250,000 passport applications are being processed each week.

**Louise Haigh:**

[\[9064\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what is the longest amount of time it has taken for the Passport Office to process a passport application in the last three years.

**Kevin Foster:**

A British passport cannot be issued until all checks are satisfactorily completed. These checks include those intended to protect the passport system against fraud and misrepresentation.

If further information is required to enable an application to be progressed in light of these checks, then it will take longer to conclude as a British Passport will not be issued until HM Passport Office is satisfied of the applicant's identity and that they are entitled to hold one.

**Louise Haigh:**

[\[9065\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many passport applications have been received by the Passport Office but have not been processed for a period of longer than six weeks as of 25 May 2022.

**Kevin Foster:**

Since April 2021, people have been advised to allow up to ten weeks when applying for their British passport as more than 5 million people delayed applying due to the pandemic. The vast majority of all passport applications continue to be dealt with well within 10 weeks

HM Passport Office has increased its staffing numbers by 650 since April 2021 and is in the process of recruiting a further 550. This has helped to ensure passport applications continue to be processed in higher numbers than ever before, with the processing of almost two million applications being completed across March and April 2022.

**Louise Haigh:**

**[9066]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of passport applications received by the Passport Office have been processed by the Passport Office in under six weeks in the last twelve months.

**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, which include the recruitment of 650 additional staff since April 2021 and with plans in place to recruit a further 550 by this summer, have ensured that passport applications can be processed in higher numbers than ever before. This was demonstrated in March and April 2022 when HM Passport Office achieved record outputs by completing the processing of two million applications.

Since April 2021, HM Passport Office has been advising people to allow up to 10 weeks when applying for their passport from the UK. However, Her Majesty's Passport Office will always endeavour to process applications as quickly as possible, and in the simplest of cases that require fewer manual interventions these may be processed much more quickly.

**Louise Haigh:**

**[9067]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many passport applications are currently being processed by the Passport Office.

**Kevin Foster:**

Approximately 250,000 passport applications are being processed each week.

## ■ **Police: Protest**

**Sir John Hayes:**

**[7901]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the financial impact on police forces of lock-on protests.

**Tom Pursglove:**

Lock-ons can take a long time to remove, drawing police resources away from local communities. Millions of pounds of taxpayers' money is spent policing protests where this tactic is used. The lock-on offence and the associated stop and search power will allow the police to pro-actively tackle protesters who plan to lock-on.

The Public Order Bill's Impact Assessment can be found here: [Impact Assessment - Public Order Bill - 17May22.PDF \(parliament.uk\)](#)

## ■ Refugees: Afghanistan

**Jessica Morden:**

**[3527]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people have arrived in the UK under the (a) Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy Scheme and (b) Afghan Resettlement Scheme as of 17 May; and how many people are currently in bridging hotels.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 25 May 2022]:* The UK Government undertook the biggest and fastest emergency evacuation in recent history. Over 15,000 people were supported to come to the UK directly following the evacuation of Afghanistan, and a further 3,000 have since arrived.

Due to the scale and pace of the evacuation we have had to use hotels as a temporary measure. There are currently over 12,000 individuals from Afghanistan in bridging hotels. This cohort is made up of British and Afghan Nationals who may be eligible for Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) or Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS).

We do not want to keep people in temporary accommodation for any longer than is necessary. We have moved – or are in the process of moving - over 6,000 people into homes since June 2021. There is a huge effort underway to support the families into permanent homes so they can settle and rebuild their lives, and to ensure those still temporarily accommodated in hotels are given the best start to their life in the UK.

## ■ Rwanda: Asylum

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

**[9967]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answers of 16 May 2022 to Questions 395 and 398, whether any funding (a) for the Migration and Economic Development Partnership and (b) to support the delivery of asylum operations, accommodation, and integration in Rwanda will come from the 0.5 per cent GNI Official Development Assistance budget; what set amount of funding for processing costs has been agreed with the government of Rwanda; what the initial £120 million investment into the economic development and growth of Rwanda will fund; over what period will that investment be made; and when further investments in Rwanda could be made as part of that agreement.

**Tom Pursglove:**

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

The UK is providing substantial investment to boost the development of Rwanda, including jobs, skills and opportunities to benefit both migrants and host communities. This includes an initial investment of £120m as part of a new Economic Transformation and Integration Fund. Rwanda will be responsible for allocating this

funding to achieve its development goals, including creating jobs, improving livelihoods, increasing productivity, boosting trade and ensuring long-term sustainable development.

The UK is funding the processing costs for each individual who is relocated to Rwanda. Every person's needs are different, but we anticipate the amount would be comparable to processing costs incurred in the UK. Funding is only provided while a person remains in Rwanda.

As this is a long-term partnership over five years, payments will depend on the outcomes delivered including the number of people relocated.

### ■ Safer Streets Fund

**Alex Norris:**

[\[8133\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much her Department has spent on (a) communications, (b) advertising and (c) marketing for the Safer Streets Fund.

**Tom Pursglove:**

The Safer Streets Fund is promoted through meetings and correspondence with the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, the National Police Chiefs' Council, the Local Government Association, the Welsh Government and civil society organisations.

The criteria for the Fund is published on Gov.uk, as are announcements setting out which areas have been successful in receiving funding. No specific, central Government funds are spent on marketing or advertising, though many local projects who are awarded funding undertake engagement and communications activity to promote their crime prevention activities.

### ■ Seasonal Workers: Northern Ireland

**Stephen Farry:**

[\[3776\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many seasonal worker visas were issued to Ukrainian nationals registered to work for an employer located in Northern Ireland in 2021.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 25 May 2022]:* The Home Office is not able to supply data on this as sponsors who are permitted to recruit workers under the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Schemes (SAWS) operate throughout the United Kingdom. They may place staff at various locations UK-wide and move them as the work requires during the season.

**Stephen Farry:**

[\[3777\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which licenced sponsors under the T5 Temporary Worker Seasonal Worker immigration route are operating in Northern Ireland.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 25 May 2022]:* Home Office Migration Statistics do not routinely publish information on sponsors other than issuing the register of sponsors.

Those companies currently licensed to operate the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS) pilot can be found here:

[Seasonal Workers Pilot request for information - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/seasonal-workers-pilot-request-for-information)

The Seasonal Agricultural Workers Schemes (SAWS) operate throughout the United Kingdom and may place staff at various locations UK-wide moving them as the work requires during the season.

**■ Seasonal Workers: Ukraine****Paul Blomfield:****[7968]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department plans to take to provide evidence to Ukrainian nationals that their Seasonal Worker visa has been extended to 31 December 2022.

**Kevin Foster:**

Ukrainian nationals in this position will be provided with a biometric residency permit which will display details of their extended right to be in the UK under this scheme.

**■ UK Visas and Immigration: Telephone Services****Chris Bryant:****[4511]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will take steps to increase staffing levels on the dedicated advice line for hon. Members at UK Visas and Immigration in the context of widespread delays experienced by customers.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 24 May 2022]:* We have seen significant increase in call volumes to the MP enquiry line in recent weeks linked to the situation in Ukraine and to passport applications.

As a result of this we have worked to increase staffing across the MP enquiry line, but more specifically on the HMPO and Ukraine options. We expect to have up to 25 dedicated HMPO and up to 20 dedicated Ukraine call handlers available to take calls.

MP's can also contact the Home Office via the MP's Urgent Enquiries inbox or in person at the Portcullis House walk-in hub.

**■ Visas****Stephen Kinnock:****[8015]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to publish the report of her Department's review into tier 1 (investor) visas.



**Kevin Foster:**

The review of visas issued under the Tier 1 (Investor) route between 2008 and 2015 is being finalised and we will publish it in the near future.

**■ Visas: Afghanistan****Seema Malhotra:****[9880]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her Department's policy is on whether people from Afghanistan, whose spouses are British nationals and live in the UK, are subject to English language tests when applying for visas; and where those tests are completed.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Government believes those seeking to enter and make a permanent home in the UK should be equipped to integrate successfully in UK society, with an appropriate level of English and an understanding of British life.

However, under the current Rules an applicant can be exempted from the English language requirement to enter the UK if a decision maker considers there are exceptional circumstances preventing the applicant from meeting the requirement.

The applicant must demonstrate, as a result of exceptional circumstances, they are unable to learn English before coming to the UK or it is not practicable or reasonable for them to travel to another country to take an approved English language test.

Each application for an exemption on the basis of exceptional circumstances will be considered on its merits on a case-by-case basis.

**■ Visas: Applications****Adam Afriyie:****[3539]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to resolve delays to processing of (a) visa applications for highly skilled workers and (b) visa sponsor licences.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 25 May 2022]:* Performance and efficiency of visa and sponsor licence processing is continually reviewed to ensure performance is as strong as possible.

Information on our immigration routes with service standards and whether they have been processed against these standards is available as part of our transparency data, at: [Migration transparency data - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/migration-transparency-data)

We are, however, currently flexing resources across all routes to ensure a robust response to the Ukrainian crisis while still processing standard applications and sponsor licences within service standard wherever possible. As a result, customers with standard applications in study, work, and family routes may experience some temporary impacts to the processing of their application.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

**[8111]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent steps she has taken to ensure that visa applicants receive responses from her Department within an appropriate timeframe.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Home Office is currently prioritising Ukraine Visa Schemes applications in response to the humanitarian crisis caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. We are communicating directly with customers that applications for study, work and family visas are taking longer to process at this time. Staff are being redeployed to these visa routes. We also continue to onboard and train more staff, as we approach the expected summer surge in visa applications including to study in the UK.

Where there are extremely compassionate or compelling circumstances (for example, a medical emergency), the Home Office will consider expediting specific cases. However, the bar for this is high and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

■ **Visas: Russia**

**Catherine West:**

**[3691]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the war in Ukraine is having an impact on the (a) eligibility of Russian nationals for skilled worker visas and (b) availability of such visas for Russian nationals.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 25 May 2022]:* The Skilled Worker Visa is open to all nationals, subject to immigration and criminality checks.

■ **Visas: Ukraine**

**Daisy Cooper:**

**[2653]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department plans to provide data to the Hertfordshire Strategic Migration Steering Group on arrivals to Hertfordshire through the Ukraine Family Visa Scheme.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 24 May 2022]:* The Ukraine Family Scheme is for Ukrainian nationals who have family members in the UK and wish to join them here. Whilst there is an expectation customers will be looked after by their family sponsor, there is no requirement in the scheme for the sponsor to accommodate and support their family member once in the UK.

The Home Office does not collect data on where Ukraine nationals will be living, therefore it cannot provide specific data on arrivals under the Ukraine Family Scheme to Hertfordshire.

**Stuart C McDonald:**

[9027]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will include Ukraine Extension Scheme visa-holders in the scope of the Ukraine Family Scheme.

**Kevin Foster:**

Ukraine Extension Scheme visa holders can already qualify for the Ukraine Family Scheme providing they meet the relevant criteria.

Nationals of Ukraine coming to the UK under the Ukraine Family Scheme will be given access to work, benefits and public services as laid down in the Immigration Rules Appendix Ukraine, details of which can be found at:

[Immigration Rules Appendix Ukraine Scheme - Immigration Rules - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules/immigration-rules-appendix-ukraine-scheme)

Successful applicants will not be given leave beyond the three years already granted to them under the Ukraine Extension Scheme.

## ■ Windrush Compensation Scheme

**Kate Osamor:**

[4643]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people who sought a tier one review through the Windrush Compensation Scheme received an increased offer of compensation in each month during the period from April 2019 to May 2022.

**Kate Osamor:**

[4644]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people who sought a tier two review through the Windrush Compensation Scheme received an increased offer of compensation in each month during the period from April 2019 to May 2022.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 27 May 2022]:* The Home Office publishes Windrush Compensation Scheme Data monthly, including for Tier one and Tier two reviews. Published data is available to the end of March 2022, <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/migration-transparency-data#windrush-compensation-scheme>. Windrush Compensation Scheme data: March 2022 refers. The data covering the period ended 14 April 2022 and 12 May 2022 has not yet been published.

The Home Office has no published data with regards to how many of those received increases. The information is not readily available in a reportable format nor held centrally and could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost.

**INTERNATIONAL TRADE**■ **Arms Trade: Turkey**

**Tim Loughton:** [\[8939\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, on what basis she made the decision to lift restrictions on arms sales to Turkey; and if she will make a statement.

**Mr Ranil Jayawardena:**

HM Government is satisfied that decisions on licence applications to Turkey can be taken, by following a careful assessment against the Strategic Export Licensing Criteria on a case-by-case basis.

The Criteria provide a thorough risk assessment framework and take into account a full range of factors such as our international obligations, including the Arms Trade Treaty.

These are not decisions we take lightly. We will not issue any export licences where to do so would be inconsistent with the Criteria.

■ **Newcastle United Football Club: Takeovers**

**Chi Onwurah:** [\[9877\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to the Answer of 10 April 2021 to Question 181471 on Football: Takeovers, whether the Government was involved in discussions on the sale of Newcastle United football club; and whether Lord Grimstone, Minister for Investment, had discussions with the Premier League during that takeover process.

**Mike Freer:**

I have been asked to reply on behalf of HM Government.

The Government was not involved in commercial discussions on the sale of Newcastle United Football Club. The takeover has always been a commercial matter for the parties concerned.

It is part of my noble Friend the Minister of State for Investment's responsibilities to monitor significant prospective investments into the UK. As part of this process, my noble Friend kept in touch with both parties involved in the potential acquisition of Newcastle United Football Club. At no point did my noble Friend attempt to influence the Premier League to approve the takeover.

■ **Trade Promotion: Uruguay**

**Angus Brendan MacNeil:** [\[7941\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether her Department plans to appoint a trade envoy to Uruguay.

**Mike Freer:**

We are constantly reviewing suitable markets to identify where the appointment of a Trade Envoy can be of greatest benefit to the Government's trade and investment objectives.

There are no plans at present to add Uruguay to the Prime Minister's Trade Envoy Programme.

**JUSTICE****■ Community Orders: Unpaid Work****Steve Reed:****[9017]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he has made of the number of hours of unpaid work completed at home as part of community sentences in the last three years for which data is available.

**Kit Malthouse:**

As a requirement usually delivered in groups, Unpaid Work was unavoidably impacted by the pandemic. Independent working projects, which allow some eligible offenders to complete some of their Unpaid Work hours from home were introduced at the start of the pandemic as a Covid-19 recovery measure. Independent working projects were not in use prior to April 2020.

Independent working projects are currently only being deployed in a limited and targeted way to support our recovery from COVID-19. We will be conducting a review of independent working projects in the summer with a view to phase out their use completely by September.

Projects have included a range of robust and practical tasks such as producing hats and scarves for Ukrainian refugees and making face masks and PPE for Care Homes and charities during the pandemic. Innovative schemes such as these help support charitable causes and ensure those who break the law are punished. Safeguards are in place to ensure that offenders complete the project to a high standard within a set time period.

In 2020–21 a total of 1,356,393 hours of Unpaid Work were delivered across England and Wales. Independent working projects accounted for 4.4%, amounting to 59,314 hours.

In 2021–22 a total of 3,573,421 hours of Unpaid Work were delivered across England and Wales. Independent working projects accounted for 7.7 %, amounting to 274,324 hours.

This data was sourced from the Probation Case Management System, nDelius. While reasonable efforts have been taken to ensure the accuracy of this data, the inaccuracy inherent in any large-scale administrative data source means data should not be assumed to be accurate to the last unit presented.

**■ Crimes against the Person: Convictions**

**Steve Reed:** [8001]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will publish figures on the number of convictions for violence against the person offences in (a) Crown and (b) Magistrates Courts in England and Wales, by (a) individual court and (b) region for each of the last five years for which figures are available.

**Steve Reed:** [8002]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prosecutions for violence against the person offences there were in each police force area in England and Wales in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

**Steve Reed:** [8003]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will publish figures on the number of prosecutions for robbery offences in each police force area in England and Wales in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

**Steve Reed:** [9020]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will publish figures for the number of convictions for theft offences in (a) Crown and (b) Magistrates Courts in England and Wales, by (i) individual court and (ii) region for each of the last five years for which figures are available.

**Steve Reed:** [9885]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many convictions for robbery offences there have been in (a) Crown and (b) Magistrates' Courts in England and Wales by (i) individual court and (ii) region for each of the last five years for which figures are available.

**Steve Reed:** [9886]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prosecutions for theft offences there have been in each police force area in England and Wales in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

**James Cartlidge:**

Court outcomes data is not held at individual magistrates' court level. Identifying individual courts separately would require a manual search of court records, which would be at disproportionate costs.

The Ministry of Justice has published information on prosecutions and convictions by offence group, offence type and individual offence by police force area, in England and Wales, up to December 2021, available in the '[Outcomes by Offence' data tool](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1076459/outcomes-by-offence-tool-2021-v2.xlsx), available below:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1076459/outcomes-by-offence-tool-2021-v2.xlsx](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1076459/outcomes-by-offence-tool-2021-v2.xlsx).

The Ministry of Justice has published information on prosecutions and convictions by offence group by police force area, at magistrates' courts and Crown Court in England and Wales, up to December 2021 available in the 'Magistrates' Court' and 'Crown Court' data tools, available:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1076465/magistrates-court-tool-2021.xlsx](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1076465/magistrates-court-tool-2021.xlsx).

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1076467/crown-court-tool-2021.xlsx](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1076467/crown-court-tool-2021.xlsx).

## ■ Criminal Liability

**Alex Cunningham:**

**[8995]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether his Department plans to undertake an audit of the use of parasitic accessory liability in convictions secured before 2016 to assess the (a) scope and (b) consequences of its application during the period the Supreme Court decided the law had been misapplied.

**James Cartlidge:**

The Government has no current plans to conduct an audit of the presence of parasitic accessory liability in joint enterprise convictions secured before 2016.

The Ministry of Justice Court Proceedings database holds information on people who have been proceeded against, found guilty and sentenced for specific criminal offences in England and Wales (i.e. murder, manslaughter, etc). This centrally held information does not include information on whether a defendant proceeded against or found guilty of an offence was party to a joint enterprise that involved parasitic accessory liability.

Similarly, data on individual appeals against convictions where parasitic accessory liability may have been a factor is not held centrally.

## ■ Fraud: Remand in Custody

**Steve Reed:**

**[9019]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will publish figures on the (a) number of offenders who were held on remand awaiting trial for fraud and (b) length of time those offenders were held on remand for, in each prison in England and Wales in each of the last five years.

**James Cartlidge:**

The number of prisoners who were held on untried remand for alleged fraud and the length of time those prisoners were held on remand, in each prison in England and Wales, as at 30 June in each of the last five years, is shown in the attached tables.

The Bail Act 1976 provides a presumption in favour of bail, which recognises that a person should not be deprived of their liberty unless necessary for the protection of the public or the delivery of justice.



It is the courts that decide on a case-by-case basis whether a defendant presents such a bail risk as to warrant custody. Bail can only be refused where there is justification, as prescribed in Schedule 1 to the Bail Act, such as substantial grounds for believing that the defendant, would abscond, commit further offences, interfere with witnesses or otherwise obstruct the course of justice.

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

**Attachments:**

1. [9019 table \[2022-06-06 9019 table.xlsx\]](#)

■ **HM Courts and Tribunals Service: Security Guards**

**Liz Saville Roberts:**

**[9939]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether his Department's contract with OCS to provide security staff on the HMCTS estate contains provisions relating to staff pay.

**James Cartlidge:**

Our contract sets out the certain provisions relating OCS staff pay. The relevant provisions are available on contracts finder by following the link:

<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/2bea0732-afb6-4948-a502-bb1594c396c9>.

■ **Homicide: Convictions**

**Alex Cunningham:**

**[8996]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many defendants have (a) been convicted of homicide in multi-defendant trials of four or more people and (b) convicted of homicide in each year since 2005, broken down by ethnicity; and if he will make a statement.

**James Cartlidge:**

The Ministry of Justice collates information centrally on a defendant level basis. This data does not identify all multi-defendant trials – for example, it does not capture data on those defendants who may be tried and convicted separately or at a later date from others who were party to the same offence.

To ascertain the number of Crown Court cases with multiple defendants that result in a homicide conviction broken down by ethnicity since 2005 could only be achieved at disproportionate costs.

The Ministry of Justice has published information on convictions for homicide, up to 31 December 2021, and this can be found in the principle offence proceedings and 'Outcomes by Offence' data tool, available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-justice-system-statistics-quarterly-december-2021>.

In the "Outcomes by Offences" document, select the 'Prosecutions and Convictions' page.

For homicide offence, select the following offences in the *Offence* filter:

- 1 Murder
- 4.1 Manslaughter
- 4.2 Infanticide
- 4.10 Applicable organisation causing death by gross breach of duty of care

The number of convictions for homicide for each year can be found in the 'Convicted' row (row 25). To view data on ethnicity, drag the *Ethnicity* filter, from the filters area (in the pivot table field list), and move to the rows area.

Publications from previous years are available on GOV.UK

#### ■ Probation Service: Agency Workers

**Liz Saville Roberts:** [\[9941\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many agency staff are currently working in the Probation Service by region.

**Liz Saville Roberts:** [\[9942\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of agency staff working in the Probation Service, broken down by region.

**Liz Saville Roberts:** [\[9943\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many Probation Service staff, who retired in the past 12 months, are currently employed as agency staff in the service; and what recent estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of these staff.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The cost of agency staff for the month of April 2022, by probation region, is set out in the following table:

REGION	TOTAL SPEND £
East Midlands	60,959
East of England	164,061
Greater Manchester	51,305
Kent, Surrey and Sussex	139,953
London	367,628

REGION	TOTAL SPEND £
North East	39,419
North West	55,299
South Central	70,315
South West	46,626
Wales	14,523
West Midlands	116,020
Yorkshire and the Humber	52,778

The overall Spending Review settlement continues investment in probation services and provides significant wider investment in new initiatives to reduce reoffending and beat crime. The funding secured for the next 3 years of the spending review (April 22 – March 25) has seen an additional £155m made permanent in the baseline.

The Probation Service recruited a total of 1,007 trainees in 2020/21; we committed to recruiting a further 1,500 trainee probation officers in 2021/2022 and we met this target, recruiting 1,518 in total. The Probation Service will also recruit a further 1,500 trainee probation officers in 2022/23. In addition, we are recruiting around 500 additional unpaid work supervisors, Probation Service Officers (PSOs) and case administrators.

The number of agency staff employed changes from day to day: it would not be possible to collate regional or national totals without incurring disproportionate cost.

We do not hold information on the number of retired staff working as agency staff. This is considered to be the personal information of these agency staff and is therefore not requested.

#### ■ Probation Service: Vacancies

**Liz Saville Roberts:**

**[9940]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many vacancies there are in the Probation Service, by region, as of 26 May 2022.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The difference between required staffing and staff in post in the Probation Service, by region, as of 31<sup>st</sup> March is:

	DIFFERENCE
East Midlands Probation Service	-97
East of England Probation Service	-129

	DIFFERENCE
Greater Manchester Probation Service	-41
Kent, Surrey and Sussex Probation Service	-230
London Probation Service	-283
North East Probation Service	55
North West Probation Service	-31
South Central Probation Service	-118
South West Probation Service	-137
Wales Probation Service	33
West Midlands Probation Service	-6
Yorkshire and the Humber Probation Service	-123
<b>Probation Service Total</b>	<b>-1,106</b>

The overall Spending Review settlement continues investment in probation services and provides significant wider investment in new initiatives to reduce reoffending and beat crime. The funding secured for the next 3 years of the spending review (April 22 – March 25) has seen an additional £155m made permanent in the baseline.

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Source: HMPPS Single Operating Platform, Required Staffing database and Workforce planning returns.

Note: Difference is a proxy for vacancies. Negative figures indicate staff in post is less than required staff level

## ■ Rape: Reoffenders

**Steve Reed:**

**[9889]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he has made of the number of subsequent offences committed by defendants on bail while awaiting trial for rape in each police force area in each year since 2017.

**James Cartlidge:**

This data requires linking Police National Computer data with courts data as well as a manual search, and would therefore be of disproportionate costs.

■ **Reading Prison: Sales****Matt Rodda:**[\[9992\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent progress his Department has made on the sale of Reading Gaol; and if he will meet (a) the hon. Member for Reading East and (b) other stakeholders to discuss that matter.

**Matt Rodda:**[\[9993\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, which developer his Department is in discussion with about plans to sell Reading Gaol; and if he will meet (a) Reading Borough Council and (b) the hon. Member for Reading East to discuss the status of those discussions.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The MoJ is considering potential uses for the former HMP Reading. We are in the process of setting up a meeting with the hon members for Reading and others to discuss this.

■ **Reoffenders****Steve Reed:**[\[8000\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will publish figures on the number of subsequent offences committed by each offender imprisoned and subsequently released on license from prison in each of the last six years by offence type.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The answer can only be provided at disproportionate cost as it would require data matching across separate systems.

■ **Terrorism****Stephen Timms:**[\[9834\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether the Government collects evidence on abuse of the civil damages system by people involved in terrorism-related activity; and if he will make a statement.

**James Cartlidge:**

The Government estimates fewer than 50 claims have been brought in the last ten years which would be likely to generate an application made under the reforms proposed in the National Security Bill currently before Parliament to reduce, freeze or forfeit civil damages to claimants involved in terrorism.

We are legislating to reduce the risk that large sums of money will be paid out in awards of damages to claimants where there is a real risk of their using it to support acts of terror.

## ■ Youth Custody

**Steve Reed:**

**[8004]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department is taking in response to the finding in the National Audit Office's report, *Children in custody: secure training centres and secure schools*, published on 28 April 2022, that unsuitable provision alongside a cohort of more serious offenders has led to decline in children's safety and outcomes.

**Victoria Atkins:**

We are reforming and evolving the youth estate through the development of the first Secure School as a pilot for a future model of youth custody. We acknowledge that performance of parts of the youth estate has not been good enough in recent years but we are committed to taking appropriate action to address those issues and drive up standards wherever necessary. Some areas of the current estate deliver good services.

**Steve Reed:**

**[9018]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to page 29 of the National Audit Office's report entitled *Children in custody: secure training centres and secure schools*, published on 28 April 2022, whether it remains the case that children are being transferred to Young Offender Institutions who would have previously been considered too vulnerable.

**Victoria Atkins:**

All children, whether vulnerable or not, are placed first and foremost on the basis of their needs. Within the Young Offender Institution (YOI) sector of the Youth Secure Estate, the Keppel Unit at Wetherby YOI, and the Enhanced Support Units and Teams at Wetherby and Feltham YOIs have all been specifically developed to meet the needs of the most vulnerable and complex children placed in YOIs.

We are committed to providing children with suitable and safe accommodation. We acknowledge that performance of parts of the youth estate has not been good enough in recent years and are committed to taking appropriate action to address those issues and drive up standards wherever necessary.

## ■ Youth Justice: Finance

**Anna McMorrin:**

**[9109]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the £300m of Government funding announced for youth justice on 20th May 2022, if she will publish a breakdown of how much of that funding will be spent on each priority outlined.

**Victoria Atkins:**

This Government has committed to invest at least £300m over the next three years to bolster our existing work to address youth crime across the country, with a particular focus on early intervention and prevention. It is important that funding is distributed to

ensure both maximum impact in tackling youth offending and value for money for the taxpayer.

My officials and those in the Youth Justice Board will inform Youth Offending Teams across England and Wales of their 2022/23 allocation, from this overall funding, as soon as possible.

## LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

### ■ Affordable Housing: Key Workers

**Mike Amesbury:**

**[8138]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if his Department will take steps to build affordable homes to ensure that keyworkers are able to afford homes in their communities.

**Stuart Andrew:**

This Government is determined to make home ownership a reality for hard-working people who are currently priced out of their local area. First Homes are homes which are sold to first-time buyers with a discount of at least 30% from full market value.

Crucially, the discount will be passed on to all future purchasers in perpetuity, so these homes will keep helping first-time buyers onto the property ladder for generations to come. Beyond the national criteria, local authorities will be able to set local connection and/or key worker criteria for First Homes in their area, based on the needs of their local community.

Alongside support for key workers purchasing First Homes, we are committed to increasing the overall supply of affordable homes. Our £11.5 billion Affordable Homes Programme will deliver up to 180,000 affordable homes, should economic conditions allow. Approximately half of the homes delivered will be for affordable home ownership, supporting aspiring homeowners to take their first step on to the housing ladder.

The Government is committed to increase first-time buyer numbers in all regions, and will do so by looking at all of the factors that influence ownership levels, including housing supply and the availability of low deposit mortgages. We will also explore further options to limit the competition first-time buyers face. This means looking at all of the options available to government to limit the factors which are pricing out local people, seeking to learn from international comparators. In addition to First Homes, this Government runs a range of schemes to help people into home ownership such as the mortgage guarantee scheme, Help to Buy: Equity Loan, Shared Ownership and Lifetime ISA.



## ■ Building Safety Regulator

**Sarah Olney:**

[\[9087\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if the Department will set out how it intends to scale-up resource within the Health and Safety Executive in order for the Building Safety Regulator to have the capacity required to carry out its duties in line with the Building Safety Act 2022.

**Stuart Andrew:**

The Building Safety Regulator was established in shadow form in the Health and Safety Executive in January 2020, to assist the Government to develop the reforms that resulted in the Building Safety Act 2022, and to prepare itself, and the sector, for the new regulatory regime. We are providing the funding necessary for the Health and Safety Executive to scale up its resource to carry out its duties. Health and Safety Executive spent over £17 million additional funding on shadow Building Safety Regulator work in 2021/22.

## ■ Buildings: Fire Prevention

**Thangam Debbonaire:**

[\[4606\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether he plans to take steps to ensure that building developers, which have not signed the building safety repairs pledge, rectify fire safety defects in buildings they have developed.

**Stuart Andrew:**

The Secretary of State has made it clear that developers must take responsibility for buildings with which they are associated. As of 23 May, 45 of the largest developers have signed a pledge to undertake all necessary life-critical fire safety work on 11m+ buildings they had a role in developing or refurbishing over the past thirty years. Those pledges are being converted into legally binding contractual commitments, and the Department intends to establish a statutory Responsible Actors Scheme to make sure that industry actors are doing the right thing. The Department is now reaching out to further industry actors who were not involved in initial negotiations, and inviting them to make similarly binding commitments.

We have made clear that we will not hesitate to use our recovery unit and new powers in the Building Safety Act to go after companies and executives who fail to do the right thing.

We have also committed to using a building safety levy on the industry to raise a further £3 billion to pay for remediating cladding on 11m+ buildings where a developer cannot be identified or held responsible.

## ■ Buildings: Insulation

**Tulip Siddiq:**

[\[8092\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether his Department is taking steps to help ensure that property developers are not able to avoid

responsibility for cladding and other remedial costs by (a) liquidating, (b) declaring bankruptcy and (c) repurchasing the freehold under a new company.

**Stuart Andrew:**

The Building Safety Act 2022 provides that where a building's freeholder is - or is linked - to the original developer, they must meet costs associated with historical building safety defects in full and cannot pass on these costs to leaseholders.

The Act refers to the position as at 14 February 2022, so any future buyer of the freehold will assume the same liabilities of the previous freeholder. As such, freeholders will not be able to simply sell off their buildings or transfer them to new companies to evade liability.

Should the freeholder declare insolvency, the Act contains provision allowing the appointed insolvency practitioner to apply to the court to require companies associated with the freeholder, such as the parent company, to meet the costs of remediation.

The Act also grants powers to the High Court and the First-tier Tribunal allowing them to extend specific liabilities for one company to associated companies, preventing developers and freeholders from evading their responsibilities by using complex corporate structures such as special purpose vehicles.

The Government has agreed with 45 residential property developers that they will fix life-critical fire safety defects, including cladding, in all buildings above 11 metres that they had a role in developing or refurbishing in the past 30 years. In these circumstances, the ownership of the particular property will be irrelevant, as the liability to remediate is with the developer group, even if the particular subsidiary that did the development becomes insolvent.

■ **Buildings: Safety**

**Sarah Olney:**

**[9090]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential impact of (a) requirements for checks from the Building Safety Regulator and (b) other requirements contained in provisions of the Building Safety Act on the time taken for construction.

**Stuart Andrew:**

Through the Building Safety Act, the Government is introducing a more stringent regulatory regime in design and construction for new high-rise residential buildings, care homes and hospitals which are 18 metres or more in height, or at least seven storeys ('higher-risk' buildings).

The intention is to strengthen regulatory oversight of higher-risk building work and provide the home-building industry the clear framework it needs to get things right before work begins and deliver more high-quality, safe homes, with clear responsibilities on those undertaking design and construction work. This approach

should reduce additional time and costs at later stages and the need to correct non-compliant or defective work.

The Government has made an assessment of the potential impact of the requirements of the new building control regime for higher-risk buildings. These can be found in the Impact Assessment that was published when the Act was scrutinised in Parliament: <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3021/publications>.

## ■ Council Housing: Standards

**Rachael Maskell:**

[5456]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will make it his policy to regularly inspect the (a) policies and (b) practices of local authority housing departments to ensure that they are in line with Government policy.

**Stuart Andrew:**

We have provided local authorities with strong enforcement powers to tackle poor property standards in the private rented sector, and we would expect them to use and reflect these powers in their policies and practices. Local authorities have a legal duty to take enforcement action if they find seriously hazardous conditions.

My officials work closely with the Local Government Association and individual authorities to address any queries or concerns and ensure that local authorities are using the full range of enforcement tools which have been provided through legislation.

As social housing landlords, local authorities are also subject to the Regulator of Social Housing's consumer standards. As announced in the Queen's Speech, we will be introducing the Social Housing Regulation Bill in the Third Session, which will enable proactive consumer regulation, regular inspections of the largest social housing landlords, and stronger enforcement powers when things go wrong. Landlords, including local authorities, will face more scrutiny, with the Regulator proactively assuring themselves that they are meeting the standards. The Regulator will also be given strong enforcement powers to use where local authorities do not meet the standards.

## ■ Faith New Deal Pilot Fund

**Conor McGinn:**

[8045]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what the status is of the Faith New Deal Pilot Fund; and when his Department plans to notify successful applicants of an award.

**Conor McGinn:**

[8046]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the Faith New Deal Pilot Fund, for what reason the time taken to award funding to successful applicants has been extended beyond the timeframe initially specified by his Department.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

The £1 million Faith New Deal Pilot Fund focuses on strengthening engagement between national government, local government and faith groups. The Fund was formally launched on 9 September 2021 and bids closed on 14 October 2021.

We received a large number of applications for the Fund and officials are now in the final stages of the moderation process. The results and subsequent funding allocations will be announced in due course.

I encourage applicants to monitor the Government's web pages for further updates: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-levelling-up-housing-and-communities>.

**Green Belt: Planning Permission**

**Daisy Cooper:** [8168]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will make it his policy to urgently introduce statutory protections to protect green belt and greenfield sites from speculative developments before wider planning reforms are introduced in the Levelling Up Bill.

**Stuart Andrew:**

The increased weight given to plans and national policy in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill will give more assurance that areas of environmental importance - such as National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and areas at high risk of flooding - will be respected in decisions on planning applications and appeals. The same is true of the Green Belt, which will continue to be safeguarded. The National Planning Policy Framework already sets out strong protections for Green Belt land, and also expects local authorities to recognise and enhance the importance of biodiversity, valued landscapes and agricultural soils, and the character and beauty of the countryside. Local authorities should give priority to re-use of suitable brownfield land wherever practicable and sustainable. These protections in national planning policy are to remain firmly in place, and by 2023 will be further reinforced by the biodiversity net gain requirements introduced through the Environment Act 2021. We will pursue options to make the Green Belt even greener.

**Help to Buy Scheme: Solihull**

**Julian Knight:** [8026]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if his Department will publish the data it holds on the number of households in the Solihull constituency that have benefited from his Department's Help to Buy scheme.

**Stuart Andrew:**

Between 1 April 2013 and 31 December 2021 1,112 homes were purchased in Solihull using the Help to Buy Equity Loan Scheme.

Further data on the number of households in England which have benefitted from the Help to Buy Equity Loan scheme (including households in the Solihull constituency)

can be found in the latest HtB Equity Loan scheme statistics:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/help-to-buy-equity-loan-scheme-data-to-31-december-2021/help-to-buy-equity-loan-scheme-data-to-31-december-2021>

## ■ Housing: Construction

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[8058]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure the timely delivery of house building programmes by local authorities in areas that have high housing costs as a result of insufficient supply.

**Stuart Andrew:**

A range of factors influence housing costs, but the supply of housing remains an important one, especially in areas of high demand. We have provided a range of tools that support councils to address the housing needs in their areas, including delivering their own housing programmes. This includes our £11.5 billion Affordable Homes Programme, £4 billion of which has been allocated to the Greater London Authority to bring forward homes in London, and more freedom in how councils can spend the money they receive from Right to Buy sales. On top of the abolition of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) borrowing cap in 2018, allowing councils greater flexibility in their borrowing to build more homes.

Furthermore the £1.8 billion Brownfield, Infrastructure and Land fund package announced in 2021 to regenerate underused land and level up the country will support local authorities (and Mayoral Combined Authorities) to bring brownfield land into use; and, building on the success of the first round of Land Release Fund where £45 million was allocated to 73 local authorities - releasing land for more than 6,500 homes - we launched a further £20 million worth of investment unlocking 2,600 additional homes.

## ■ Housing: Insulation

**Shabana Mahmood:**

**[8979]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether it is his policy that protection for leaseholders from (a) cladding and (b) non-cladding remediation costs cover leaseholders who live in a building that is managed by a resident management company to which they pay a service charge.

**Shabana Mahmood:**

**[8980]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what his policy is on the protection for leaseholders from (a) cladding and (b) non-cladding remediation costs for leaseholders who live in a building managed by a Right to Manage company.

**Shabana Mahmood:**

**[8981]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what his policy is on the protection for leaseholders from (a) cladding and (b) non-cladding remediation

costs for leaseholders who live in a building managed by the residents and leaseholders themselves.

**Stuart Andrew:**

The leaseholder protections in the Building Safety Act 2022 apply equally to buildings which are managed by a right to manage (RTM) company or resident management company (RMC) as they do to buildings which are not. Buildings are only exempt from the leaseholder protections measures if the building is collectively owned by the residents, such as in a building where the residents have collectively enfranchised to purchase the freehold.

**Shabana Mahmood:**

**[8982]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment has been made of the number of leaseholders who do not qualify for government protection from non-cladding costs because they are a buy to let landlord with more than (a) three, (b) five, (c) 10 and (d) 20 properties.

**Stuart Andrew:**

The leaseholder protections in the Building Safety Act apply to people living in their own homes or with up to three UK properties in total. The protections are designed to protect those living in their own homes from unaffordable remediation bills. In recognition of the circumstances of people with small numbers of additional properties, the protections also apply to leaseholders with up to three UK properties in total. The Department does not hold data on leaseholders with more than three properties.

There are still significant protections in place for leaseholders with more than three properties. Where more than three properties are owned, the principal home always qualifies for the protections. All leaseholders will be protected from all historical building safety remediation costs where their building owner or landlord is – or is connected to – the developer. Where developers have signed up to our developer pledge to fix their own buildings, this will benefit all leaseholders in the building. Leaseholders with more than three properties will also benefit from grant funding for the removal of unsafe cladding. Further, the leaseholder protections measures will drive enhanced proportionality, eliminating unnecessary work and bringing down remediation costs; this will also benefit all leaseholders.

## ■ Leasehold: Reform

**Dr Rupa Huq:**

**[8080]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what plans he has to reform leasehold tenure in the 2022-23 parliamentary Session.

**Eddie Hughes:**

The Government remains committed to creating a fair and just housing system that works for everyone. We will be taking forward a comprehensive programme of reform to end unfair practices in the leasehold market.

This starts with the Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Act 2022 which comes into force on 30 June. The Act will make homeownership fairer and more transparent for thousands of future leaseholders, by preventing landlords under new residential long leases from requiring a leaseholder to pay a financial ground rent.

The Government is committed to delivering the second phase of our major two-part leasehold and commonhold reforms within this Parliament. This is a long-term reform programme; it is complex with many interdependencies and will take time to get the detail right. Once it is enacted the effect will be felt for generations and so we are determined this work considers all the implications and impacts with care.

**Sarah Olney:**

**[9085]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what plans he has to bring forward the leasehold reforms proposed by his Department in 2017; and for what reason a leasehold reform bill was not included in the Queen's speech.

**Eddie Hughes:**

The Government remains committed to creating a fair and just housing system that works for everyone. We have made great strides with the Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Act 2022. From 30 June this year anyone buying a home on a new residential long lease will not be subjected to the annual costs of ground rent. This Act is the first part of major two-part legislation this parliament to implement leasehold and commonhold reforms.

In addition to the Ground Rent Act, thousands of existing leaseholders have also already seen a reduction in their inflated ground rent costs. The Competition and Markets Authority secured commitments from major homebuilders to remove lease terms that led to doubling ground rents, and where houses were sold as leasehold, to support leaseholders to buy the freehold at the original price quoted.

The government is committed to a comprehensive programme of reform to end unfair practices in the leasehold market. This is a long-term reform programme; it is complex, and it is important to get the detail right. As these reforms will be felt for generations, we are determined this work considers all the implications with care.

**Sarah Olney:**

**[9086]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment his Department made of the impact of introducing the first part of leasehold reforms to prohibit ground rent on new build flats without bringing forward the corresponding changes to existing leaseholders.

**Eddie Hughes:**

The Government remains committed to creating a fair and just housing system that works for everyone and to delivering the second phase of our major two-part leasehold reform within this Parliament.

The Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Act 2022 will come into force on 30 June. The Act will make homeownership fairer and more transparent for thousands of future



leaseholders, by preventing landlords under new residential long leases from requiring a leaseholder to pay a financial ground rent.

We understand the difficulties some existing leaseholders face with high and escalating ground rents. Unfair practices have no place in the housing market. This is why we asked the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) to investigate potential mis-selling of homes and unfair terms in the leasehold sector. The Government has welcomed the action to tackle potential mis-selling and unfair terms in the leasehold sector and wants to see homeowners who have been affected obtain the justice and redress they deserve.

The CMA has secured commitments from Aviva, Persimmon, Countryside Properties and Taylor Wimpey to amend their practices, including commitments to remove lease terms that led to doubling ground rents, houses sold as leasehold and to support leaseholders to buy the freehold at the original price quoted. This is a hugely important step and demonstrates our determination to support affected leaseholders. We urge other developers to follow suit.

## ■ Local Government: Meetings

**Grahame Morris:**

[\[8988\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the Answer given on 23 May 2022 to Question 3564 on Local Government: Meetings, if he will make it his policy to introduce a requirement on local authorities to allow the public to use recordings of meetings made by local councils.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

The Openness of Local Government Regulations 2014 make provision to allow members of the public to report and commentate on public meetings of local government bodies in England.

Regulation 3 amends the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to allow entry to the meetings of specified local government bodies for the purposes of reporting and to allow the results of the reporting to be published or disseminated.

"Reporting" includes filming and providing commentary on proceedings and allows for the use of a wide range of methods including social media.

## ■ Planning Authorities

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[5457\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will make an assessment of the (a) leadership, (b) capacity or (c) capability of planning departments in local authorities.

**Stuart Andrew:**

I recognise the challenges that local planning authorities are facing. Our aim is to ensure that local authority planning departments have the capacity and skills to make better places, deliver levelling up and provide an efficient service. We are engaging



with representatives from across local government, the private sector, and professional bodies to design and deliver a skills strategy.

## ■ **Planning: Renewable Energy**

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[8059]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of taking steps through local planning to ensure that land approved to generate sustainable energy is used to power new build developments including (a) garden villages and (b) towns.

**Stuart Andrew:**

The Government has made steps to ensure land approved to generate sustainable energy is used to power new build developments. National planning policy is clear that strategic policies in Local Plans should make sufficient provision for energy infrastructure (including heat). In particular, the planning system should support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure and plans should provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, and identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy systems.

The Government's recent 'British Energy Security Strategy' sets out a series of changes to the planning system to support the delivery of renewable energy infrastructure. This included a commitment to cut the time it takes for offshore wind projects to get planning and regulatory consents. For onshore wind, we will consult this year on developing local partnerships for supportive communities who wish to host new onshore wind infrastructure in return for benefits, including lower energy bills. We will also consult on amending planning rules to strengthen policy in favour of solar development, while ensuring communities continue to have a say and environmental protections remain in place. As part of this we will gather evidence on the use and suitability of the existing permitted development rights which allow for the installation of solar equipment.

## ■ **Rented Housing: Reform**

**Olivia Blake:**

**[9211]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, when the Renters Reform white paper will be published; and what plans he has to bring forward legislative proposals on Renters Reform.

**Eddie Hughes:**

We are absolutely committed to delivering a better deal for renters and will be bringing forward a Renters Reform Bill in this parliamentary session.

We will publish a White Paper shortly that will set out more detail on our reform proposals.

## ■ Repossession Orders

**Dr Rupa Huq:** [\[8078\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether he has plans to bring forward legislative proposals to reform the forfeiture provisions of leasehold housing.

**Eddie Hughes:**

The Government believes that forfeiture is an extreme measure and should only be used as a last resort. In practice forfeiture happens very rarely and is subject to the right of relief, to be exercised at the court's discretion.

Any changes to forfeiture will require a careful balancing of the rights and responsibilities of landlords and leaseholders and will require primary legislation. As a first step, we have asked the Law Commission to update their 2006 report *Termination of Tenancies for Tenant Default*, given the passage of time, and to take into account the implications of the reforms currently underway, and we are considering what action may be needed.

## ■ Travellers: Sutton

**Elliot Colburn:** [\[8183\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he has held discussions with representatives of the London Borough of Sutton on its Gypsy and Traveller site plan due to be submitted in 2022.

**Stuart Andrew:**

The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has not held discussions with representatives of the London Borough of Sutton on its Gypsy and Traveller site plan. Due to his quasi-judicial role in the planning system he is unable to comment on specific development plans or their content.

## PRIME MINISTER

### ■ Investigation into Alleged Gatherings on Government Premises during Covid Restrictions

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[9044\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, with reference to the Investigation into alleged gatherings during Covid Restrictions: Final Report published on 25 May 2022, when the Second Permanent Secretary first raised the treatment experienced by security and cleaning staff with him.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[9045\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, with reference to the Investigation into alleged gatherings during Covid Restrictions: Final Report published on 25 May 2022, when he was first made aware of the treatment experienced by security and cleaning staff by officials.

**Boris Johnson:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Wirral South during my oral statement on 25 May. And in addition to the apology I made in my statement, I have personally spoken and apologised to members of staff affected.

■ **Prime Minister: Diaries****Angela Rayner:**[\[9021\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, if he will publish his diary for the 13 November 2020.

**Boris Johnson:**

I had meetings with ministerial colleagues and others. I also held a roundtable to discuss the supermarket sector's ongoing role in the COVID-19 response, as recorded in the government's transparency data.

**Angela Rayner:**[\[9022\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, if he will publish his diary for 20 May 2020.

**Boris Johnson:**

I refer the Rt hon. Member to the response I gave to the hon. Member for Vale of Clwyd at Prime Minister's Questions on 12 January 2022 (Hansard Volume 706, Column 562).

In addition to answering Prime Minister's Questions on that day in May (Hansard Volume 676, Column 565), I also had an audience with Her Majesty the Queen as recorded in the Court Circular.

**TRANSPORT**■ **A1: Repairs and Maintenance****Sir Greg Knight:**[\[7917\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the timescale is for completion of the roadworks at Apex Corner on the A1; what interim steps are being taken to minimise delays and congestion to motorists travelling on, or seeking to access the A1; and if he will make a statement.

**Trudy Harrison:**

Transport in London is devolved and is the responsibility of the Mayor of London and Transport for London (TfL). TfL estimates these essential works will continue until summer 2022, and provide status updates here: <https://tfl.gov.uk/status-updates/major-works-and-events/a41-edgware-way-bridge?cid=edgware-way>

■ **British Energy: Security****Charlotte Nichols:**[\[9191\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the ambition set in the British energy security strategy, published in April 2022, of the doubling of the UK's 2030

hydrogen production, whether he has held discussions with the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on investment in hydrogen transport schemes to stimulate hydrogen production.

**Trudy Harrison:**

My department continues to work closely with colleagues in BEIS on our support for the use of hydrogen for transport to deliver the plans set out in the recent Energy Security Strategy. This includes recently announced investments such as the £206m UK Shipping Office for Reducing Emissions (UK-SHORE) and £200m for our zero emission road freight HGV demonstrator programme.

This March we also announced that we will be funding 124 hydrogen fuel cell buses and accompanying refuelling infrastructure through our Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas scheme, supporting the West Midlands Combined Authority to introduce one of the most ambitious hydrogen bus projects in Europe.

**Charlotte Nichols:**

[\[9193\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent analysis his Department has conducted of the role hydrogen transport can play in delivering the increased hydrogen production ambition set out in the British energy security strategy, published in April 2022.

**Trudy Harrison:**

As set out in government's recent Hydrogen Strategy and our Transport Decarbonisation Plan, we expect hydrogen to play a significant role in a clean transport system. It is likely to prove most effective in heavier types of transport such as buses, HGVs, rail maritime and aviation.

■ **Buses**

**Kerry McCarthy:**

[\[7936\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many buses in total are currently operating in (a) England, (b) Scotland, (c) Wales and (d) Northern Ireland; and what proportion of these buses are (i) electric, (ii) hybrid-diesel, (iii) biomethane, (iv) diesel and (v) other fuels.

**Trudy Harrison:**

The requested figures are in the tables below. The Department does not collect this data for Northern Ireland.

Table 1 – Number of buses used as Public Service Vehicles by local bus operators as at 31 March 2021

**Thousand**

FINANCIAL YEAR	ENGLAND	SCOTLAND	WALES	GREAT BRITAIN
2020/21	32.7	3.7	1.3	37.8

Source: DfT Annual Bus Statistics (BUS0602)

Table 2 – Percentage of buses used as Public Service Vehicles by fuel consumption type as at 31 March 2021

<b>FUEL CONSUMPTION</b>				
<b>TYPE</b>	<b>ENGLAND</b>	<b>SCOTLAND</b>	<b>WALES</b>	<b>GREAT BRITAIN</b>
Hydrogen	0%	0%	0%	0%
Electric (not hybrid)	2%	2%	0%	2%
Diesel-Hybrid	14%	7%	0%	13%
Methane/Biomethane	1%	0%	0%	1%
Diesel	79%	87%	98%	81%
Other (including Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO))	0%	0%	0%	0%
Unknown	3%	6%	2%	3%

Source: DfT Annual Bus Statistics (BUS0609b)

## ■ Buses: Exhaust Emissions

**Kerry McCarthy:**

**[7937]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much total funding has been awarded to each of the devolved Administrations for the purchases of zero emission buses as of 24 May 2022; and what estimate he has made of the number of zero emission buses that that funding will deliver in (a) Scotland, (b) Wales and (c) Northern Ireland.

**Trudy Harrison:**

In Scotland the Scottish Government has funded 272 zero emission buses through the Scottish Ultra Low Emission Bus Scheme and 276 zero emission buses through the Scottish Zero Emission Bus challenge fund. Transport funding in Scotland is supported by the UK block grant awarded to the Scottish Government.

In Wales, 68 zero emission buses have been directly supported by the UK Government through funding to Welsh local transport authorities and bus operators. The Welsh Government has also provided funding for further zero emission buses. Transport funding in Wales is supported by the UK block grant awarded to the Welsh Government.

In 2020 the Government provided £50 million funding to the Northern Ireland Executive for ultra low emission public transport. This funding will support the introduction of over 100 zero emission buses in Northern Ireland.

**■ Department for Transport: Consultants****Louise Haigh:****[9063]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much his Department spent on consultants in (a) 2018-19, (b) 2019-20, (c) 2020-21 and (d) 2021-22.

**Andrew Stephenson:**

The spend on consultancy can be found in the Department's Annual Report and Accounts on Gov.uk

We are in the process of producing the Department's Annual Report which will be published in July, this will include our audited consultancy spend for 2021-22.

**■ Driving Licences: Spain****Andrew Gwynne:****[8969]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has made an assessment of the prevalence of UK expats in Spain who are no longer able to drive legally in that country with a UK license and who were not able to register their intention to swap to a Spanish license prior to the deadline of the 1 January 2021 as a result of not yet being a resident in Spain; and whether he has had discussions with his Spanish counterpart on that matter.

**Trudy Harrison:**

The lack of a driving licence exchange agreement with Spain primarily affects three groups:

- UK licence holders who are long-term residents in Spain and did not exchange or register their intent to exchange, as advised, before the end of the transition period (31 December 2020).
- UK licence holders who did register their intent to exchange before the end of the transition period, but did not complete the exchange process by 30 April.
- UK licence holders who have arrived as residents in Spain after 31 December 2020 and have been resident Spain for longer than 6 months.

The Department for Transport does not hold information on the number of people affected in each group.

The UK and Spain have rapidly accelerated talks on driving licence exchange since the Secretary of State for Transport discussed the issue with Spanish ministers on 29 April 2022.

**■ Driving Tests: Private Sector****Anna McMorris:****[9110]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 16 May 2022 to Question 410, how many slots within the 24-week booking window for car tests are allocated to (a) DrivingScout and (b) other similar private companies.

**Trudy Harrison:**

Practical car driving test slots are not allocated to, or reserved for, private companies.

When a test slot is booked, it is not possible to link the named candidate to a driving school or private company.

**■ Electric Scooters****Jim Shannon:**[\[9008\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent estimate he has made of the number of electric scooters being used across the UK.

**Trudy Harrison:**

According to monitoring data from the Department's trials scheme, as of April 2022 there were over 1.5 million active users (defined as someone who used a rental e-scooter in the last month), with over 19 million trips made on rental e-scooters in England since the trials started in July 2020.

Based on findings from the Department's Transport and Technology Tracker, we estimate that as of June 2021 roughly 750,000 individuals aged 16+ owned a private e-scooter in England – we do not have data for the whole of the UK.

**■ Ferries: Collective Bargaining****Louise Haigh:**[\[9062\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential impact of provisions in the Harbours (Seafarers' Remuneration) Bill on the collective bargaining arrangements in the ferry sector.

**Robert Courts:**

We are seeking views on all potential impacts of the proposals in the Bill as we want to ensure that all impacts have been considered prior to introduction. The formal public consultation closes on 7th June 2022.

**■ Great British Railways****Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[\[9977\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Rail Industry Associations criteria for the new railway body, Great British Railways, what steps he has taken to ensure the implementation of Great British Railways will result in no hiatus to current work.

**Wendy Morton:**

The Department and the Great British Railways Transition Team are continuing to work with the rail sector, including private companies, to ensure a common understanding of the vision, establish the phases of delivery, and work collectively with the sector to design our new guiding mind for the railways, Great British Railways. The Department will continue to work with Network Rail (NR) to deliver current workstreams, including the Control Period 6 programme of work, the schemes



outlined in the Integrated Rail Plan including the next phase of the Midland Mainline electrification.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

[9978]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Rail Industry Associations criteria for the new railway body, Great British Railways, what steps his Department taking to ensure they are clear and transparent with rail suppliers.

**Wendy Morton:**

The Department and the Great British Railways Transition Team are continuing to work with the rail sector to ensure a common understanding of the vision, establish the phases of delivery, and work collectively with the sector to design our new guiding mind for the railways, Great British Railways. We are ensuring this engagement is as open and transparent as possible.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

[9979]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Rail Industry Associations criteria for the new railway body, Great British Railways, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that Great British Railways leave a positive legacy, including in safety, decarbonisation, exports and the economy.

**Wendy Morton:**

The Department and the Great British Railways Transition Team are working with the rail sector to design and establish the new guiding mind for the railways, Great British Railways, to ensure our railway meets the future needs of passengers, freight customers and the wider economy.

## ■ High Speed 2 Line

**Hilary Benn:**

[9839]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what his timeframe is for publishing the terms of reference for the Integrated Rail Plan study into (a) how to bring HS2 trains to Leeds from East Midlands Parkway and (b) capacity at Leeds station.

**Andrew Stephenson:**

We will set out the Terms of Reference for the studies set out in the IRP shortly. We will continue to liaise closely with West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Leeds City Council in the meantime.

## ■ Hydrogen Refuelling Stations

**Charlotte Nichols:**

[9194]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has had discussions with the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on the potential merits of planning for the provision of hydrogen refuelling infrastructure for transport as part of the development of new hydrogen production facilities.

**Trudy Harrison:**

Support for the deployment of additional hydrogen refuelling infrastructure is linked to specific investments and research and development programmes, such as the refuelling infrastructure to support the deployment of 124 hydrogen fuel cell buses in the West Midlands through our Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas scheme and our pioneering £200m zero emission road freight HGV demonstrators, which will demonstrate hydrogen fuel cell HGVs on UK roads.

**Large Goods Vehicles: Concrete****Gill Furniss:**[\[9948\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Answer of 28 October 2021 to Question 62817 on Large Goods Vehicles: Concrete, if he will publish the impact assessment referenced in that Answer which was undertaken at the time of the regulatory changes in 2017.

**Trudy Harrison:**

The impact assessment done at the time of the Goods Vehicles (Plating and Testing) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2017 is published online alongside the regulations and is available to view at [legislation.gov.uk](http://legislation.gov.uk).

**Railways: Tickets****Sir John Hayes:**[\[8953\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will publish the most recent timeline for delivery of the Consolidated Online Retail Solution being managed by Rail Delivery Group on behalf of Great British Railways Transition Team; and if will he make a statement.

**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 are working to procure what will become Great British Railways' website and app for ticket retailing. We will provide further detail in due course.

**Sir John Hayes:**[\[8954\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will publish the timeline for the (a) tender bidding, (b) preferred bidder shortlist and (c) preferred bidder selection for Great British Railway's Consolidated Online Retail Solution.

**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 are working to procure what will become Great British Railways' website and app for ticket retailing. We will provide further detail in due course.

**■ Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation: Hydrogen****Alan Brown:****[9038]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department is taking steps to reform the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation to incentivise the use of hydrogen vehicles.

**Trudy Harrison:**

The renewable transport fuel obligation covers a wide range of fuels, all renewable and low carbon. Since 2018, renewable hydrogen has been eligible for “development fuel certificates” under the RTFO. This means it receives a higher level of reward compared to conventional renewable fuels. Last year we consulted on proposals to support new ways to supply hydrogen under the RTFO. We expect to publish the government response to this consultation shortly.

The RTFO supports supply of fuels and does not directly support the deployment of vehicles. My department has a range of support mechanisms to encourage early adopters of hydrogen vehicles. These are projects like the Tees Valley Hydrogen Hub, competitions including the Zero Emission Road Freight Trials (ZERFT) and modal support schemes like the Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) scheme which has contributed to the ordering of a significant number of new hydrogen buses.

**Charlotte Nichols:****[9190]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department has taken steps to reform the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation to help increase the use of hydrogen powered vehicles.

**Trudy Harrison:**

The renewable transport fuel obligation covers a wide range of fuels, all renewable and low carbon. Since 2018, renewable hydrogen has been eligible for “development fuel certificates” under the RTFO. This means it receives a higher level of reward compared to conventional renewable fuels. Last year we consulted on proposals to support new ways to supply hydrogen under the RTFO. We expect to publish the government response to this consultation shortly.

The RTFO supports supply of fuels and does not directly support the deployment of vehicles. My department has a range of support mechanisms to encourage early adopters of hydrogen vehicles. These are projects like the Tees Valley Hydrogen Hub, competitions including the Zero Emission Road Freight Trials (ZERFT) and modal support schemes like the Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) scheme, which has contributed to the ordering of a significant number of new hydrogen buses.

## ■ Transport: Hydrogen

**Alan Brown:**

**[9039]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the UK's 2030 hydrogen production target outlined in the British energy security strategy, whether he has had discussions with the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on the potential merits of funding hydrogen transport schemes to stimulate hydrogen production.

**Trudy Harrison:**

My department continues to work closely with colleagues in BEIS on our support for the use of hydrogen for transport to deliver the plans set out in the recent Energy Security Strategy. This includes recently announced investments such as the £206m UK Shipping Office for Reducing Emissions (UK-SHORE) and £200m for our zero emission road freight HGV demonstrator programme. This March we also announced that we will be funding 124 hydrogen fuel cell buses and accompanying refuelling infrastructure through our Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas scheme, supporting the West Midlands Combined Authority to introduce one of the most ambitious hydrogen bus projects in Europe.

**Charlotte Nichols:**

**[9189]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the ambition set in the British energy security strategy, published in April 2022, of the doubling of the UK's 2030 hydrogen production, whether his Department is taking steps to stimulate investment in hydrogen transport schemes.

**Trudy Harrison:**

My department continues to work closely with colleagues in BEIS on our support for the use of hydrogen for transport to deliver the plans set out in the recent Energy Security Strategy. This includes recently announced investments such as the £206m UK Shipping Office for Reducing Emissions (UK-SHORE) and £200m for our zero emission road freight HGV demonstrator programme. This March we also announced that we will be funding 124 hydrogen fuel cell buses and accompanying refuelling infrastructure through our Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas scheme, supporting the West Midlands Combined Authority to introduce one of the most ambitious hydrogen bus projects in Europe.

**Charlotte Nichols:**

**[9192]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department plans to establish additional hydrogen transport hubs following the evidence gathered so far from the Teesside Hydrogen Transport Hub.

**Trudy Harrison:**

The UK's first Hydrogen Transport Hub in Tees Valley has kick started the development of hydrogen transport in the North East and is already attracting new investments and jobs to the area. Following the initial £3m of funding for seven pilot trials last year, we will announce what form future support will take in due course.

**TREASURY****■ Alcoholic Drinks: Excise Duties**

**Rosie Duffield:** [\[9096\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment the Government has made of the potential merits of the Wine and Spirit Association's proposed model for the taxation of wine and spirits.

**Rosie Duffield:** [\[9097\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the Government is providing support to small and medium sized businesses in the wine and spirits sector to assist with the financial implications of that sector's taxation system.

**Helen Whately:**

The Government is currently considering all proposals put forward to it through the alcohol duty review consultation, which closed on 30 January. The Government will respond to the consultation in due course.

**Mr David Jones:** [\[9851\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to recent comments by Miles Beale, chief executive of the Wine and Spirit Trade Association, in the report entitled SME Inquiry Report, by the Wine and Spirit APPG, on the proposed new alcohol duty system, if he will take steps to reduce complexity in the proposed framework.

**Helen Whately:**

The Government is currently considering all proposals put forward through the alcohol duty review consultation, which closed on 30 January. The Government will respond to the consultation in due course.

**■ BlackRock: Zambia**

**Patrick Grady:** [\[9912\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions the Government has had with BlackRock on participating in internationally agreed debt relief in Zambia.

**John Glen:**

Zambia is one of three countries – along with Chad and Ethiopia - to have so far requested the Common Framework, which was agreed between the G20 and Paris Club to help deliver a long-term, sustainable approach for supporting low-income countries to tackle their debt vulnerabilities.

Under the terms of the Common Framework, a debtor country that signs an MoU with participating official creditors will be required to seek from all private creditors a treatment at least as favourable. Accordingly, once Zambia signs an MoU for its case it will need to engage its private creditors to ensure their participation on comparable terms.

The UK is fully committed to ensuring the private sector plays its part and the Government engages private sector creditors on international debt issues in a number of fora.

### ■ **Building Alterations: VAT**

**Mr Gregory Campbell:**

[\[8967\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the number of people in who were waiting more than twenty working days for VAT refunds on eligible building works in April (a) 2022 and (b) 2021.

**Lucy Frazer:**

VAT relief is available on a wide range of eligible building works. In such cases a zero or reduced rate of VAT applies, providing relief without the need to claim a VAT refund. VAT refunds for DIY builders and converters allow self-builders to reclaim VAT on eligible building materials and some related services when constructing or converting for domestic, non-profit, or charitable use. HMRC aims to respond to claims relating to the DIY Housebuilders Scheme within six weeks of receipt. Therefore, it is not expected that VAT refunds will routinely be completed within twenty working days following receipt of a claim.

### ■ **Cost of Living: Government Assistance**

**Mr Clive Betts:**

[\[9836\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to his statement on the economic update on the 26 May 2022 and his commitment to legislate to deliver support on the same terms in every part of the UK, whether it is his policy that people with the same circumstances will receive the same level of support regardless of where they live.

**Mr Simon Clarke:**

Most of the support announced by the Chancellor on 26 May is being provided directly to households in all parts of the UK by the UK Government.

The one-off Cost of Living payments will be paid directly to households across the UK. In the absence of a functioning Executive in Northern Ireland, the UK Government is supporting the Northern Irish people through these payments, on exactly the same terms as the rest of the UK.

The Energy Bill Support Scheme applies to Great Britain only, but equivalent support will be provided to people in Northern Ireland, and the Household Support Fund is England-only, but the devolved administrations will receive around £79 million through the Barnett formula.

**■ Debts Written Off: Zambia****Mr Toby Perkins:****[9870]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps her Department is taking to assist Zambia in its attempts to be the first nation to benefit from the Common Framework debt cancellation programme.

**John Glen:**

Zambia is one of three countries – along with Chad and Ethiopia - to have so far requested the Common Framework.

The Common Framework was agreed in November 2020 by the UK, along with the G20 and Paris Club, to help deliver a long-term, sustainable approach for supporting low-income countries to tackle their debt vulnerabilities.

In its February 2022 communique, the G20 reiterated its commitment to step up efforts to implement the Common Framework in a timely, orderly and coordinated manner. Progress in implementing the Common Framework has been a regular feature in the Chancellor's discussions in the G7 and G20 and - as a creditor to Zambia - it is a priority to work with our international partners to ensure swift progress on the debt treatment.

**■ Developing Countries: Debts****Patrick Grady:****[9911]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of bringing forward legislative proposals to require lenders to take part in internationally agreed debt relief.

**John Glen:**

The Government does not currently have any intention to pursue a legislative approach that would force private lenders to participate in debt relief initiatives.

Any legislative approach would need to address a number of challenges. For example, legislating may increase the cost of finance for low-income countries or reduce the availability of finance to meet wider development goals.

The Government is instead prioritising the implementation of the Common Framework for Debt Treatments beyond the DSSI. The UK, along with the G20 and Paris Club, agreed the Common Framework to deliver a long-term, sustainable approach to dealing with debt vulnerabilities. Private sector participation on at least as favourable terms as bilateral creditors is a fundamental principle of the Common Framework. We are fully focused on ensuring that the private sector plays its part in any debt treatments under the Framework.

## ■ Electricity Generation: Capital Investment

**Pat McFadden:**

[\[9862\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the impact of his oral statement, Economy Update, on 26 May 2022, Official Report, on the cost of capital and investment for electricity generators in the context of uncertainty on the steps he plans to take in response to power generation profits.

**Helen Whately:**

As the Chancellor set out in his statement on the cost of living support the Government is urgently evaluating the scale of extraordinary profits in the energy generation sector and the appropriate next steps.

As part of this process, and to mitigate potential uncertainty, officials are urgently engaging with industry stakeholders on this matter.

## ■ Energy Bills Rebate: Equality

**Debbie Abrahams:**

[\[9012\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he will publish his assessment of how groups with protected characteristics will be affected by the Council Tax Rebate in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

**Helen Whately:**

The Government announced a package of support on 3 February 2022 to help households with rising energy bills. This included a £150 non-repayable council tax rebate from April this year for households in England in council tax bands A-D and £144 million of discretionary funding to support households who need help with their energy bills but are not eligible.

Treasury Ministers carefully considered the equalities impacts of the Council Tax Rebate and had due regard to these impacts when making decisions, in line with the legal obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in the Equality Act 2010.

## ■ Fraud: Debts

**Alex Sobel:**

[\[9998\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if will he publish the internal HMRC guidelines on dealing with liabilities accrued by victims of fraud.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The relevant guidance is already publicly available in HMRC's Admin Law manual. HMRC responds to liabilities accrued by the victims of fraud based on the individual circumstances of each case. HMRC Commissioners' discretionary powers are set out in the Admin Law manual.



## ■ Fuel Oil: Rural Areas

**Virginia Crosbie:**

**[10044]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to help people who live in rural communities with the cost of domestic heating oil when alternative options for heating are limited as a result of lack of connection to the gas grid or there is a limited competitive market for domestic heating oil supply as a result of the remote location.

**Helen Whately:**

On 26 May 2022 the Chancellor announced £15 billion of additional support for households struggling with the cost of living, particularly targeted at those with the greatest need.

This includes a doubling of the Energy Bills Support Scheme, providing an additional £200 to households that will not be recovered through higher bills in future years. This support extends to heating oil consumers, as long as they are also domestic electricity customers.

The Government is also providing a £650 one-off cost of living payment to households on means-tested benefits. Pensioner households will be eligible for a £300 cost of living payment, and individuals receiving extra disability benefits will also receive a £150 disability cost of living payment. To support people who need additional help, the Government is providing an extra £500 million of local support, via the Household Support Fund, which will be extended from this October to March 2023.

This package builds on the £22 billion package of support announced previously, with government support for the cost of living now totalling over £37 billion this year. This does not include continued financial support which remains available for heating oil customers with energy bills, if eligible, through the Warm Home Discount, Winter Fuel Payment and Cold Weather Payment schemes.

## ■ Housing: Energy

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[9928]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for what reason he has not announced proposals on retrofitting homes to reduce energy use and costs.

**Helen Whately:**

At the spending review, the Government committed to invest £3 billion over this Parliament to improve the energy efficiency of up to 500,000 low-income homes, reducing energy bills by hundreds of pounds per year.

We are also expanding the Energy Company Obligation to £1 billion per year from 2022 to 2026, helping 133,000 low-income households annually to also improve their energy efficiency.

At the Spring Statement, the Chancellor announced the removal of the 5 per cent VAT charge on the installation of energy-efficiency materials over the next five years. This represents a £280 million tax cut to support investment in energy efficiency over

the next 5 years. This is additional to the total support for households this year of over £37bn.

## ■ Inflation

**Beth Winter:**

**[8207]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will publish any statistical data his Department holds on the effective rate of inflation for households for different income cohorts.

**John Glen:**

The independent Office for National Statistics (ONS) is responsible for the calculation and publication of inflation statistics. In January 2022 the ONS resumed its publishing of CPI-consistent inflation estimates for UK by household groups, including income decile.<sup>[1]</sup>

The Government understands that millions of households across the UK are struggling to make their incomes stretch to cover the rising cost of living. The government is providing over £15bn of additional support in the May Cost of Living Support, targeted particularly on those with the greatest need. This support package builds on the over £22bn announced previously, with government support for the cost of living now totaling over £37bn this year.

[1]

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/bulletins/cpiconsistentinflationrateestimatesforukhouseholdgroups/2005to2021>

## ■ Inflation: Coventry

**Colleen Fletcher:**

**[9901]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment he has made of the impact of inflation on living standards in (a) Coventry North East constituency and (b) Coventry.

**John Glen:**

The Government recognises the challenges of high inflation and its impact on the cost of living across the country and is providing targeted support for the cost of living totalling over £37bn. This includes support for all domestic electricity customers in Great Britain, with £400 off their bills from October through the expansion of the Energy Bills Support Scheme (EBSS). It also includes support for over 8 million households across the UK in receipt of means tested benefits with a one-off Cost of Living Payment of £650, additional one-off payments of £150 to support disabled people with extra costs they face, and one-off payments of £300 to help over eight million pensioner households with the costs of energy. For families that still need additional support; the government is providing an extra £500 million of local support, via the Household Support Fund.

**■ Members: Correspondence****Robert Largan:** [\[9202\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he will respond to the correspondence of 5 April 2022 from the hon. Member for High Peak, reference RL37109.

**John Glen:**

I responded to the Honourable Member's correspondence on 27 May 2022.

**■ National Savings and Investments: Internet****Dr Rupa Huq:** [\[8082\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to help ensure the National Savings and Investments website is compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines; and what his Department's timetable and plan is for meeting that compliance.

**John Glen:**

The National Savings & Investments' (NS&I) website is designed to be used by as many people as possible. NS&I uses the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines to test how accessible its websites and mobile applications are, as well as the Website Accessibility Conformance Evaluation Methodology (WCAG-EM) approach to decide on a sample of web pages to test.

NS&I website is partially compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. NS&I is working hard to address areas that do not meet this standard. NS&I has recently worked with the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) to identify the changes required for full compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. The changes recommended by EHRC were implemented on 22 May 2022, and further changes are expected to be made in June 2022.

NS&I is currently procuring a new outsourced service delivery partner and it is expected that its website and mobile apps will be fully compliant by 2024 with regular reviews throughout.

**■ Offshore Industry: Taxation****Rachel Reeves:** [\[9871\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Energy Profits Levy, Technical Note, published on 26 May 2022, if he will place in the Library the figures for the size of the tax base for the Energy Profits Levy in (a) 2022-23 and (b) each of the years of the forecast horizon to 2025-26.

**Helen Whately:**

The latest data on Corporation Tax (CT) receipts and liabilities for ring fenced oil and gas companies can be found on GOV.UK. The data is available within Table 3C of the "Corporation Tax statistics tables 2021" publication. [1]

A full costing of the Energy Profits Levy will be certified by the independent Office for Budget Responsibility at the Budget.

[1]

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1020005/Corporation Tax statistics data tables 2021.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1020005/Corporation_Tax_statistics_data_tables_2021.ods)

**Rachel Reeves:**

[9875]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Energy Profits Levy, Technical Note, published on 26 May 2022, if he will place in the Library the figures for the total estimated amount the Energy Profits Levy will be reduced in (a) 2022-23 and (b) each of the years of the forecast horizon to 2025-26 as a result of (i) investment expenditure within the investment incentive allowance and (ii) loss relief.

**Helen Whately:**

As set out in "Energy Profits Levy Factsheet - 26 May 2022", the new Energy Profits Levy will raise around £5 billion over the next year. As part of the levy a new tax relief is being introduced to encourage firms to invest in the UK. The new 80% Investment Allowance will mean businesses will overall get a 91p tax saving for every £1 they invest. The Government expects the combination of the levy and this investment allowance to lead to an overall increase in investment, and the OBR will take account of this policy in their next forecast. To appropriately tax the extraordinary profits, companies will not be able to offset previous losses or decommissioning expenditure against profits subject to the levy. A full costing of the policy will be certified by the independent Office for Budget Responsibility at the Budget.

## ■ **Plastics: Taxation**

**Geraint Davies:**

[7889]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Answers of 21 April 2022 to Questions 153692, 153693 and 153694 on Plastics: taxation, how much and what proportion of the £30 billion committed by the Government to the green industrial revolution has been allocated to tackling (a) single-use plastics, (b) waste and (c) litter.

**Geraint Davies:**

[7890]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Answers of 21 April 2022 to Questions 153692, 153693 and 153694 on Plastics: taxation, how much and what proportion of the £30 billion committed by the Government to the green industrial revolution is (a) funded by and (b) planned to be funded by revenue generated from the plastic packaging tax; and whether funding allocated for tackling (i) single-use plastics, (ii) waste and (iii) litter has changed since the introduction of that tax.

**Geraint Davies:**

[7891]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of allocating a greater proportion of the revenue generated from the plastic packaging tax to recycling and collection infrastructure in advance of the

implementation of (a) deposit return schemes and (b) extended producer responsibility reforms in 2025 and beyond.

**Helen Whately:**

As set out at Budget 2018 when the tax was first announced, future revenues raised from the Plastic Packaging Tax and the Packaging Producer Responsibility reforms will enable investment to address single-use plastics, waste and litter. Some businesses have already started reformulating their packaging to include recycled content in response to the tax, with many signing up to the UK Plastics Pact which has a target of 30% average recycled content by 2025.

Since March 2021, the Government has committed a total of £30 billion for the green industrial revolution in the UK, including more than £300m capital funding at the 2021 Spending Review to implement free, separate food waste collections in every English local authority from 2025.

■ **Public Expenditure: Wales**

**Ben Lake:**

[9973]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to his statement providing an Economy Update on 26 May 2022, what the Barnett consequential for Wales is; if he plans for funds to be made available to the Welsh government; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Simon Clarke:**

As the Chancellor set out in his statement to the House, in recognition of the challenges people are facing as a result of the rising cost of living, the UK Government is providing an additional £15 billion of support.

The majority of this support is being provided directly to households across the UK and is on top of the support announced in February and at Spring Statement. In addition, the Welsh Government is receiving around £25m from the Household Support Fund through the Barnett formula.

The full details of the support announced, including Barnett consequentials for the devolved administrations, were set out in the Chancellor's statement of the 26 May and the [accompanying press release](#).

■ **Public Finance**

**Pat McFadden:**

[9863]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if his Department will place in the Library a revised forecast of the expected level of public sector net borrowing in the 2022-23 financial year, incorporating the impact of announcements made by the Chancellor to the House on 26 May 2022.

**Pat McFadden:**

[9864]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if his Department will direct the Office for Budget Responsibility to produce a revised forecast of growth in real gross domestic product,

consumer price inflation and public sector net borrowing for the 2022-23 financial year, incorporating the impact of announcements he made to the House on 26 May 2022.

**John Glen:**

The Chancellor will in due course commission a forecast from the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR), as set out by the Charter for Budget Responsibility. The OBR will incorporate the impact of new policy in their next economic and fiscal forecast, including measures that have been announced since the last forecast event.

■ **Small Businesses: Energy**

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[9924\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the Government plans to take steps to help SMEs which are non-intensive energy users with their energy costs.

**Helen Whately:**

We recognise that a number of businesses are facing cost pressures. Energy prices have increased globally over the past year, driven by global factors including the impact of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Over the past two years we have taken unprecedented action to protect millions of businesses including:

- extending the Recovery Loan Scheme to 30 June 2022, providing SMEs with up to £2 million of government guaranteed finance.
- cutting business rates by 50% for eligible retail, hospitality and leisure businesses in 2022-23, worth up to £110,00 per business.
- increasing the Employment Allowance from £4,000 to £5,000, cutting the cost of employment for 495,000 small businesses.
- increasing the Annual Investment Allowance to £1 million.
- introducing the super-deduction, allowing companies to cut their tax bill by up to 25p for every £1 they invest in qualifying productivity enhancing plant and machinery assets until March 2023.
- businesses will also benefit from the cut to fuel duty announced by the Chancellor announced as part of his Spring Statement. The duty rate on petrol and diesel has been cut by 5p per litre for a year, from 6pm on 23 March 2022.

We are in regular contact with business groups about the challenges businesses are facing and we will continue to keep the situation under review.

■ **Social Security Benefits: Cost of Living**

**Rachel Reeves:**

[\[9874\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Cost of Living Payment for people on means tested benefits, when claimants of tax credits will receive that payment.

**Mr Simon Clarke:**

The Department for Work and Pensions will make the payment in two lump sums to those receiving means-tested benefits - the first from July, the second in autumn. Tax credits claimants who also receive an eligible means-tested benefit from DWP will receive their Cost of Living Payment from DWP.

HM Revenue and Customs will then make first payments in autumn, and second payments in winter, to those who claim tax credits but do not receive any eligible means-tested benefits from DWP. This is necessary to allow time for HMRC to carry out de-duplication on data for those who have already received a payment from DWP.

**■ Treasury: Hikvision****Sir Iain Duncan Smith:**[\[9826\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 23 May 2022 to Question 4454 and with reference to the Answer of 23 February 2022 to Question 124950, if he will review his response of 23 May; and whether he plans to remove any Hikvision cameras in use at his Department.

**Helen Whately:**

As has been the case under successive administrations, it is not government policy to comment on the security arrangements of government buildings. Specific details regarding the make and model of security systems are withheld on national security grounds.

The National Cyber Security Centre and the Centre for Protection of National Infrastructure provide guidance on the use of IP-connected cameras and cyber-connected physical security systems.

Security measures within departments are tailored to protect each site, proportionate to the level of threat, aligned with the HMG Minimum Security Standards and, take into account the building risk categorisation and the physical composition of the site.

**■ Wine and Spirit Association****Daisy Cooper:**[\[9175\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will meet with the Wine and Spirit Trade Association in advance of the publication of a draft bill which would seek to introduce a new alcohol duty system.

**Daisy Cooper:**[\[9176\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the (a) administrative burden and (b) financial cost to wine and fortified wine (i) importers, (ii) distributors and (iii) wholesalers of the proposed new alcohol duty system.



**Daisy Cooper:**

[9177]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of providing (a) financial and (b) other support packages to wine and spirit (i) producers, (ii) importers and (iii) distributors in the context of the costs associated with purchasing and administering new IT and accounting systems required under the plans to reform the alcohol duty system.

**Helen Whately:**

Since the start of the alcohol duty review consultation, my officials and I have had meetings with wine producers, importers, distributors and trade bodies, including the Wine and Spirit Trade Association, to understand the implications of the new alcohol duty system for their sector. The Government's response to the consultation will be published in due course.

Details of ministerial meetings will be published in the usual way here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmt-ministers-meetings-hospitality-gifts-and-overseas-travel>

## ■ Wines: Excise Duties

**Mr David Jones:**

[7938]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to his Department's consultation on the new alcohol duty system, if he will take steps to ensure that winemakers from hotter climates who produce wines with a high alcohol content do not pay a higher rate of alcohol duty.

**Helen Whately:**

The Government set out at the Budget its proposal to tax all products, including wine, in line with their ABV content. This will consistently apply the principle that stronger products should pay higher amounts of duty. This means that sparkling wines and still wines below 11.5% ABV will pay less duty than now, while still and fortified wines above this level will pay more duty.

The consultation on the new alcohol duty system closed on 30 January. The Government is considering the feedback received from producers and will respond in due course.

## ■ Zambia: Common Frameworks

**Hywel Williams:**

[9848]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent discussions he has had with his G20 counterparts on the effectiveness of the Common Framework process; and what assessment he has made of Zambia application under that framework.

**John Glen:**

The Common Framework, agreed between the G20 and the Paris Club, represents the first time that all G20 creditors and the Paris Club have committed to work together to coordinate debt treatments. The Framework is intended to deliver a



longer-term, more sustainable approach to dealing with debt vulnerabilities for countries that request it. Progress in implementing the Common Framework has been a regular feature in the Chancellor's discussions in the G20 and in its February 2022 communique, the G20 reiterated its commitment to step up efforts to implement the Framework in a timely, orderly and coordinated manner.

Zambia is one of three countries – along with Chad and Ethiopia - to have requested the Common Framework. Zambia reached a Staff-Level Agreement with the IMF in December, marking a step forward. At Spring Meetings, the IMF managing director indicated that China had agreed to join the creditor committee for Zambia. As a creditor to Zambia, it is a priority to work with our G20 partners to ensure swift progress on the debt treatment.

## WORK AND PENSIONS

### ■ Carer's Allowance: Standards

**Kerry McCarthy:**

**[9850]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many Carers Allowance applications are awaiting a decision as of 26 May 2022; and what the average waiting time is for someone who has applied for Carers Allowance to receive a decision about their claim in the latest period for which that information is available.

**Chloe Smith:**

As of 23 May 2022 (latest data available) there were 39,071 Carer's Allowance claims awaiting a decision.

The current average clearance time for a Carer's Allowance claim decision to be made is 37 working days.

### ■ Carer's Allowance: State Retirement Pensions

**Jonathan Edwards:**

**[9869]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment she has made of the potential merits of making carer's allowance available to carers in receipt of a state pension; if she will estimate the cost to her Department of continuing to pay carer's allowance to those carers in receipt of a state pension; and if she will make a statement.

**Chloe Smith:**

I refer the honourable gentleman to the answer I gave on 20 April 2022 to question UIN 154461.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-14/154461>

## ■ Department for Work and Pensions: Tees Valley

**Alex Cunningham:**

**[8994]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether her Department consulted with Stockton Borough Council on its decision to move the Department for Work and Pensions office in Stockton to Middlesbrough.

**Mims Davies:**

As part of the Department's plans to reshape how, when and where the Department works (resulting in a smaller, greener and better estate); we plan to move colleagues and services from Stockton-on-Tees to Middlesbrough James Cook House which is approximately 5.2 miles away. The planned move is to an existing DWP building and as such, no consultation with Stockton Borough Council took place.

## ■ Employment Schemes: Social Security Benefits

**Jonathan Ashworth:**

**[7999]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the oral contribution of the Prime Minister of 18 May 2022, Official Report, Column 679, what the evidential basis is for 300,000 more people moving off welfare and into work on the Way to Work programme in the last month.

**Mims Davies:**

As published in PQ [6950](#), as of 22 May at least 347,300 unemployed Universal Credit (UC) claimants moved into work during the Way to Work Campaign between 31 January and the end of 22 May 2022.

The comments referenced in Official Report, Column 679 were based on having moved over 300,000 UC claimants into work during the Way to Work Campaign, this cumulative figure having been achieved in the last month. Please refer to PQ [6950](#) to see our current estimate of the number of claimants moved into work in the month of April, based on our internally management information. In April 102,900 people moved into work, a rate of 9.9%, the highest rate for any April on record.

The management information presented here has not been subjected to the usual standard of quality assurance associated with official statistics but is provided in the interests of transparency and timeliness.

## ■ Foetal Anticonvulsant Syndrome: Government Assistance

**Virginia Crosbie:**

**[10047]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the adequacy of support available to families with children affected by foetal valproate syndrome.

**Chloe Smith:**

There is a wide range of disability-related financial support, including benefits, tax credits, payments, grants and concessions.

The Department recognises the extra costs disabled people can face in their everyday lives. Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment and Carer's Allowance are intended to help with these extra costs. Claimants are able to use their benefit according to their own priorities. These benefits are tax-free, non-contributory and are uprated annually in line with inflation. They are paid in addition to other benefits such as Universal Credit, which someone may be entitled to claim.

## ■ Fuel Direct Scheme

**Liz Saville Roberts:**

[\[9078\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether she is taking steps in response to the decision of some energy companies to halt participation in the Fuel Direct Scheme.

**David Rutley:**

The Secretary of State has written to OFGEM to express her concern. Energy suppliers have a duty to support customers in payment difficulty. OFGEM have noted the concerns raised and will work with DWP to ensure benefit claimants receive the support they need.

## ■ Household Support Fund

**Mr Clive Betts:**

[\[9837\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, in what way allocations to local authorities are to be calculated in the context of the £500 extension to the household support fund.

**David Rutley:**

Government is providing an additional £500 million from October to help households with the cost of essentials, bringing the total funding for this support to £1.5 billion. In England £421m will be used to extend the Household Support Fund (October 2022 – March 2023).

Guidance and individual local authority indicative allocations for this further extension to the Household Support Fund will be announced in due course.

## ■ Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Skills Bootcamps

**Gill Furniss:**

[\[8096\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on the potential merits of extending the length of time those claiming legacy benefits can participate in a Skills Bootcamp in HGV driving to 16 weeks.

**Mims Davies:**

Through DWP Train and Progress Universal Credit claimants can access all full-time work-related training for up to 16 weeks. This includes Skills Bootcamps in the

logistics sector and allows claimants to benefit from gaining key vocational skills, in all sectors where there is labour market demand.

We plan to review the impact of the 16-week extension on outcomes and will take a view as to whether we expand this flexibility to legacy benefit claimants.

## ■ Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Training

**Gill Furniss:**

**[8095]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 19 May 2022 to Question 2599 on Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Training, what her timescale is for making a decision on whether to extend to 16 weeks the length of time people on legacy benefits can participate in full-time employment-focussed skills training; and if she will make a statement after she has made a decision.

**Mims Davies:**

Through DWP Train and Progress, we have already extended to 16 weeks the full-time training flexibility within Universal Credit. It was agreed, across Government, that this extension applied to the period April 2022 – March 2023.

We plan to review the impact of the 16-week extension on labour market outcomes later this year and will take a view as to whether we expand this flexibility to legacy benefit claimants.

## ■ Pension Credit

**Sir John Hayes:**

**[8955]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what her Department is doing to increase the take-up of pension credit awards by those who qualify.

**Sir John Hayes:**

**[8956]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many pensioners in South Holland and The Deepings constituency are in receipt of pension credit.

**Sir John Hayes:**

**[8957]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate her Department has made of the number pensioners in the UK who qualify for pension credit but do not claim their entitlement.

**Guy Opperman:**

In November 2021, there were 2,436 Pension Credit claimants in South Holland and the Deepings. Quarterly statistics for the number of Pension Credit claimants by constituency can be found on Stat-Xplore. The latest figures are for November 2021.

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk>

Guidance for users is available at: <https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/index.html>

In Great Britain, there are an estimated 770,000 entitled non recipients of Pension Credit. This is available in the “Income-related benefits: estimates of take-up” publication which can be found on the statistics section of gov.uk. The latest publication relates to the financial year 2019 to 2020. Income-related benefits: estimates of take-up: financial year 2019 to 2020 - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

We have already undertaken a range of actions to raise awareness of Pension Credit and increase take-up. Initial internal management information suggests that new claims for Pension Credit in the 12 months to December 2021 were around 30% higher compared to the 12 months to December 2019.

Earlier this year, we directly targeted over 11 million pensioners with information about Pension Credit and the additional support it can provide in the leaflet accompanying their annual up-rating notification.

However, it is more important now than ever before that we ensure all eligible pensioners claim the vital financial help which Pension Credit provides. That’s why on 3 April we launched a new Pension Credit awareness campaign. We are promoting Pension Credit in a variety of ways, including on social media – with advertising targeted both at potential recipients as well as their friends and family and also in key locations for the elderly, such as post offices and GP waiting rooms.

I have written to the editors of regional newspapers across England, Scotland and Wales calling on readers to check if they could be eligible and make a claim. This was done on repeat occasions in 2021. I have also written to all MPs, urging them to lend the campaign their support. MPs are well placed to promote Pension Credit to their older constituents and many already do so.

On 6 June there will be a further roundtable meeting with some stakeholders, who have reach and expertise, to identify other practical initiatives to encourage eligible pensioners to claim.

On 15 June, there will be another Pension Credit awareness media day of action with broadcasters, newspapers and other partners encouraged to reach out to pensioners to promote Pension Credit through their channels. We will also extend the campaign to include advertising in regional and national newspapers. This event was a success in 2021.

We know that one of the best ways to reach eligible customers is through trusted stakeholders working in the community. We will be producing and distributing leaflets and posters which can be used across local communities, and we will also be updating our digital toolkit with information and resources that any stakeholder can use to help promote Pension Credit.

## ■ Pension Credit: Coventry

**Colleen Fletcher:**

**[9898]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will make an estimate of the number of pensioners in (a) Coventry North East constituency and (b) Coventry are

eligible for pension credit but do not claim it; and what steps her Department is taking to help ensure that all pensioners in those areas receive their full entitlement to pension credit.

**Guy Opperman:**

There are currently some 2,980 recipients of Pension Credit in Coventry North East and 7,390 Pension Credit recipients in Coventry.

We have already undertaken a range of actions to raise awareness of Pension Credit and increase take-up. Initial internal management information suggests that new claims for Pension Credit in the 12 months to December 2021 were around 30% higher compared to the 12 months to December 2019.

Earlier this year, we directly targeted over 11 million pensioners with information about Pension Credit and the additional support it can provide in the leaflet accompanying their annual up-rating notification.

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**■ Pension Credit: East Yorkshire****Sir Greg Knight:****[7918]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate she has made of the take up rate for Pension Credit in East Yorkshire; and what steps her Department is taking to increase take up of Pension Credit (a) locally and (b) nationally.

**Guy Opperman:**

There are currently some 3,040 recipients of Pension Credit in East Yorkshire.

We have already undertaken a range of actions to raise awareness of Pension Credit and increase take-up. Initial internal management information suggests that new claims for Pension Credit in the 12 months to December 2021 were around 30% higher compared to the 12 months to December 2019.

Earlier this year, we directly targeted over 11 million pensioners with information about Pension Credit and the additional support it can provide in the leaflet accompanying their annual up-rating notification.

However, it is more important now than ever before that we ensure all eligible pensioners claim the vital financial help which Pension Credit provides. That's why on 3 April we launched a new Pension Credit awareness campaign. We are promoting Pension Credit in a variety of ways, including on social media – with advertising targeted both at potential recipients as well as their friends and family and also in key locations for the elderly, such as post offices and GP waiting rooms.

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## ■ Personal Independence Payment: Autism

**Virginia Crosbie:**

**[10043]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of not requiring autistic people to undertake reassessments for Personal Independence Payments in the context of that condition not having a cure.

**Chloe Smith:**

Entitlement to Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is assessed on the basis of the needs arising from a health condition or disability, rather than the health condition or disability itself. Award rates and their durations are set on an individual basis, based on the claimant's needs and the likelihood of those needs changing. Award reviews allow for the correct rate of PIP to remain in payment, including where needs have increased as a consequence of a congenital, degenerative or progressive condition.

We announced in the Shaping Future Support: Health and Disability Green Paper that we will test a new Severe Disability Group (SDG) so that those with severe and lifelong conditions can benefit from a simplified process to access PIP, ESA and UC without needing to go through a face-to-face assessment or frequent reassessments. We will consider the test results once complete to influence thinking on the next stages of this work.

## ■ Poverty: Children

**Colleen Fletcher:**

**[9899]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment her Department has made of trends in the level of child poverty in (a) Coventry North East constituency, (b) Coventry, (c) the West Midlands and (d) England.

**David Rutley:**

Latest statistics for the levels of children who are in low income in Coventry North East constituency and Coventry are published in "Children in Low Income Families", and can be found at: [Children in low income families: local area statistics 2014 to 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)\(opens in a new tab\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics-2014-to-2021).

National statistics on the number and percentage of children in low income are published annually in the "Households Below Average Income" publication, and can be found at: [Households below average income: for financial years ending 1995 to 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/households-below-average-income-for-financial-years-ending-1995-to-2021)

Due to methodological differences, the figures in these two publications are not comparable.

## ■ Social Security Benefits: Death

**Rosie Duffield:**

**[9098]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many claimants have died after their claims have been denied for (a) Employment Support Allowance and (b) Universal Credit in each of the last 10 years.



**Chloe Smith:**

This information is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Eligibility criteria for Universal Credit and Employment and Support Allowance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit/eligibility> and [www.gov.uk/employment-support-allowance/eligibility](https://www.gov.uk/employment-support-allowance/eligibility)

■ **State Retirement Pensions****Wendy Chamberlain:****[10014]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to her Department's publication entitled Benefit Expenditure and caseload tables 2022, what the level of expenditure on Category D retirement pensions is in each year from 2019-20; what estimate she has made of the level of fluctuations from year to year in the total amount paid; and if she will make a statement.

**Guy Opperman:**

The table below shows the total level of expenditure on Category D retirement pensions for each financial year from 2019/20 to 2026/27. The year-on-year change is also included in the table to show the fluctuations in total Category D expenditure over this period. The increase in outturn in 2020/21 relates to the Department's estimated liability due to underpaid Category D State Pension. The increase in forecast in 22/23 reflects the increased expenditure for the year in which it will be repaid to customers.

£ million, nominal terms	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	
	Outturn	Outturn	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	
State Pension (non contributory 'Category D')	£119	£275	£149	£271	£187	£174	£180	£188	
Year on year change	£0	£156	-£126	£122	-£84	-£13	£6	£8	

Source: [Benefit expenditure and caseload tables 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/benefit-expenditure-and-caseload-tables-2022)

## WRITTEN STATEMENTS

### DEFENCE

#### ■ **Armed Forces Pay Review Body Chair Appointment**

**Minister for Defence People and Veterans (Leo Docherty):** [\[HCWS75\]](#)

I am pleased to announce that the Prime Minister has appointed Mr Julian Miller as the next Chair of the Armed Forces' Pay Review Body. His appointment will commence on 17 June 2022 and run until 16 June 2025.

The appointment was conducted in accordance with the 2016 Governance Code on Public Appointments.

### FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

#### ■ **Contingent Liability Notification: Ukraine Guarantee**

**Minister for Europe and North America (James Cleverly):** [\[HCWS74\]](#)

Today, I have laid a departmental Minute which describes a liability the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) are undertaking to support the economic stability of Ukraine after the Russian invasion in March 2022.

It is normal practice, when a Government Department proposes to undertake a contingent liability in excess of £300,000 for which there is no specific statutory authority, for the Minister concerned to present a departmental minute to Parliament giving particulars of the liability created and explaining the circumstances; and to refrain from incurring the liability until 14 parliamentary sitting days after the issue of the statement, except in cases of special urgency.

The FCDO will guarantee a further USD500 million or EUR-equivalent (approximately EUR464 million or GBP396 million at current exchange rates) of financing by the World Bank to the Government of Ukraine. It will enable USD500 million of additional World Bank financing to the Government of Ukraine.

The UK announced an intention to guarantee a further USD500 million of financing from the World Bank to the Government of Ukraine on April 9 2022. If, during the period of 14 parliamentary sitting days beginning on the date on which this Minute was laid before Parliament, a member signifies an objection by giving notice of a Parliamentary Question or by otherwise raising the matter in Parliament, final approval to proceed with incurring the liability will be withheld pending an examination of the objection.

The exact length of the liability is dependent on the agreed loan by the World Bank but is expected to last up to 25 years. FCDO would only pay official development assistance if a default occurs as agreed with the World Bank. The departmental Minute sets this out in detail.

HM Treasury has approved the proposal in principle and the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee has been notified.

I am placing today a copy of the departmental Minute in the Library of the House.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

### ■ Publication of report pursuant to Section 42 of the Agriculture Act 2020 on the UK-Australia Free Trade Agreement

**Secretary of State for International Trade (Anne-Marie Trevelyan):** [\[HCWS76\]](#)

The Government has, today, laid before Parliament a report on the Australia-UK Free Trade Agreement. The report is required under Section 42 of the Agriculture Act 2020, prior to the agreement being laid before Parliament for formal scrutiny under the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010 (CRaG).

The Government has always been clear that we will not compromise on the UK's high environmental protection, animal welfare and food safety standards in our trade negotiations. This report, which draws on independent advice from the Trade and Agriculture Commission<sup>[1]</sup>, Food Standards Agency and Food Standards Scotland, confirms the Government's view that the UK-Australia FTA is consistent with the maintenance of UK statutory protections in these areas.

This report is intended to inform and support scrutiny of the UK-Australia agreement prior to its ratification and entry into force. The text of the UK-Australia agreement was published on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2022 and will be formally laid before Parliament for scrutiny under the provisions of CRaG in due course.

[1] TAC advice published on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-australia-fta-advice-from-trade-and-agriculture-commission>

## TRANSPORT

### ■ Planning Update

**Minister of State for Transport (Andrew Stephenson):** [\[HCWS73\]](#)

I have been asked by my Right Honourable Friend, the Secretary of State to make this Written Ministerial Statement. This statement confirms that it has been necessary to extend the deadline for a decision for the A1 in Northumberland – Morpeth to Ellingham Development Consent Order under the Planning Act 2008. The extension is in light of the Written Statement made by the Secretary of State on 26 May 2022 regarding the Union Connectivity Review [HCWS62](#)

The proposed development comprises the widening of approximately 12.8 miles stretch of the A1 between Morpeth to Ellingham with approximately 9 miles online widening and approximately 3.8 miles of new offline highway. The Secretary of State received the Examining Authority's report on 5 October 2021 and the original deadline for a decision

was extended from 5 January 2022 to 5 June 2022 following a Written Ministerial Statement laid on 15 December 2021 to allow for further consideration of environmental matters.

The deadline for a new decision is 5 December 2022.

The decision to set a new deadline is without prejudice to the decision on whether to grant development consent for the above application.