



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 9 June 2022 and the information is correct at the time of publication (07:01 P.M., 09 June 2022). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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**Notes:**

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

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

## ANSWERS

### BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

#### ■ **Business: Rural Areas**

**Bob Seely:**

[\[10011\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans his Department has to help increase the survival rate of micro-businesses in rural and isolated communities.

**Paul Scully:**

The Government is providing a range of support to help small and medium-sized businesses across the UK with rising costs, including those in rural communities. The Government has cut fuel duty for 12 months, raised the Employment Allowance to £5,000, and is zero-rating VAT on energy-saving materials. This builds on existing support, including business rates relief worth £7 billion over five years.

Additionally, Help to Grow programmes will enable eligible SMEs to mitigate the effects of rising costs by providing financial discounts on approved digital technologies up to a value of £5000 and improving SME leadership and management skills through subsidised courses.

#### ■ **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Dunfermline and West Fife**

**Douglas Chapman:**

[\[9036\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the recent announcement of Government plans to reduce the number of civil servants by 91,000, what estimate he has made of the likely reduction in the number of staff in his Department located in Dunfermline and West Fife constituency as a result of those plans.

**George Freeman:**

The Department does not have any civil servants with a contractual work location within the Dunfermline and West Fife constituency.

#### ■ **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Hikvision**

**Sir Iain Duncan Smith:**

[\[9827\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 23 May 2022 to Question 4425 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.

**George Freeman:**

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.

### ■ Directors: Disqualification

**Kate Green:** [\[11672\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, on how many occasions the Official Receiver has issued legal proceedings against a disqualified director for the recovery of assets in each of the last five years.

**Paul Scully:**

Information on the issuing of legal proceedings by the Official Receiver against disqualified directors is not collated and is not readily available. As part of their duties, where the Official Receiver is liquidator, they may instruct solicitors to take recovery action against directors, whether disqualified or not. Many cases are resolved without the need to issue legal proceedings.

**Kate Green:** [\[11673\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the average (a) cost is incurred by the Insolvency Service of each director disqualification it has undertaken and (b) length of time taken by the Insolvency Service to secure a director disqualification, from the date at which the office holder's report on the director's conduct is submitted to the Insolvency Service, for each of the last five years.

**Paul Scully:**

The Insolvency Service does not currently record the average cost of a disqualification, however where a case goes to court, the Insolvency Service's costs are calculated on individual cases for the purpose of seeking costs.

The Insolvency Service records the average time from the date of insolvency to disqualification. The average time for each of the last five years is:

2021-22	22.1 months
2020-21	21.7 months
2019-20	19.8 months
2018-19	19.9 months
2017-18	20.4 months

## ■ Energy Bills Rebate: Park Homes

**Andrew Bridgen:** [\[11676\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to help ensure that people who live on mobile home sites receive energy grants rather than the site owner.

**Greg Hands:**

The Government is aware that not all households have electricity provided through a domestic electricity supply contract, such as mobile home residents. The Government raised this in its technical consultation on the Energy Bills Support Scheme.

Households without a domestic electricity supply contract are not eligible for the scheme and the Government is exploring options for other ways in which they might receive similar support. The responses to this consultation are being analysed and a response will be published later in the summer.

## ■ Fuels: County Durham

**Mary Kelly Foy:** [\[13241\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has made a recent assessment of the level of disparity in prices for petrol and diesel across County Durham.

**Mary Kelly Foy:** [\[13242\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent assessment he has made of trends in the price of petrol and diesel in County Durham.

**Greg Hands:**

The Government publishes weekly national average pump prices for both petrol and diesel online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/weekly-road-fuel-prices>. The Government does not collect data at a local level.

The difference in retail prices largely reflects a difference in traded wholesale prices for the two fuels. The wholesale cost of diesel is often higher than for petrol. This is because UK and European refineries were historically set up at a time when petrol was the dominant fuel in demand. Consequently, the UK is a net importer of diesel but a net exporter of petrol.

The Government analysis shows that petrol and diesel prices are mainly driven by the price of crude oil (priced in US\$) and exchange rates. These are also influenced by a range of factors, which can create small price differences in the short term. This includes balance of demand and supply for individual fuels, levels of oil stocks, changes to the costs of biofuels, and distribution and retail costs.

## ■ New Businesses: Government Assistance

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[9932\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what support his Department is providing to establish business incubators.

**George Freeman:**

The Levelling Up White Paper sets out how we will maximise the contribution of innovation to levelling up by building on existing and emerging strengths across the country. Innovation is a vital part of levelling up making businesses more productive, boosting wages and economic growth.

Incubators and accelerators play a crucial role in helping entrepreneurs start and grow their business. This builds on several government programmes to support business including the Start Up Loans Company, Help to Grow: Management and Help to Grow: Digital – helping business to grow whilst levelling-up productivity across the UK.

## ■ Park Homes: Energy

**Sir Desmond Swayne:** [\[13025\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will take steps to ensure that park home residents receive the full benefit of the support available to households to help meet the rise in the cost of energy.

**Greg Hands:**

The Government is aware that not all households have electricity provided through a domestic electricity supply contract, such as mobile home residents. The Government raised this in its technical consultation on the Energy Bills Support Scheme.

Households without a domestic electricity supply contract are not eligible for the scheme and the Government is exploring options for other ways in which they might receive similar support. The responses to this consultation are being analysed and a response will be published later in the summer.

## ■ Quantum Technology

**Chi Onwurah:** [\[13111\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to help ensure UK capability for the manufacture of quantum (a) devices and (b) systems.

**George Freeman:**

The National Quantum Technologies Programme, which is set to see £1 billion of public and private funding through its 10 year lifetime (2014-2024), is a collaboration between government, industry, and academia to drive the development of transformative research, products, and services in quantum. As part of this, UK Research and Innovation's £173 million Commercialising Quantum Technologies Challenge (part of the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund) includes dedicated funding



for projects to remove the obstacles to scale up and to support manufacturing and system or service development. UK academia and industry have been further supported by bodies such as the Compound Semiconductor Catapult and the National Physical Laboratory's Quantum Metrology Institute to test and validate quantum technologies. In order to build on these existing initiatives, the UK Government is developing a national strategy to be published later this year.

## ■ Warm Home Discount Scheme

**Grahame Morris:**

[\[13095\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether support is available to people who fall within the Broader Group eligible for the Warm Home Discount Scheme but who cannot receive a payment as a result of the limit on the number of customers who can benefit.

**Greg Hands:**

Energy suppliers participating in the Warm Home Discount scheme have discretion over the criteria they use to determine which households qualify for support under the Broader Group. They are given minimum targets for Broader Group payments set by the Government, but suppliers can make further payments.

## CABINET OFFICE

### ■ EU Law

**Hilary Benn:**

[\[11559\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how the Government manages UK regulatory divergence from the EU.

**Hilary Benn:**

[\[11560\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how his Department (a) reviews EU developments and new regulations, (b) assesses the potential effect of UK divergence from those regulations on (i) UK industry, (ii) trade barriers between Great Britain and Northern Ireland, (iii) devolved administrations, (iv) level playing field provisions in the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement and EU adequacy and equivalence decisions and (v) levels of protection for the environment, labour and human health and (c) makes assessments as to which regulations the UK should align with and where there may be potential opportunities from divergence.

**Hilary Benn:**

[\[11561\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to the monitoring of regulatory divergence from the EU, how many full-time equivalent staff undertake that work; how external stakeholders input into that work; which Department coordinates and/or shares that work across Government; and if he will publish assessments made of the impact of any regulatory divergence.

**Mr Jacob Rees-Mogg:**

This government is making the most of our new found freedom to reform, repeal and replace outdated retained EU law that does not serve the interests of the UK. We are creating a regulatory environment which will promote growth, innovation and prosperity, cutting at least £1 billion of red tape for businesses, while maintaining the high standards the British people rightly expect.

Cabinet Office is leading and coordinating the programme of work being undertaken by Secretaries of State across government, to identify and deliver the regulatory and economic opportunities that Brexit has provided. No staff within the Brexit Opportunities Unit in the Cabinet Office monitor how the EU chooses to diverge from the UK.

The Government monitors significant EU policy developments that are likely to affect UK interests, to ensure compliance with the Trade and Cooperation Agreement and support business readiness as necessary. My officials and I undertake regular engagement with the Devolved Administrations on the opportunities arising from leaving the EU, using Common Frameworks and other existing intergovernmental structures.

**■ United Kingdom Security Vetting: York**

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[13168\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether he plans to retain UK Security Vetting Services in York after the disposal of Imphal Barracks.

**Mr Jacob Rees-Mogg:**

The Cabinet Office as a department is committed to growth in both York and Glasgow. Cabinet Office jobs, including United Kingdom Security Vetting (UKSV), are likely to move to a new Hub in York; the location and timing of which has yet to be decided.

**DEFENCE****■ Armed Forces: Deployment**

**Kenny MacAskill:** [\[13255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many of his Department's personnel are deployed around the world; and in which locations those people are stationed.

**James Heapey:**

The following table details the number of personnel deployed overseas on operations and their location. The numbers change depending on operational requirements, but are accurate at the time of answering the hon. Member's question.

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<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>NUMBER OF UK MILITARY DEPLOYED</b>	<b>NUMBER OF CIVILIANS DEPLOYED</b>	<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF MILITARY AND CIVILIANS DEPLOYED</b>
Egypt	2	0	2
HMS Montrose	180	2	182
HMS Penzance	41	0	41
HMS Chiddingfold	45	0	45
RFACardigan Bay	0	0	0
HMS Middleton	45	0	45
HMS Bangor	36	0	36
HMS Trent	61	0	61
HMS Spey	46	0	46
HMS Tamar	75	0	75
AbuDhabi (British Embassy)	1	0	1
Bahrain	188	2	190
Cyprus	214	6	220
Oman	18	0	18
Qatar	132	0	132
UAE	110	0	110
USA	23	1	24
Baghdad(British Embassy)	1	0	1
Iraq	189	3	192
Jordan	12	0	12
Kuwait	51	3	54
TelAviv(British Embassy)	1	0	1
Saudi Arabia	24	0	
Azerbaijan	1	0	1
Pakistan(British High Commission)	3	0	3

<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>NUMBER OF UK MILITARY DEPLOYED</b>	<b>NUMBER OF CIVILIANS DEPLOYED</b>	<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF MILITARY AND CIVILIANS DEPLOYED</b>
Pakistan	1	0	1
Gibraltar	3	0	3
Mali	464	5	469
Democratic Republic of Congo	1	0	1
Kenya	10	0	10
Somalia	69	0	69
Djibouti	5	0	5
Tunisia(British Embassy)	1	0	1
Chad	3	0	3
Nigeria	27	0	27
South Sudan	3	0	3
Estonia	1,372	14	1,386
Germany	81	2	83
Latvia	2	0	2
Lithuania	89	0	89
Poland	414	3	417
Bosnia	2	0	2
Kosovo	41	0	41
Ukraine	97	0	97
Romania	197	1	198
Bulgaria	2	0	2
North Macedonia	2	0	2
Slovakia	43	0	43
Finland	1	0	1
Sweden	2	0	2

LOCATION	NUMBER OF UK MILITARY DEPLOYED	NUMBER OF CIVILIANS DEPLOYED	TOTAL NUMBER OF MILITARY AND CIVILIANS DEPLOYED
Japan	1	0	1
Indonesia	8	0	8
Kuala Lumpur	1	0	1
Lebanon (British Embassy)	7	0	7
Ghana	25	0	25

### ■ Military Aid: Coronavirus

**John Healey:**

[\[13034\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many of the 34,000 Armed Forces personnel deployed on over 450 Military Aid to Civil Authority tasks supporting the Government's response to the covid-19 pandemic came from the (a) Army, (b) Royal Air Force and (c) Navy.

**James Heapey:**

The data held centrally by the Ministry of Defence on Military Aid to the Civil Authorities tasks records trades and roles for personnel deployed, but not details of the originating Service. Therefore, unfortunately a detailed response can be provided only at disproportionate cost. However, multiple personnel from all Services were used throughout the response.

### ■ Platinum Jubilee 2022: Medals

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[13167\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, for what reason (a) MOD Guard Service personnel and (b) other officials in his Department undertaking senior operational roles are not eligible for a Platinum Jubilee Medal.

**Leo Docherty:**

Ministry of Defence (MOD) civilian personnel are not eligible for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal (QPJM), in keeping with long standing precedent within Defence for Jubilee medals that they are only awarded to members of the Armed Forces and Adult Cadet Volunteers meeting the requisite criteria. As the MOD Guard Service and 'other officials' are civilians, they do not meet the requisite criteria. However, as emergency service personnel are an eligible group for the QPJM, there are some limited exceptions in cases where MOD civilian personnel meet the definition of being part of an emergency service. For this reason, the Northern Ireland Security Guard Service are eligible.

**■ Qatar: Football****John Healey:**[\[13032\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the total cost to his Department is for the support it is providing to Qatar for the FIFA World Cup 2022.

**James Heappey:**

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) is working with Qatar to support their delivery of a safe, secure and successful FIFA World Cup 2022. The total cost to the MOD of this support will be up to £800,000. This will complement existing MOD activity with Qatar, with whom the UK has a long-standing defence relationship - in particular through the UK-Qatar Joint Typhoon Squadron, which will support Qatar's air security operations during World Cup 2022. The Joint Typhoon Squadron was established to provide the Qatar Emiri Air Force with bespoke support and training, following their purchase of 24 Typhoon from BAES. This, along with the Joint Hawk Training Squadron, also supports RAF pilot development and is part of a wider package of contracts with the Qatar Armed Forces collectively worth in excess of £6 billion and which sustains thousands of jobs in the UK.

**■ Shipbuilding****Stuart Anderson:**[\[10012\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent steps his Department has taken to support British shipbuilding.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

On 10 March, the Prime Minister and I launched the UK's new National Shipbuilding Strategy, setting out a comprehensive package of Government support for the key priority of furthering a shipbuilding renaissance for the whole of the UK. It reflects over £4 billion of investment in UK shipbuilding over the next three years.

Implementation of this ambitious strategy is being led by the National Shipbuilding Office.

I am delighted with the progress already made since publication of the National Shipbuilding Strategy. In particular, the National Shipbuilding Office is now fully operational and brings with it a clear strategic focus on maximising the national benefits from Government shipbuilding activity. The Maritime Capability Campaign Office, the trade and investment arm of the National Shipbuilding Office, in the Department for International Trade is also fully established and is rapidly identifying new civil and defence export opportunities.

Other recent achievements include the announcement of the Chair and membership of the UK Shipbuilding Skills Taskforce, who will develop a strategy to boost skills and jobs in the shipbuilding industry. The second round of the multi-year Clean Maritime Demonstration Competition has also been launched as part of Department for Transport's £206 million investment in a UK Shipping Office for Reducing Emissions, which will match-fund private investment in the commercialisation of clean maritime technologies. The Shipbuilding Enterprise for Growth, the main interface

between Government and industry, has also met twice to drive implementation of the NSbS, and begun work to develop a model for the Shipyard of the Future and define UK Centres of Excellence.

Lastly, for all Ministry of Defence shipbuilding procurements, I have raised the percentage of the evaluation criteria that considers their contribution to social value to a minimum of 20%. This could include the extent to which procurements support skills development or supply chain resilience. We will also construct future contracts to ensure we maximise as much as possible either UK build, content or design, or all three.

## ■ Ukraine: Military Aid

**John Healey:**

[\[13033\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, from which Department's budget the £25 million made available for the Ukraine defence innovation fund will be covered.

**James Heappey:**

The £25 million innovation fund is included as part of the additional £1.3 billion of funding announced by the Chancellor for military operations and aid to Ukraine, and is provided from Her Majesty's Treasury reserves.

**John Healey:**

[\[13047\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the cost of replenishing weapons supplied to Ukraine will come from his Department's budget.

**James Heappey:**

Her Majesty's Treasury have agreed to fund initial stock replenishment from the £1.3 billion package announced for this Financial Year. Further work is being undertaken to establish and agree funding lines for the longer term replenishment programme.

**John Healey:**

[\[13048\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether HM Treasury will be providing his Department funding to replace stockpiles of weapons supplied to Ukraine at their (a) initial or (b) depreciated value.

**James Heappey:**

Discussions with Her Majesty's Treasury are ongoing to agree a funding strategy in-line with revised capability requirements.

**Kenny MacAskill:**

[\[13253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will publish details of British military aid that has been (a) delivered and (b) ordered for Ukraine since February 2022, including (i) equipment type, (ii) quantity of units, (iii) the companies that the equipment has been bought from and (iv) the price paid for that equipment.

**James Heappey:**

The UK has committed £1.3 billion for military operations and aid to Ukraine. To date, we have sent over 6,900 anti-tank missiles, 120 armoured vehicles, 1,360 anti-

structure munitions, Air Defence systems including Starstreak missiles and 4.5 tonnes of plastic explosives. We are also providing Multiple-Launch Rocket Systems (MLRS). This is in addition to more than 200,000 pieces of non-lethal aid and medical equipment sent to help sustain the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

**Kenny MacAskill:** [\[13254\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department has had discussions with Ukrainian authorities on the use of military aid provided by the UK on targets inside Russia.

**James Heapey:**

We have provided Ukraine with military aid on the understanding that it will be used in accordance with international humanitarian law. We liaise on a daily basis with the Ukrainian Government, and they are clear that equipment provided by us is intended for the defence of Ukraine in Ukraine.

## DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

### ■ Data Protection: EU Law

**Chi Onwurah:** [\[13710\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to her Department's consultation entitled Data: a new direction, for what reason that consultation did not assess the risk of not having an adequacy agreement relating to data transfers from the UK to the EU.

**Julia Lopez:**

The Data: a new direction consultation included an [assessment](#) of the impact of a change in adequacy status with the EU arising as a result of proposed reforms.

The UK is firmly committed to maintaining high data protection standards - now and in the future. Protecting the privacy of individuals will continue to be a national priority. We will continue to operate a high-quality regime that promotes growth and innovation, and underpins the trustworthy use of data.

EU adequacy decisions do not require an 'adequate' country to have the same rules, and our view is that the proposed reform of UK legislation on personal data is compatible with maintaining free flow of personal data from Europe.

### ■ Data Protection: Public Opinion

**Darren Jones:** [\[13221\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if her Department will take steps to ensure that reform to the UK's data protection regime is aligned with public attitudes to data regulation.



**Julia Lopez:**

In September 2021, the Government launched its consultation, "Data: A New Direction".

This consultation ran for 10 weeks, closing on 19 November 2021 and received almost 3,000 responses. Responses were received from the Information Commissioner's Office; organisations which represent a cross-section of the UK economy and society, and from overseas organisations.

During the consultation period, the Government engaged with a range of stakeholders, including over 40 roundtables with academia, tech and industry bodies, and consumer rights groups, providing a wide range of views.

The Government has carefully considered these responses and we will publish our response soon.

Furthermore, the CDEI recently [published](#) the findings from the first wave of its tracker survey. This will be a vital resource in seeking to understand public attitudes towards data and AI, and the conditions needed to create a trustworthy environment for data use.

**■ Film & TV Production Restart Scheme****Feryal Clark:**[\[11899\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of extending the Film and TV Production Restart Scheme that was available during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Julia Lopez:**

The UK Film and TV Production Restart Scheme was introduced as part of Her Majesty's Government's commitment to provide support during the Covid-19 pandemic and enable productions to proceed in the absence of insurance for Covid-19 related risks.

The Scheme has supported a production boom during the pandemic, protecting over 100,000 jobs and £3bn of production spend, ensuring the continued production of content for our screens. Thanks to the Government's Living with Covid plan, the success of the vaccination programme and effective risk management by productions during the pandemic, the risk to productions posed by coronavirus has diminished, with no civil authority restrictions in place that require production shutdowns. As a result, the Government is confident it no longer needs to intervene in the market and has closed the scheme to new applications.

**EDUCATION****■ Children: Care Homes**

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[13181\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will take steps to ensure that traumatised children and young people who perpetrate serious child on adult violence are placed in a safe residential placement.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[13182\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he plans to provide additional residential provision for children who are at serious risk to themselves or family members in (a) England and (b) Yorkshire.

**Will Quince:**

A safeguarding approach is paramount for children at risk of committing violence. It is important that services provide wrap-around support, both to reduce harm and prevent children entering the criminal justice system.

Local authorities are responsible for ensuring there are enough places for their young people in care, including in foster care and children's homes. They might provide places themselves or commission them from other providers. Children's homes provide care for some of the most vulnerable and traumatised children who may be at risk of causing harm to themselves and others.

The 2021 Spending Review announced £259 million capital funding for both secure and open children's homes up until 2025. This will enable local authorities to expand their provision to reduce out of area placements, provide for children with complex needs, and promote innovative practice to maintain placement stability or prevent children from entering the care system. The second wave of bidding is open to all local authorities in England.

The department is currently working with a local authority in South Yorkshire awarded funding in the first wave to create additional provision for children in their area, increasing available services for therapy and support.

**■ Further Education Capital Transformation Fund**

**Margaret Greenwood:** [\[11710\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much of the £1.5 billion FE Capital Transformation Fund has been allocated since March 2020; where those funds have been allocated and for what purpose; and how the remaining funds will be used.

**Alex Burghart:**

The Further Education (FE) Capital Transformation Programme is delivering the £1.5 billion manifesto commitment to upgrade FE college estates.

In the first phase of the Programme, we allocated £200 million to all FE colleges and designated institutions in August 2020, to enable colleges to undertake immediate remedial work and upgrade the condition of their estates.

The department announced in April 2021 that we are working with 16 colleges, that are some of the most in need of support to upgrade and revitalise their estates.

In April 2022, the department announced that up to £405 million of funding is being provided to a further 62 colleges who were successful in bidding for funding through the FE Capital Transformation Fund. We will aim to provide an update on plans for delivering the remainder of the £1.5 billion of funding later this year.

**Mr Toby Perkins:**

**[13090]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much of the Government's £1.5 billion FE Capital Transformation Programme has been (a) allocated to capital projects or (b) remains unallocated as at 6 June 2022.

**Alex Burghart:**

The Further Education Capital Transformation Programme (FECTP) is delivering the department's £1.5 billion commitment to upgrade further education (FE) college estates.

In August 2020, the department allocated £200 million to all FE colleges and designated institutions in the first phase of the FECTP. This enabled colleges to undertake immediate remedial work and upgrade the condition of their estates.

In April 2021, the department announced it is working with 16 colleges, which are some of the most in need of support, to upgrade and revitalise their estates. In April 2022, the department announced that up to £405 million of funding is being provided to a further 62 colleges that were successful in bidding for funding through the FE Capital Transformation Fund.

The department will provide an update on plans for delivering the remainder of the £1.5 billion of funding later this year, including a confirmation on how much funding remains to be invested.

**Mr Toby Perkins:**

**[13092]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of impact of increased material costs on the adequacy of funding made available through the Further Education Capital Transformation Fund.

**Alex Burghart:**

On 4 April 2022, the department announced the colleges that were successful in the Further Education Capital Transformation Fund bidding process.

Each college has received a grant offer from the department. Most colleges will also be contributing match funding. It is for colleges to manage their condition improvement project within the available budget.

The department will monitor progress across all college projects.

### ■ Further Education: Buildings

**Mr Toby Perkins:** [\[13091\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment his Department has made of the (a) adequacy and (b) condition of the FE college estate.

**Alex Burghart:**

The Further Education (FE) Condition Data Collection took place in 2019. It is a visual survey that collects detailed condition, contextual and building management data for every FE college in England. Independent building survey organisations assessed elements of each building and graded them A, performing as intended, to D, immediate remedial action or replacement.

### ■ Leeds City College: Buildings

**Hilary Benn:** [\[13059\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what his planned timetable is for making a decision on funding for Leeds City College to replace the Enfield site and College House with a new building in Mabgate.

**Alex Burghart:**

Leeds City College and the project to replace the Enfield site and College House, with a new building in Mabgate, was announced as 'approved in principle' following the college's successful application to the Further Education Capital Transformation Fund. Department officials have met with the college to seek further assurance on some elements of their plans to help ensure the investment is value for money and will provide appropriately sized facilities to support local demand for further education and vocational training.

A decision will be made in due course and notified to the college. We expect this to be in the next two weeks.

### ■ Sixth Form Education: Per Capita Costs

**Mr Richard Holden:** [\[9199\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the average level of per pupil funding was in (a) actual and (b) real terms for sixth form funding in 2018-19; and what that the equivalent figures are for 2022-23.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The average Total Programme Funding per 16 to 19-year-old student in the 2018/19 academic year was £4,504.

The equivalent figure for the 2022/23 academic year is not yet available.

In 2018/19, the base rate of funding per 16 and 17-year-old student was £4,000. This was the largest component in the Total Programme Funding per student. In the 2022/23 academic year, the base rate will be £4,542. This is an increase of 13.6% in cash terms, or 2% in real terms over the base rate in 2018/19.

**ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS****■ Animal Products: Imports**

**Mrs Pauline Latham:** [\[8989\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the potential (a) costs and (b) benefits of banning imports of hunting trophies into the UK; and whether such assessments took into account the potential impact of such a ban on (i) levels of biodiversity and (ii) evolutionary harm to species.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The consultation and call for evidence on hunting trophies ran from 2 November 2019 to 25 February 2020. We received views and evidence on the costs and benefits of further restrictions, including the potential impacts on biodiversity and species.

The summary of responses and Government response to the consultation and call for evidence are available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/hunting-trophies-controlling-imports-to-and-exports-from-the-uk/outcome/summary-of-responses-and-government-response--2>.

Further information will be published when legislation is brought forward in due course.

**■ Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks: Motorcycles**

**Hilary Benn:** [\[11556\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he has received representations from (a) national parks and (b) areas of outstanding natural beauty requesting additional powers to control the use of motorcycles.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The Government published its response to the Landscapes Review on 15 January. This included some consultation questions on potential restrictions to motor vehicles on unsealed unclassified roads and making a greater range of enforcement powers available to National Park Authorities and the Broads Authority to help manage visitor pressures. We have received 15,000 responses to our consultation and are currently in the process of analysing these. We will publish a response to the consultation in due course.

**■ Avian Influenza: Disease Control**

**Kerry McCarthy:** [\[13066\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he plans to develop a highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in wild birds response plan in England, as recommended by the United Nations Convention on Migratory Species Scientific Task Force on HPAI in wild birds.

**Jo Churchill:**

Defra's objective in tackling any outbreak of avian influenza is to eradicate the disease as quickly as possible from the UK poultry and captive-bird population and regain UK World Organisation for Animal Health disease-free status. Defra's approach is set out in the Notifiable Avian Disease Control Strategy for Great Britain. Swift and humane culling of kept birds on infected premises coupled with good biosecurity aims to prevent the amplification of avian influenza and subsequent environmental contamination and to reduce the risk of disease spread from infected premises to other poultry or to wild birds. Current policy is in line with international standards of best practice for disease control. It reflects our experience of responding to past outbreaks of exotic animal disease.

The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) carries out year-round avian influenza surveillance of dead wild birds submitted via public reports and warden patrols. During the avian influenza 2021/2022 season wild birds from multiple locations across GB have tested positive for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) H5N1. Findings of HPAI in wild birds in GB are published weekly by APHA and are available on GOV.UK at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/avian-influenza-in-wild-birds>

Defra works closely with the UK Health Security Agency and non-governmental organisations with interests in wildlife conservation and wetland management and recognises the importance of One Health approaches in the communication and coordination for preparedness and responses. Defra has a robust programme of avian influenza surveillance in both wild and kept birds and actively promotes the importance of biosecurity measures to reduce spillover and spillback risks between poultry and wild birds.

It is not current policy to cull wild birds, although powers exist to do this. The control of avian influenza infection in wild bird populations is not feasible from a logistical, environmental and biodiversity perspective. Culling of wild migratory bird populations is unlikely to be effective in preventing further spread of avian influenza, and their hunting would likely cause the dispersion of the birds. At present, we cannot foresee circumstances that would lead to a change in this policy, although this position will be assessed as any new evidence emerges.

We continue to monitor the current situation both in Europe and globally, as well as the effectiveness of any disease control measures taken. Any future decisions on disease control measures will be based on the latest scientific, ornithological and veterinary advice.

**■ Bovine Tuberculosis: Disease Control****Daniel Zeichner:****[11699]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what was the cost to the public purse of badger culling in England in each year since 2013.

**Jo Churchill:**

The costs to the Government of badger culling in England are published annually on Gov.uk, and can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bovine-tb-government-badger-control-costs>. Costs for 2021 are being calculated and will be published once ready.

The costs of badger culling need to be placed in context of the annual taxpayer costs of TB eradication in England, which are around £100 million per year. More than £30 million was spent on cattle compensation in the year to 31 March 2022.

**Carbon Emissions****Wera Hobhouse:****[9950]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate he has made of the amount of PM 2.5 emissions that has been produced by the (a) manufacturing and combustion sector as a whole, (b) burning of all types of biomass and (c) burning of wood pellets for energy.

**Jo Churchill:**

Emissions of key air pollutants, including PM<sub>2.5</sub>, are compiled and reported by Defra on an annual basis through the National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory. The latest data is available to view at <https://naei.beis.gov.uk/data>.

**Environment Protection****Geraint Davies:****[9832]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Environment Agency is taking to speed up its environmental permitting service.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The Environment Agency (EA) is working through a backlog of work. Where appropriate it is expediting critical cases and those linked to Government priorities such as green growth and infrastructure. The EA is taking significant steps to recover and improve services going forward: actively recruiting more staff and using rolling recruitment campaigns. It has brought in contractors and reassignment of staff from its laboratory service no longer required to support Coronavirus sewage testing.

A rigorous improvement programme is in place to drive efficiency and better responsiveness to business, including the introduction of more specialist teams to deliver complex and high environmental risk work as well as improved advice for applicants. The recent Government Spending Review allocated significant funding to the EA for modernised digital systems. These will improve both the pace of permitting and provide better platforms for its customers to make applications on in future.

**■ Environment Protection: Standards****Ian Byrne:** [\[10040\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when the Government consultation on environmental targets produce its final report and recommendations.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The Environmental Targets consultation is currently open and can be accessed through Citizen Space. The consultation is due to close on 27 June. We will carefully consider responses before finalising the targets to be laid in Parliament. A Government response will be published in due course.

**■ Marine Protected Areas: Fisheries****Paul Girvan:** [\[11832\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that (a) bottom-towed fishing gear and (b) other destructive fishing activities are banned from offshore Marine Protected Areas.

**Henry Smith:** [\[13094\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will mark World Oceans Day on 8 June 2022 by committing the UK to ban bottom-towed fishing gear and other destructive fishing activities from all offshore Marine Protected Areas to ensure their protection.

**Luke Pollard:** [\[13239\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will mark World Oceans Day by committing that the Government will ban bottom-towed fishing gear and other destructive fishing activities from all offshore marine protected areas to ensure their proper and meaningful protection.

**Rebecca Pow:**

This is a devolved matter and the information provided therefore relates to England only.

We have designated over 100 Marine Protected Areas since 2010, so that now 40% of English waters are within the protected area network. We have already committed that the next step is to ensure all of our MPAs are properly protected, supported by our proposed legally binding target under the Environment Act which we are consulting on at present. We have already introduced byelaws in the first four sites which ban bottom towed gear over sensitive habitats and published a call for evidence relating to the next thirteen sites. We are aiming to have all Marine Protected Areas in English offshore waters protected from damaging fishing activity by 2024.



**Dr Alan Whitehead:** [\[13028\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will set out the Government's timeframe for ensuring that all offshore marine protection areas designated for seabed features are fully protected from bottom trawling.

**Rebecca Pow:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Crawley, on 20 May 2022, PQ UIN 1160.

## ■ Nitrogen Oxides

**Ian Byrne:** [\[10041\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate he has made of the change in levels of nitrogen oxide levels in ((a) Liverpool and (b) England from March 2019 to March 2022.

**Jo Churchill:**

Assessments of concentration changes are reported in:

i) National Statistics on Air Quality are available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/air-quality-statistics>

ii) The statutory compliance assessments, "Air Pollution in the UK" 2019 and 2020 (published in September 2020 and 2021 respectively) are available here:

<https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/library/annualreport/>

Concentration data for 2022 has not yet been quality assured and remains provisional. It is available in UK-Air here: <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/data/>

Our national statistics (published in April) are compiled on an annual basis and data for the year 2022 will be published in April 2023 following data ratification. The formal compliance assessment for 2021 will be published in "Air Pollution in the UK" this September once concentration modelling has been completed. Compliance for 2022 calendar year will be publication in September 2023.

Our National Monitoring Network (the Automatic Urban and Rural Monitoring Network (AURN)) measured a 20% decline in annual mean concentrations of nitrogen dioxide across roadside sites in the UK between the periods 2019 to 2021, and a 19% decline at urban background sites. There were two AURN sites in Liverpool throughout this period, Birkenhead Borough Road and Wirral Tranmere. Current data shows a declining trend in concentrations at both of these sites since March 2019.

## ■ Tree Felling

**Catherine West:** [\[13202\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how his Department (a) consults communities, including taking residents' environmental concerns into account, in respect of the process of local tree felling.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The England Trees Action Plan sets out how trees should be seen as an essential part of the fabric of urban areas and aims to increase the number of trees in our towns and cities.

The Government is committed to protecting our valuable street trees. The new Duty to Consult on street tree felling as mandated in the Environment Act 2021 will increase transparency in decision making and allow the public to be consulted before a street tree is felled. We are currently developing appropriate guidance for the new Duty to Consult and will be seeking to commence the measure in 2023.

**■ Tree Felling: Subsidence****Catherine West:**[\[13201\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to work with the (a) the buildings insurance industry and (b) local authorities to find alternatives to tree felling where insurance companies claim trees as liabilities due to subsidence risk.

**Rebecca Pow:**

We will be introducing the new Duty to Consult on street tree felling, as mandated in the Environment Act 2021, which will increase the awareness and transparency in decision making on street trees and create a space for the public to contribute to these decisions. We are currently developing appropriate guidance for the new Duty to Consult and will be seeking to commence the measure in 2023.

We are also working to produce best practice guidance for local authorities to produce their own local tree and woodland strategies, supporting local authorities to expand, manage and protect local treescapes. The guidance will be in the form of a toolkit for Local Tree and Woodland Strategies and will be published by the Tree Council.

**FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE****■ Afghanistan: Females****Preet Kaur Gill:**[\[13216\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what bilateral programmes to support women and girls in Afghanistan her Department funded in (a) 2019-20 and (b) 2020-21.

**James Cleverly:**

The Government is committed to upholding the rights of women and girls in Afghanistan. We continue to raise rights of women and girls in our political engagement with the Taliban. We continue to mainstream support to women and girls across our programmes to ensure we take every opportunity to support women and girls' access to services. This includes reaching up to 2.5m women and girls through

our support to the World Food Programme (WFP) with in-kind food or cash assistance, and up to 4m women and girls through the UK's contribution to the UN's Afghan Humanitarian Fund (AHF). In addition our funding through other agencies has included support for access to; sustainable clean water & sanitation, nutrition treatment and primary healthcare services as well as support provided in response to gender-based violence. We continue to engage with Afghan women to ensure we are responding to their needs.

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[\[13217\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what level of funding the Government provided to support women and girls in Afghanistan in (a) 2019-20 and (b) 2020-21.

**James Cleverly:**

As the Foreign Secretary said on 31 March, at least 50% of those we reach with our aid should be women and girls. The Foreign Secretary has announced £286 million of aid for Afghanistan this financial year and we are funding child protection support and supporting access to gender-based violence services. Ministers and officials regularly meet Afghan women to discuss our support; most recently, on 24 March Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, the Minister of State for South Asia, held a roundtable with a diverse group of Afghan women leaders.

#### ■ **Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Staff**

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[\[9961\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether her Department has modelled staffing reductions of up to 40 per cent; and where she plans to target such reductions.

**Vicky Ford:**

The FCDO is expecting to receive a commission from Cabinet Office in the next few days. We expect the guidance from Cabinet Office to set out what proposals the FCDO will offer to help meet the Government targets on workforce numbers for the period to March 2025. We are likely to be asked to set out our present plans and to model the impact of workforce reductions.

On the 24 May, Minister Milling during a general debate reiterated that the Foreign Secretary and UK government are committed to ensure that we have the right people, in the right places, to deliver the UK's international priorities.

#### ■ **Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Hikvision**

**Sir Iain Duncan Smith:**

[\[9828\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 23 May 2022 to Question 4453 and with reference to the Answer of 23 February 2022 to Question 124950, if she will review her response of 23 May; and whether she plans to remove any Hikvision cameras in use at her Department.

**Vicky Ford:**

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.

**Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Reorganisation****Preet Kaur Gill:**[\[9965\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the merger of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the Department for International Development (DfID), if she will publish the (a) cost of that merge as of 26 May 2022, (b) staffing retention rates among former DfID and former FCO staff and (c) details of progress on the integration of IT systems.

**Vicky Ford:**

FCDO's Annual Report and Accounts are published in summer each year. The costs of merging the FCO and DFID into the FCDO (Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office) during FY 2020/21 were published in last year's Annual Report and Accounts. We will publish the cost of merger for FY 2021/22 in this year's Annual Report and Accounts.

The turnover rate of FCDO staff over the last financial year, April 2021 to March 2022, was 10.8%. Over the same time period the turnover rate of former DFID staff was 11.4%, and the turnover rate of former FCO staff was 10.4%. The turnover rate of FCDO staff during the first year of the merger, September 2020 to August 2021, was 9.3%. Over the same time period the turnover rate of both former DFID staff and former FCO staff was also 9.3%

FCDO has developed a new single IT platform called Osprey. Over 650 ex-DFID staff have so far been migrated to Osprey, with plans to have all FCDO staff, in the UK and overseas, operating from a single core IT cloud tenant by September 2022. The FCDO Hera programme will deliver a single integrated finance and HR system, the system is planned to be implemented in two phases in July and November 2022.

**Kenya: General Elections****Ms Lyn Brown:**[\[9858\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether the Government has made plans with international partners in the event that the result of the 2022 Kenyan general election is not accepted.

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

[\[9859\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent steps she has taken to offer technical support to the (a) Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission of Kenya, (b) police services in that country and (c) judiciary in that country for upholding peace, freedom and fairness in the 2022 Kenyan general election.

**Vicky Ford:**

The funding and organising of Kenya's elections in August is the responsibility of the Government of Kenya. The UK commends Kenya's ongoing preparations for the elections, recognising, however, that challenges remain. In line with requests from Kenya's independent institutions, the UK is providing technical support with the aim of building on lessons learned and improving standards to help strengthen the democratic process. We are supporting the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) on civic and voter education, public communications and election security. We are also working with the security sector and judiciary as key partners in election security and ensuring community cohesion, respectively. This is supporting Kenya's ability and capacity to deliver free, fair, credible, and peaceful elections.

Together with likeminded partners, we urge all parties to peacefully engage in elections and are working in concert to plan for all eventualities. The UK regularly convenes Heads of Mission in Nairobi to this end. In addition, we have established contact with all planned international Election Observer Missions. In the event that the result is not accepted we will continue to call for all parties to respect due legal process and challenge through the judiciary.

#### ■ **M16: Environment Protection**

**Kenny MacAskill:**

[\[13256\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 6 June 2022 to Question 9182 on MI6: Environment Protection, whether the documentation sent to the National Audit Office by MI6 will be published or otherwise available to the public.

**James Cleverly:**

The report's environmental content intersects with sensitive national security and operational work so will not be made public.

#### ■ **Northern Ireland Protocol: Disclosure of Information**

**Stella Creasy:**

[\[13110\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will publish the legal advice provided to her Department relating to her proposals on the Northern Ireland Protocol and the compatibility with the provisions in section 38 of the EU (Withdrawal Agreement) Act 2020 and Article 4 of the Withdrawal Agreement.

**James Cleverly:**

It is a longstanding convention for governments of all parties not to comment on the fact or contents of government legal advice. As the Foreign Secretary set out in the house on 17 May, we are very clear that this is legal in international law. We believe bringing forward further legislation on this issue to be urgent and essential to protecting the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement.

**■ Somaliland: Embassies**

**Alexander Stafford:** [\[10054\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she plans to take steps to open a British embassy in Somaliland.

**Alexander Stafford:** [\[10055\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she has had discussions with the Secretary of State for International Trade on a trade deal between the UK and Somaliland.

**Vicky Ford:**

For a decade the UK has been the only Western bilateral donor with a permanent diplomatic presence in Hargeisa. However, consistent with the entire international community, we do not recognise Somaliland's unilateral declaration of independence and will therefore not seek to open a British Embassy in Somaliland. It is for Somaliland and Somalia to come to an agreement about their future relationship. Any new arrangements would need to be recognised by the African Union and neighbours in the region. The African Union is the pre-eminent regional body mandated to defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of its member states, of which Somalia is one. The UK encourages dialogue between Mogadishu and Hargeisa on this issue.

The Department for International Trade's approach to trade agreements can be found on their gov.uk pages. Somalia, including Somaliland, qualifies for duty free quota free access on goods imported to the UK. There are no imminent plans to negotiate a free trade agreement with Somalia, including Somaliland. The UK is, however, a leading economic partner of Somaliland. The UK's support to Somaliland includes the £25 million Horn of Africa programme, and our £35 million contribution to the Somaliland Development Fund. Through British International Investment, the UK has made a significant investment in the development of Berbera Port. This is part of an initial £232 million investment into three ports in Africa. Our existing £25 million of investment of official development assistance in the Berbera Corridor will drive economic growth and present significant opportunities for UK businesses.

**HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE****■ Asthma: Accelerated Access Collaborative**

**Liz Twist:** [\[9970\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has plans to extend the NHS Accelerated Access Collaborative's rapid uptake programme for severe asthma.

**Liz Twist:** [\[9971\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has plans to allow initiation of biologic treatments for severe asthma to take place in secondary care.

**Gillian Keegan:**

Asthma biologics were selected for tailored support by the Accelerated Access Collaborative's (AAC) Rapid Uptake Products programme. This aimed to increase adoption in the National Health Service for the treatment of severe asthma in 2021/22. The AAC has now concluded its support following an additional 2,185 patients initiated on asthma biologics through the programme. The Academic Health Sciences Network continues to support NHS organisations to improve access to these medicines in 2022/23.

All asthma biologics are prescribed following a decision by a specialist severe asthma multi-disciplinary team under specialised commissioning arrangements. Severe asthma networks are configured to meet local needs and in some areas biologics may be prescribed in secondary care through these networks, with the appropriate governance in place.

**■ Caesarean Sections: Maternity Services**

**Alicia Kearns:** [\[10028\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Answer to Question 3755 on Caesarean Sections: Maternity Services, if he will strengthen post natal care for mothers who have had a caesarean section in the upcoming Women's Health Strategy.

**Maria Caulfield:**

Further information on the specific topics which will be addressed in the Women's Health Strategy will be available in due course. We will publish the Strategy later this year.

**■ Carers: Cost of Living**

**Conor McGinn:** [\[13165\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on ways to help unpaid carers meet the rising cost of living.

**Gillian Keegan:**

While we have had no specific discussions, Ministers and officials have regular discussions on a range of issues.

The Government continues to provide financial support to unpaid carers through Carer's Allowance, the Carer Element in Universal Credit and other benefits. Carers in low-income households will benefit from the Means-Tested Benefit Cost of Living Payment. Those living in the same household as the disabled person they care for will benefit from the disability Cost of Living Payment, while families with a pensioner in the household will benefit from the Pensioner Cost of Living Payment.

**■ Carers: Respite Care****Patrick Grady:****[8043]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish a recovery and respite plan for unpaid carers.

**Gillian Keegan:**

*[Holding answer 6 June 2022]:* We have no plans to publish a specific recovery and respite plan for carers. However, the white paper 'People at the Heart of Care' sets out the Government's strategic approach to empower unpaid carers to live happy, healthy and fulfilling lives. We will invest up to £25 million to work with the sector on improving the services provided to support unpaid carers. We expect that this funding will identify and test new and existing initiatives, which could include respite and breaks, peer group and wellbeing support and how these could be combined to maximise the impact.

The Better Care Fund (BCF) will also be used to support carer breaks and respite services. The BCF Framework for 2022/23 will be published shortly and will ask that all local BCF partnerships set out how funding is used to support unpaid carers.

On 13 May 2022, I wrote to local authorities on the importance of respite support for carers and to understand any challenges in getting these services regaining full capacity.

Additionally, the Chancellor recently announced a package of support to help with the cost of living. Unpaid carers in low-income households will benefit from the Means-Tested Benefit Cost of Living Payment, and those living in the same household as the disabled person for whom they care will benefit from the disability Cost of Living Payment, while families with a pensioner in the household will benefit from the Pensioner Cost of Living Payment.

**■ Community Nurses****Steve McCabe:****[3468]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department will take to alleviate pressures on district nurses.



**Maria Caulfield:**

*[Holding answer 24 May 2022]:* The Department is on track to deliver 50,000 more nurses in the National Health Service, supported by improved staff retention and enabling staff to return to practice, investment in a diversified training pipeline and ethical international recruitment. Through the NHS People Promise, all NHS staff in England, including district nurses, can receive rapid access to free and confidential mental health assessment and support via new Health and Wellbeing hubs.

In addition, NHS England and NHS Improvement are delivering the Community Nursing Safer Staffing Tool, which will support community organisations to understand how nursing staffing levels should relate to changing workloads. A five-year National Community Nursing Plan is being developed to create attractive, fulfilling and flexible careers in community nursing, improve patient outcomes and experience through collaborative working with accelerated use of digital and data and increase the profile of community nurses.

Community nurses are also being trained as Professional Nurse Advocates to support colleagues' mental health and wellbeing. This initiative has enhanced recruitment and retention, reduced sickness absence and staff turnover and improved patient experience.

**■ Coronavirus: Vaccination****Jessica Morden:**[\[13081\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will expand the spring covid-19 booster vaccine rollout to include people with motor neurone disease who are clinically extremely vulnerable.

**Maggie Throup:**

During the spring booster vaccination programme, an additional dose is being offered to residents in care homes for older adults, individuals aged 12 years old and over who are immunosuppressed and adults aged 75 years old and over. The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) do not currently recommend a further dose for those with motor neurone disease, unless the existing criteria applies.

The JCVI continues to consider the latest available data, particularly in relation to the timing and value of any further doses. On 19 May 2022, the JCVI published interim advice on an autumn COVID-19 booster programme. The JCVI advises that a booster dose should be offered to residents in care homes for older adults and staff; frontline health and social care workers; all those aged 65 years old and over; and adults aged 16 to 64 years old who are in a clinical risk group, such as motor neurone disease.

The JCVI will continue to review the vaccination programme, the definitions of clinical risk groups and the epidemiological situation to inform its final advice. The Government will consider the JCVI's final advice before determining which groups should be included in the autumn COVID-19 booster programme.

## ■ Death Certificates

**Kim Leadbeater:**

[\[5520\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the impact of Part 6, of Section 169, on medical examiners of the Health and Social Care Act 2022 on the time taken to complete the death certification process; and if he will take steps to reduce that time.

**Maria Caulfield:**

*[Holding answer 24 May 2022]:* We have no current plans to make an assessment. The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care will have a duty to ensure that sufficient medical examiners are appointed in the healthcare system in England; funds and resources are made available to medical examiners to enable them to carry out their functions of scrutiny to identify and deter poor practice; and to ensure that performance is monitored. NHS England and NHS Improvement's National Medical Examiner will issue guidance to medical examiners to ensure that their functions are undertaken in an effective and proportionate manner. In 2018 we set the objective to ensure that a reformed system for certifying non-coronial deaths improves the quality and accuracy of Medical Certificate of Cause of Deaths and provides adequate scrutiny to identify and deter criminal activity or poor practice. This should be achieved without imposing undue delays on the bereaved or undue burdens on medical practitioners and others involved in the process.

## ■ Defibrillators and First Aid

**Rosie Cooper:**

[\[11607\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps the Government is taking to improve public access to (a) first aid kits and (b) defibrillators.

**Rosie Cooper:**

[\[11608\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to encourage members of the public to undertake CPR and first aid training.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The Government encourages organisations across England to consider purchasing a defibrillator with first-aid equipment, particularly in locations where there are high concentrations of people. Many community defibrillators have since been provided in public locations through national lottery funding, community fundraising schemes, workplace funding or by charities

NHS England and NHS Improvement and St John Ambulance co-ordinate skills development to increase the use of Automated External Defibrillators by individuals in the community. This will include a national network of Community Advocates to champion the importance of first aid, training 60,000 people to save up to 4,000 lives each year by 2028.

**■ Dementia: Diagnosis**

**Virginia Crosbie:** [\[6964\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that identification of dementia in patients is prioritised during hospital admissions.

**Gillian Keegan:**

*[Holding answer 26 May 2022]:* We have committed to expand the provision of all-age mental health liaison services in all acute hospitals in accident and emergency (A&E) departments and inpatient wards. We are also establishing acute frailty services in all hospitals with a major A&E department to ensure that dementia patients can be assessed, treated and supported by skilled multidisciplinary teams.

**■ Dialysis Machines**

**Feryal Clark:** [\[5503\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many patients received haemodialysis at home in the financial year (a) 2021-22, b) 2020-21 and (c) 2019-20.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The information is not available in the format requested.

**■ Dialysis Machines: Children**

**Kenny MacAskill:** [\[9179\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 20 May 2022 to Question 2655, on Dialysis Machines: Children, what the terms of reference are under which the Renal Services Clinical Reference Group are reviewing the reimbursement process for children receiving home dialysis.

**Kenny MacAskill:** [\[9180\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 20 May 2022 to Question 2655 on Dialysis Machines: Children, what the timeframe is for the Renal Services Clinical Reference Group reporting on their review of the reimbursement process for children receiving home dialysis.

**Kenny MacAskill:** [\[9181\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 20 May 2022 to Question 2655 on Dialysis Machines: Children, what his timeframe will be for implementing the recommendations made within the Renal Services Clinical Reference Group review of the reimbursement process for children receiving home dialysis.

**Maria Caulfield:**

*[Holding answer 6 June 2022]:* Specialised Paediatric Renal Services, including dialysis, are currently in the remit of the Paediatric Medicine Clinical Reference Group. The Terms of Reference for the review of the reimbursement process for

children and young people receiving home haemodialysis in England are expected to be agreed by July 2022.

Timelines for reporting on the review and implementing its recommendations will be established once the Terms of Reference are agreed.

## ■ Disease Control

**Michael Fabricant:** [\[13031\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to his letter of 6 June 2022, reference PO-1405720, if he will make it his policy not to be a signatory to any treaty with the World Health Organisation which would enable instructions to be given to the Government on when lockdowns may or may not be imposed in any future pandemic; and if he will make a statement.

**Gillian Keegan:**

The Government supports a new international legally binding instrument to strengthen pandemic prevention, preparedness and response.

The process for developing this new pandemic instrument will be led by the member countries of the World Health Organization, including the United Kingdom. The instrument would become binding if and when the UK accepts it in accordance with our constitutional process. The UK would remain in control of any future domestic decisions about national restrictions or other measures and would be subject to Parliamentary approval.

## ■ Food: Advertising

**Nigel Mills:** [\[9009\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the potential health impact for consumers and businesses of including fruit and nut-based bars under the restrictions for high fat, sugar and salt products.

**Nigel Mills:** [\[9010\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the high fat, sugar and salt regulations, whether his Department plans to publish evidence that demonstrates why sweet nut bars are set to be included in the restrictions, and why sweet nuts in bags are not.

**Maggie Throup:**

The Government decided the restrictions of foods high in fat, salt or sugar in stores and online should apply to a specified list of categories which are significant contributors to children's sugar, salt, and calorie intakes and are heavily promoted. Products within these categories are considered less healthy if they receive a score of four or more for food or a drink product scores one or above, using the 2011 technical guidance to the 2004/2005 Nutrient Profiling Model (NPM). The 2004/2005 NPM is being applied as it is based on scientific evidence and provides an overall assessment of the nutritional content of products considered by balancing the beneficial nutrients of a product including fruit, vegetables and nuts, fibre and protein content against components of food that children should eat less of, such as saturated fat, sugar, salt, and calories. The categories in the sugar and calorie reduction and reformulation programmes have been used as a basis as they were formulated following research and analysis undertaken by Public Health England (PHE). The categories identified everyday foods that contribute significantly to the sugar and calorie intakes of children up to the age of 18 years old. For the sugar reduction programme, PHE held stakeholder engagement between 2016 and 2017 to inform decisions on the categories included in the programme and ensure the application of a consistent approach to businesses and products. A similar approach was used for the calorie reduction programme. The impact assessments for the promotions and placement restrictions, published in December 2020, show the overall health benefit is significant and takes into account the proportionality and feasibility of restricting specific product categories. Definitions of product categories in scope of the advertising restrictions are to be included in a consultation which will be launched shortly.

**■ Genito-urinary Medicine: Finance****Andrew Gwynne:**[\[13074\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether funding will be made available for the implementation of the upcoming sexual and reproductive health strategy.

**Maggie Throup:**

No additional funding is currently planned for the implementation of the Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy. However, we have committed £20 million over the next three years to support the expansion of opt-out HIV testing in emergency departments in local authority areas with the highest prevalence. We have also invested £33 million in pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) in the last two years. Funding for PrEP is now included in the Public Health Grant. Local authority spending through the Public Health Grant will be maintained in real terms from 2022 to 2025 to support local authorities to invest in sexual and reproductive health services.

## ■ Genito-urinary Medicine: Health Professions

**Andrew Gwynne:** [\[13073\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the upcoming sexual and reproductive health strategy will (a) prioritise a sexual health workforce and (b) include building resilience to unexpected pressures such as the current monkey pox outbreak.

**Maggie Throup:**

We are undertaking a workforce needs analysis to define and assess the specialist medical skills required to meet population sexual and reproductive health need. We will also consider new public health challenges such as monkeypox as part of the strategy development process.

## ■ Hormone Replacement Therapy: Prescriptions

**Steve McCabe:** [\[6695\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of allowing pharmacists to amend patient prescriptions when there is a supply shortage of hormone replacement therapy medications.

**Maria Caulfield:**

*[Holding answer 6 June 2022]:* The Department has issued Serious Shortage Protocols (SSPs) which allow pharmacists to substitute a specified alternative hormone replacement therapy (HRT) product if the prescribed product is not available. There are currently 13 SSPs in place for five HRT medicines, to manage and mitigate medicine supply issues.

## ■ Incontinence: Health Services

**Peter Dowd:** [\[13154\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will (a) set out the timeframe for the NHS Supply Chain's National Bladder and Bowel Health Project and (b) provide details of which stakeholders have been consulted in respect of that project.

**Gillian Keegan:**

NHS England established the National Bladder and Bowel Health Project to improve continence care, to further research and implement recommendations from 'Excellence in Continence Care' published in 2018. The Project is currently developing bladder and bowel care pathways to be shared with stakeholders, which was paused due to the pandemic. However, a timeframe has not been agreed and no stakeholders have been consulted with as yet.

**Peter Dowd:** [\[13155\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when his Department last made an assessment of the state of continence care in England.

**Peter Dowd:** [\[13156\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has undertaken an assessment of the impact of health interventions provided by Continence Advisory Services on patients' outcomes in respect of incontinence.

**Gillian Keegan:**

No specific assessment has been made. However, NHS England is planning an assessment of 'Excellence in Continence Care' published in 2018 and its pandemic recovery and restoration plans include continence services.

## ■ Kidney Diseases: Health Services

**Mohammad Yasin:** [\[3702\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether chronic kidney disease will be included in the update of the NHS Long Term Plan expected in summer 2022.

**Gillian Keegan:**

The updated NHS Long Term Plan is expected to be published later this year. Discussions on the specific detail of the update are continuing.

**Chris Green:** [\[6794\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 22 March 2022 to Question 135527, on Kidney Diseases: Health Services, what assessment his Department has made of the ability for NHS England and NHS Improvement's Healthcare Inequalities Improvement Programme to facilitate coordination between regions to reduce health inequalities in chronic kidney disease and kidney failure.

**Maria Caulfield:**

No specific assessment has been made.

NHS England's annual statutory performance assessment reviews how it has fulfilled its legal duty to have regard to the need to reduce health inequalities in access to, outcomes from and experience of NHS services.

## ■ Medical Equipment: Electricity

**Dan Jarvis:** [\[13138\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people use large volumes of electricity for medical equipment to treat health conditions at home in (a) Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, (b) Yorkshire and (c) the UK.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The information requested is not collected centrally.

**■ Medical Examinations: Prisoners****Ellie Reeves:** [\[11804\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress the Government has made on adopting a similar model to the Comprehensive Health Assessment Tool for (a) male and (b) female prisoners with built-in evaluation.

**Gillian Keegan:**

There are no plans to do so as the Comprehensive Health Assessment Tool is used only in the children and young people estate and is not appropriate for the adult estate. Adults entering prisons in England receive an initial health screening based on the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's guidance. NHS England and NHS Improvement are currently reviewing the existing reception screening tool within the female estate. The outcome of this review is due to be reported in late summer.

**■ Mental Health****Mr Toby Perkins:** [\[11642\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure local authorities are able draw on resources from the £500m fund designed to support better mental health outcomes.

**Gillian Keegan:**

In 2021/22, we provided £500 million to accelerate plans to expand National Health Service mental health provision and target groups whose mental health has been most affected by the pandemic. This included a £15 million investment in activity to promote positive mental health in 40 of the most deprived local authority areas in England. The Department monitors the delivery and impact of this funding through a quarterly Ministerial Mental Health Recovery Board.

**■ Mental Health Services: Children****Dr Lisa Cameron:** [\[9908\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has taken steps to amend mental health services provision for children in response to increased demand for those services as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

**Dr Lisa Cameron:** [\[9910\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to NHS statistics that one in six children aged between six and 16 have a probably mental health disorder, whether the Government plans to provide additional support for youth mental health services.

**Gillian Keegan:**

We have committed to invest an additional £2.3 billion a year to expand mental health services in England by 2023/24. This will enable a further 345,000 children and young people to access National Health Service-funded mental health support.



In 2021/22, we made £500 million available to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health. This included £79 million to ensure that approximately 22,500 more children and young people could access community mental health services and a further 2,000 to access eating disorder services. We have also accelerated the coverage of mental health support teams in schools and colleges to 20% to 25% of the country, which will increase to over 500 teams, covering approximately 35% of pupils by 2023/24. We have also launched a public call for evidence to support the development of a new cross-Government ten-year plan for mental health which is open until 7 July 2022.

### ■ **Mental Health Services: Telephone Services**

**Theresa Villiers:**

[\[11575\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make it his policy to create a national emergency helpline for mental health which is separate from the NHS 111 service.

**Gillian Keegan:**

*[Holding answer 8 June 2022]:* We have no plans to do so. Currently, all National Health Service mental health providers in England have 24 hours a day, seven days a week all-age urgent mental health helplines available, which provide access to trained mental health professionals for those experiencing a mental health crisis or those concerned for someone who may be experiencing such a crisis. By 2023/24, we aim to enable individuals to select a mental health option via NHS 111 to reach a local specialist NHS urgent mental health service.

### ■ **Pharmacy: Closures**

**Peter Dowd:**

[\[13158\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to ensure that there are no further community pharmacy closures.

**Maria Caulfield:**

Community pharmacies are private businesses which receive funding to provide NHS services. The closure or consolidation of a pharmacy is a commercial decision of the owner. However, the Department monitors the market and the effect of any such closures on patient access. The Pharmacy Access Scheme seeks to protect access for patients where pharmacies are more than a mile away from the next nearest pharmacy or 0.8 of a mile in areas of high deprivation.

### ■ **Pharmacy: Staff**

**Peter Dowd:**

[\[13157\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the mental health and wellbeing of the community pharmacy workforce.

**Maria Caulfield:**

No assessment has been made. However, employers in the National Health Service and the community pharmacy sector have a legal duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of their employees.

NHS England and NHS Improvement have extended the NHS Mental Health Support Helpline and NHS Mental Health and Wellbeing Hubs to all community pharmacy teams. This provides access to free and confidential clinical assessments by trained mental health professionals plus access to talking therapies and other secondary care mental health services.

**Refugees: Ukraine****Alex Sobel:**[\[11851\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what funding the Government has made available for (a) short, (b) medium and (c) long-term specialist mental health services for people fleeing from Ukraine.

**Gillian Keegan:**

While no specific funding has been made available, we have developed guidance for Ukrainian arrivals on accessing health services, including mental health support, in addition to guidance for health care professionals. Arrivals on Ukraine Family and Homes for Ukraine visa schemes are entitled to free health care, including mental health services.

If Ukrainian arrivals experience symptoms of poor mental health, evidence-based treatment is available via their general practitioner or local Improving Access to Psychological Therapies services.

**Wound Dressings: Clinics****Damien Moore:**[\[8156\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department will take to ensure that patients are able to access treatment at wound dressing clinics without delay.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The National Wound Care Strategy Programme (NWCSP) is working with NHS England and NHS Improvement's Transformation Directorate and the Academic Health Science Network Transforming Wound Care programme to promote the equitable provision of wound care clinics in England.

In December 2020, the NWCSP published clinical recommendations for lower limb care, including to allow more people with chronic lower limb wounds to receive equitable care in dedicated chronic lower limb services staffed by clinicians with appropriate time, knowledge, and skills and with established referral routes to escalate care. The NWCSP is currently testing this model, with full results expected in 2022/23.

**HOME OFFICE****■ 10 Downing Street: Security****Rachael Maskell:**[\[9061\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has made an assessment of the adequacy of the security arrangements at 10 Downing Street during the covid-19 outbreak; and if she will undertake a review of whether the (a) police and (b) other security personnel observed parties occurring during their surveillance of the property.

**Kit Malthouse:**

It is our long-standing policy not to provide detailed information on protective security arrangements. To do so could compromise the integrity of those arrangements and affect the security of the individuals and locations concerned.

**■ Asylum and Passports: Applications****Chi Onwurah:**[\[13114\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the impact of trends in the number of employees in her Department on delays in processing (a) passport applications and (b) visa and asylum applications.

**Kevin Foster:**

Her Majesty's Passport Office has increased staffing numbers by 650 since April 2021, which has helped to ensure 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 a record monthly high by completing the processing of nearly two million applications. There are plans in place to recruit a further 550 which will continue to prevent delays, with the vast majority of passport applications being processed with the published ten-week processing time.

Asylum Operations are currently increasing the numbers of asylum decision makers working on processing the backlog of asylum applications, with some currently completing their foundation training programme and completing their mentoring period. We anticipate a further increase in the number of decisions once their training is completed.

The department are also continuing to invest in a programme of transformation and business improvement initiatives which will speed up and simplify decision making, reduce the time people spend in the asylum system and decrease the number of people who are awaiting an interview or decision. The department also have extensive recruitment and training plans in place, including career progression options to aid the retention of staff.

## ■ Asylum: Applications

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[11745\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications from people seeking asylum are awaiting a decision as of 1 June 2022.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[11746\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications from people seeking asylum (a) are awaiting an initial decision, (b) have been waiting six months or less for a decision, (c) have been waiting over six months for a decision and (d) are pending further investigation as of 1 June 2022.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Home Office publishes data on asylum and resettlement in the '[Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release](#)'. Data on the number of asylum applications awaiting an initial decision or further review are published in table Asy\_D03 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 31 March 2022. Data as at 30 June 2022 is set to be published on the 25 August 2022.

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

## ■ Asylum: Employment

**Angela Crawley:** [\[5430\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 18 May 2022 to Question 847, on Asylum: Employment, how many asylum seekers have (a) applied for and (b) been accepted for permission to work or volunteer in (i) 2020, (ii) 2021 and (iii) 2022; and what steps her Department is taking to promote vacancies on the shortage occupations list to asylum seekers.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 27 May 2022]:* The Home Office are unable to report how many asylum seekers have applied for and been accepted for permission to work in 2020, 2021 and 2022 as this information is not held in a reportable format or forms part of published data.

The Home Office do not track how many asylum seekers have applied to volunteer as they are able give their time for free to charitable or public sector organisations without any contractual obligation or entitlement. They are not employees or workers as defined by various statutory provisions. Further information can be found at: [Permission to work and volunteering for asylum seekers \(accessible version\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Information on the shortage occupation list (SOL) is readily available in the public domain as part of the immigration rules: [Immigration Rules - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

**Angela Crawley:**[\[5432\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many shortage occupation list vacancies have been filled by (a) refugees and (b) people entering the UK as part of a resettlement scheme in (i) 2020, (ii) 2021 and (iii) 2022.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Government does not collect the information required to calculate the number of people with refugee status employed in the UK. Those granted refugee status in the UK have full, unrestricted, labour market access and are free to take employment without notifying the Home Office.

To capture numbers would require a manual trawl of data and to do so would incur a disproportionate cost.

**■ British Overseas Territories: British Nationality****Andrew Rosindell:**[\[6705\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress has been made on the Government's consultation on the British Nationality Act 1981 in respect to discriminatory citizenship rules for people from the British Overseas Territories.

**Andrew Rosindell:**[\[6706\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people who (a) are the children of unmarried parents from the British Overseas Territories and (b) have sought to claim citizenship through their mother have had their application for British Overseas Territories citizenship rejected in each of the last three years.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 30 May 2022]:* The Nationality and Borders Act 2022 has created registration routes for the children of British Overseas Territory citizen mothers, and those who would have become British Overseas Territories citizens had their parents been married. Those affected by historical discrimination will be able to acquire both British Overseas Territories citizenship and British citizenship, giving them the statuses they would otherwise have received automatically.

Applications for British Overseas Territories citizenship under existing routes are decided in the territories by Governors. There is currently no specific route for the children of British Overseas Territories citizen mothers, or unmarried fathers, to claim citizenship. The new routes we are introducing will allow them to apply.

**■ CCTV and Lighting: Crime Prevention****Emma Hardy:**[\[9121\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to increase support for the further use of CCTV and improved lighting to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.

**Kit Malthouse:**

Through the Safer Streets Fund, we are providing local organisations, including local authorities, with the resources they need to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour through evidence based and innovative interventions including improved CCTV and lighting.

£50 million per year is being invested in the Safer Streets Fund over the next three years, and since the Fund was established, we have already invested £70 million.

Round Four of the Fund launched in March with the primary focus of targeting neighbourhood crime, violence against women and girls and, for the first time, anti-social behaviour. Police and Crime Commissioners, local authorities, and certain civil society organisations across England and Wales were eligible to bid for funding and bids are currently being assessed.

**■ Community Security Trust: Finance****Theresa Villiers:****[13070]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 16 May to Question 88 on Whetstone Synagogue: Security, if she will take steps to ensure that funding for the Jewish Community Protective Security Grant is increased in line with inflation.

**Damian Hinds:**

Annual funding for the Jewish Community Protective Security Grant is allocated from Departmental budget allocations.

The Home Secretary has announced the extension of the Jewish Community Protective Security Grant for 2022/23, at £14 million, the same amount as in 2021/22.

**■ Cybercrime: Retail Trade****Charlotte Nichols:****[11894]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to tackle cybercrime against retailers; and if she will make a statement.

**Damian Hinds:**

Tackling cyber crime is at the heart of the Government's [National Cyber Strategy](#). The strategy was launched in December 2021 and presents the UK's role as a responsible and democratic cyber power, protecting and promoting UK interests in, and through, cyberspace. The strategy commits £2.6bn of new investment to deliver objectives under five strategic pillars:- Ecosystem; Resilience; Technology; International; and, Threat.

The Cyber Aware campaign is a major national advertising campaign that aims to help businesses (as well as individuals) to protect themselves online. The campaign empowers and enables the public and micro businesses to understand the best ways to stay secure online and take the necessary protective actions; and supports wider efforts to combat the threat at source via the Suspicious Email Reporting Service

(SERs), and through partnership interventions. This year's campaign was launched on 18 March and is focusing on empowering citizens, microbusinesses and sole traders to keep their email accounts secure. [Cyber Aware - NCSC.GOV.UK](#)

The Governments' Cyber Essentials Scheme provides the basic controls all businesses should implement to protect themselves. [About Cyber Essentials - NCSC.GOV.UK](#)

Further good advice and helpful products from Government include the 10 Steps to Cyber Security and the Cyber Information Sharing Partnership (CISP). [10 Steps to Cyber Security - NCSC.GOV.UK](#)

We have also rolled out Regional Cyber Resilience Centres in each of the nine policing regions, and London. These are a collaboration between police, public, private sector and academic partners to provide subsidised or free products and cyber security consultancy services to help Small and Medium Sized Enterprise and micro businesses protect themselves better in a digital age.

We have developed and we continue to innovate on a series of Active Cyber Defence measures. Active Cyber Defence is the principle of implementing security measures to strengthen the security of a network or system to make it more robust against attack. The National Cyber Security Centre's Active Cyber Defence programme provides tools that are free at the point of use which help organisations to tackle, in a relatively automated way, a significant proportion of the cyber attacks that hit the UK.

Retailers (and other organisations) suffering a live cyber attack (in progress), can report directly to Action Fraud, the national reporting centre for cyber crime and fraud, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. [Action Fraud](#)

## ■ Hate Crime

**Catherine McKinnell:** **[9003]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when the Government plans to respond to the Law Commission's review of hate crime laws, published 6 December 2021.

**Catherine McKinnell:** **[9004]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when the Government will publish its new strategy for tackling hate crime, including hate crime committed online.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The Government is working at pace to respond to the Law Commission's review of hate crime laws and develop a new Hate Crime Strategy, and intends to publish the new Strategy shortly.

**■ HM Passport Office: Overtime****Grahame Morris:** [13096]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the Passport Office gave staff the option of overtime to work during the Jubilee Bank Holiday weekend.

**Kevin Foster:**

The option to work overtime was made available to Her Majesty's Passport Office during the Jubilee bank holiday weekend.

**■ Home Office: Written Questions****Sir Iain Duncan Smith:** [8942]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when he will respond to Question 4451 tabled on 18 May 2022 by the Rt hon. Member for Chingford and Woodford Green on Sanctions: Russia.

**Damian Hinds:**

The response for UIN 4451 was given on 30 May 2022.

**■ Homes for Ukraine Scheme****Kirsty Blackman:** [11693]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Ukrainian refugees who were already matched with a sponsor when they applied for a visa under the Homes for Ukraine scheme have received their visas as of 1 June 2022.

**Kirsty Blackman:** [11694]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average processing time is for visas for Ukrainian refugees under the Homes for Ukraine scheme as of 1 June 2022.

**Kevin Foster:**

Information on the number of visas granted under the Ukraine Family Scheme and the Homes for Ukraine Scheme can be found in our published data on the GOV.UK webpage: [Ukraine Family Scheme and Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme \(Homes for Ukraine\) visa data - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/data-and-statistics/ukraine-family-scheme-and-ukraine-sponsorship-scheme-homes-for-ukraine-visa-data)

Information requested which is not contained within this published data is not routinely captured. To capture numbers would require a manual trawl of data and to do so would incur disproportionate cost.

**Daisy Cooper:** [6920]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications to the Homes for Ukraine scheme were received by UK Visas and Immigration between 18 and 25 March 2022; and of those applications, how many had received a permission to travel letter as of 18 April 2022.



**Kevin Foster:**

The Home Office do not publish data on the number of permission to travel letters received. To capture this information would exceed cost threshold. Information on the number of visas granted under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme can be found in our published data on the GOV.UK webpage: [Ukraine Schemes: application data - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)\(opens in a new tab\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/data-and-visual-information/data-catalogue/ukraine-schemes-application-data).

**Daisy Cooper:****[6922]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reason there is a delay between a positive decision to issue a visa under the Homes for Ukraine scheme and the provision of a Permission to Travel document.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 31 May 2022]:* Homes for Ukraine and the Ukraine Family Scheme make up one of the fastest and largest visa programmes in UK history. In as little as two months we have issued over 100,000 visas, helping Ukrainians displaced from their home country to come to the UK to live, work, study and find safety here.

Once an application has been processed and approved, an official permission to travel letter confirming the applicant can travel to the UK is sent to the applicant if they possess a valid Ukrainian passport.

**■ Immigration: Ukraine****Stephen Farry:****[8225]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has issued guidance in respect of its approach to leave afforded to Ukrainian nationals who enter the UK via the Common Travel Area having arrived lawfully in the Republic of Ireland.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 1 June 2022]:* Guidance was provided to the operational arms of the Home Office at the time our approach was implemented.

A copy of the Ministerial Authorisation we have put in place to underpin this policy can also be found in the Libraries of both Houses.

**■ Members: Correspondence****Dr Rupa Huq:****[11770]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the enquiry from the hon. Member for Ealing Central and Acton regarding MPAM/0268882/22.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Home Office has no record of receiving subsequent correspondence from the Hon. Member in relation to the previous correspondence of 24 March 2022 to which the Home Office responded on 23 April 2022 under reference MPAM/0268882/22.

The Home Office has contacted the Hon. Member's office to request a copy of the latest correspondence.

**Chi Onwurah:** [\[13117\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the target time is for responding to hon. Members' correspondence on immigration and asylum representations made on behalf of constituents; how often that target is met; and what steps she is taking to reduce the response time.

**Kevin Foster:**

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

Performance has been impacted by a 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 that it has not been able to meet service standard in other cases. MPs can escalate urgent and compassionate cases via the team at Portcullis House.

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:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/customer-service-operations-data-q1-2022](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/customer-service-operations-data-q1-2022)

**Jane Stevenson:** [\[6905\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average response time is for correspondence on immigration cases from hon. Members to the Home Office; and if she will make a statement.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 26 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. MPs can escalate urgent and compassionate cases via the team at Portcullis House.

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:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/customer-service-operations-data-q1-2022>

We do not publish average waiting times for substantive responses to correspondence.

## ■ Migrant Workers: Research

**Matt Western:** [\[9107\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the impact of the cost of visa applications on (a) recruiting and (b) retaining researchers in the UK.

**Matt Western:** [\[9108\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the impact of the immigration surcharge on (a) recruiting and (b) retaining researchers in the UK.

**Tom Pursglove:**

Attracting international research talent is a key component of our global points-based immigration system. We have a very generous immigration offer, which enables talented researchers to come to the UK through several different routes, including Global Talent, Skilled Worker, and Authorised Exchange (GAE) routes.

Visa fees are set taking account of the charging powers provided by Section 68(9) of the Immigration Act 2014, which include the ability to set fees based on: the cost of processing the application, the benefits provided by a successful application and the wider cost of the Migration and Borders system. Full details are available via the following link - <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/22/section/68>.

Turning to the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS), this is payable by individuals coming to the UK to work, study or join family for a period exceeding six-month in length. An impact assessment was published alongside the Immigration (Health Charge) (Amendment) Order 2020 on 16 July 2020 which included assessments of the impact of the IHS on work routes, of which researchers would be in scope. The impact assessment can be viewed through this link <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2020/1086/impacts>.

## ■ Migrants: School Leavers

**Patrick Grady:** [\[5423\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of school leavers with limited leave to remain in each UK nation in the next 12 months.

**Kevin Foster:**

The information requested could not be obtained without disproportionate cost due to a manual trawl required.

**■ Offences against Children: Reviews****Louise Haigh:****[11757]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether DBS checks were undertaken on appointees to the External Reference Group for the Review into group-based child sexual exploitation.

**Louise Haigh:****[11758]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the criteria were for the appointment of members to the External Reference Group for the Review into group-based child sexual exploitation.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The Home Office consulted with an External Reference Group (ERG) while developing its publicly available paper 'Group-based Child Sexual Exploitation; Characteristics of offending' between July and December 2020. The aim of the ERG was to provide comment on the content and findings of the draft paper to ensure it provided as accurate a picture as possible of what is known about group-based child sexual exploitation offending. Members of the ERG did not have access to any sensitive information or direct access with children, and on this basis DBS checks were accordingly not sought.

The ERG was drawn from a range of sectors, including representatives of victims and survivors, law enforcement, academia, the third sector, and parliamentarians. It had an advisory role in the development of the paper, and as such all comments from the ERG were considered carefully, but not all were taken onboard. The final paper is ultimately a Home Office product and does not reflect the position of all ERG members.

Full details of the ERG's role and input are set out in paragraphs 1 to 10 of the published paper [Group-based Child Sexual Exploitation Characteristics of Offenders \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

**■ Passports: Applications****Michael Fabricant:****[13030]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people were waiting for the issue of a passport (a) in each of the last 12 months for which data are available and (b) in each month in 2019.

**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:** [13188]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many passport applications have been submitted to the Passport Office in each of the last 12 months.

**Kevin Foster:**

The volume of passport applications received is published quarterly in HM Passport Office's transparency data. The most recent published data can be found at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hm-passport-office-data-q1-2022>

**Louise Haigh:** [13191]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of passport applications are processed within six to 10 weeks.

**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. 98.6% of all passport applications continue to be dealt with well within 10 weeks.

**Nick Smith:** [5640]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many passport applicants have used the fast-track service for applications in each of the last six months.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 25 May 2022]:* Appointments for Fast Track and other urgent services are released three weeks in advance. While this means new appointments are released on a daily basis at each of the seven public counters, in busy periods these will be booked quickly.

In response, Her Majesty's Passport Office has implemented measures to increase appointment capacity to further support its customers with urgent travel needs.

**Stephen Kinnoek:** [6785]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many discussions Ministers in her Department had in (a) 2020, (b) 2021 and (c) 2022 with the senior management of Teleperformance on plans for responding to the expected increase in passport renewal applications that would result from the re-opening of the travel industry and easing of covid-related lockdown restrictions.

**Kevin Foster:**

Her Majesty's Passport Office has been clear of its performance requirements of suppliers ahead of the unprecedented 9.5 million passport applications that are expected in 2022.

Teleperformance, who operate the Passport Adviceline, have not been meeting the required standard, and Ministerial feedback has been shared with them by senior officials as part of the regular supplier engagement. As part of their response, by mid-June Teleperformance will have added a further 500 call agents compared to their position in mid-April.

**Police: Yorkshire and the Humber****Emma Hardy:****[9119]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to increase the number of (a) police and (b) police community support officers in (a) Kingston upon Hull and (b) Humberside.

**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.

At 31 March 2022, Humberside police has recruited 237 additional uplift officers against a combined year 1 and 2 uplift allocation of 193 officers. The force has been allocated 129 additional uplift officers in the final year of Uplift.

The 20,000 figure refers to warranted police officers. Decisions about how police resources are deployed, including police community support officers, are a matter for Chief Constables and Police and Crime Commissioners.

Data on the number of PCSOs in each of the territorial police forces in England and Wales are published biannually in the "Police workforce, England and Wales" statistical bulletin, available here: [Police workforce England and Wales statistics - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-england-and-wales-statistics)

**Refugees: Afghanistan****Tim Farron:****[13085]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Afghans evacuated under Operation Pitting are in bridging hotels as of 6 June 2022; and how many of those are children.

**Kevin Foster:**

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 around half of whom are children. 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 absolutely 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 as soon as we can 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.

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[9052]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the potential merits of introducing a scheme similar to the Homes for Ukraine scheme for Afghan refugees.

**Kevin Foster:**

Each safe and legal route is tailored to the unique situation arising in each crisis.

The 'Homes for Ukraine' sponsorship scheme has been developed to meet the immediate needs of those fleeing the Russian invasion of Ukraine and there are no plans to establish a similar scheme for Afghanistan.

In response to the Afghanistan crisis, this Government helped over 15,000 people to safety in the largest and fastest emergency evacuation in recent history. We have also continued to bring people to the UK, with over 3,000 people helped to enter since the evacuation.

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

More widely, community Sponsorship provides the opportunity for friends and neighbours, charities and faith groups to play a direct role in supporting families resettled to the UK as they restart their lives here. Sponsors are able to welcome and support families through the ACRS. Further details on the Community Sponsorship Scheme can be found at:

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

## ■ Refugees: Housing

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[9053]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of permitting UK families to host refugees whose applications for asylum are being processed.

**Kevin Foster:**

Asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute can obtain support under section 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. The support package provided to these individuals usually consists of free, furnished accommodation and a weekly cash allowance to meet other essential living needs such as food and clothes.

Asylum seekers may also obtain accommodation with friends or relatives.

**Refugees: Public Buildings****Rachael Maskell:**[\[9054\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the viability of using public estate buildings to house refugees, including disused care homes in York.

**Kevin Foster:**

Private and public options for the housing of refugees are being pursued by the Home Office in partnership with local authorities. The Home Office welcomes alternative accommodation options proposed by councils and others. A proposition from City of York Council or other organisations in the City of York area would be given due consideration.

On 13 April we announced all local authority areas in England, Scotland and Wales will be expected to participate in a new system of full dispersal. Under full dispersal, the Home Office's accommodation providers will approach all local authorities in England, Scotland and Wales with proposals for procuring specific accommodation within their boundaries. This move is hoped to end the use of contingency accommodation, be less expensive and more sustainable with local authorities sharing the responsibility to accommodate asylum seekers across the UK.

**Synagogues: Security****Theresa Villiers:**[\[13069\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department's funding for the security of synagogues has risen in line with inflation in each of the last five years.

**Damian Hinds:**

Funding for the Jewish Community Protective Security Grant was £14 million in each of the last three years, and £13.4 million in the two years prior to that.

**UK Visas and Immigration: Telephone Services****Chris Bryant:**[\[4510\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will increase levels of staffing on UKVI passport hotline following the widespread delays experienced by customers.



**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 24 May 2022]:* HM Passport Office staff have been deployed to support MP Account Management staff, and answer passport-related enquiries to the Home Office's dedicated MP's hotline. For the most urgent cases, HM Passport Office staff are also available to conduct in-person passport surgeries at Portcullis House.

We have seen a significant increase in call volumes to the MP enquiry line in recent weeks linked to passport applications situation and the Ukraine situation.

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 now have up to 25 dedicated HMPO staff available to take calls currently. Additionally we have up to 20 dedicated Ukraine call handlers who will be ready to take calls in the coming days. This will mean from next week there will 4 times more staff operating the enquiry line compared to the beginning of May.

MPs also can contact the Home Office via the MPs Urgent Enquiries inbox or in person at the Portcullis House walk-in hub.

**■ Violent and Sex Offender Register****Steve Reed:**[\[9890\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of people on the sex offenders register who have changed their name by deed poll in the last three years.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The UK has some of the toughest powers in the world to deal with sex offenders.

Qualifying offenders are required to notify their personal details, including their name, address, date of birth and national insurance number, to their local police station (this system is often referred to as the 'sex offenders' register'). This is done annually or whenever their details change. Failure to comply, including failure to notify the police of a name change, is punishable by up to five years' imprisonment. We recently further strengthened the regime for managing registered sex offenders through the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act.

Statistics on registered sex offenders are published in the most annual Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) report. The most recent report showed that on 31 March 2021 there were 64,325 registered sex offenders in England and Wales, and 1,641 breaches of the notification requirements. The number of offenders cautioned or convicted for a breach of notification requirements had been increasing since 2015/16 but declined by 36% in the year to March 2021. A further breakdown of this data is not collated centrally.

The Home Office is carrying out an internal review to better understand the nature of offenders, including registered sex offenders, changing their name and whether this is used to facilitate further offending.

In addition, on 2 March the Home Secretary appointed former chief constable, Mick Creedon, to conduct an independent review into the police management of registered sex offenders in the community. The review will deliver recommendations to HM Government on what needs to be done across the policing landscape to enhance the management of registered sex offenders in the community in England and Wales.

## ■ Visas: Applications

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[8112\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent estimate her Department has made of the average waiting time between someone from overseas submitting an application for a visitor visa and receiving a decision.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 1 June 2022]:* 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, visits, work and family visas are taking longer to process at this time. Staff are being redeployed to these visa routes and we continue to onboard and train more staff, as we approach the expected summer surge in visa applications.

Standard visitor visa applications are currently taking on average 6 weeks to process.

Information on how UKVI is performing against service standards can be found in the migration transparency data published on the GOV.UK webpage [Migration transparency data - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

## ■ Visas: Married People

**Thangam Debbonaire:** [\[11726\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she made of the potential impact of changes to the service standard for spouse visas from 12 to 24 weeks without notice on peoples' plans.

**Thangam Debbonaire:** [\[11727\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure the 12-week service standard for spouse visas is met.

**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.

Staff from other government departments, including DWP and HMRC, are being surged into the department to help with Ukraine work and enable normal visa routes to return to normal service levels in due course. Applicants were informed of the change to a 24-week service standard on 11 May 2022 and the department is currently operating within this.

## ■ Visas: Overseas Students

**Marsha De Cordova:** [\[11859\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what criteria were used to determine the universities at which attendance makes a person eligible for the High Potential Individual Visa scheme; and for what reason (a) there is not a university that has its main base in Africa on that list and (b) she did not take steps to ensure an equitable distribution of universities across continents.

**Marsha De Cordova:** [\[11861\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that high potential students who have studied at top institutions in Africa are able to apply to work in the UK under the High Potential Individual Visa scheme.

**Kevin Foster:**

The High Potential Individual route provides a short-term opportunity for talented international graduates to work or look for work in the UK as they start their careers.

By concentrating on graduates from select international universities, we will ensure the calibre of applicants remains high. Research has shown graduates from universities ranked in the top 50 of established international rankings are more likely to occupy higher paid roles and to find work easily.

Individuals who have graduated from other international institutions, and those who have no formal qualifications but have job offers in eligible occupations, continue to be able to come to the UK to work through other routes such as the Skilled Worker route.

## ■ Visas: USA

**Chris Law:** [\[8024\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether premium application centres provide an accessible service for visa applicants in the US planning to visit the UK.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 1 June 2022]:* The Home Office offers a non-premium visa application submission service for customers at 136 locations in the United States (US) run by US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). These locations do not require customers to pay an additional fee to attend.

Customers also have the choice of attending one of our Premium Application Centres (PAC) run by our commercial partner, VFS, and paying an associated fee to do so.

Once customers have completed their online application they will be prompted to book a biometric enrolment appointment at the location of their choice.

Full details on the application process for visa applicants in the US can be found on GOV.UK [Apply for a UK visa in the USA - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

It should be noted US citizens are non-visa nationals and do not need to apply for a visa to visit the UK for up to 180 days.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

### ■ Parliamentary Works Sponsor Body

**Anne Marie Morris:**

[\[13139\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for Broxbourne, representing the House of Commons Commission, with regard to the Commission's decision to abolish the Restoration and Renewal Sponsor Body, if he will publish (a) the reason(s) for doing so and (b) the evidence to support that decision.

**Sir Charles Walker:**

In March 2022, the House of Commons Commission published a joint statement with the House of Lords Commission in which it set out concerns about the approach being taken by the Restoration and Renewal Programme, and set out proposals for a new approach to the works and to the governance structure of the programme; and the intention to seek independent advice and assurance.

The statement from the House of Commons and House of Lords Commission can be found here: <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/348/house-of-commons-commission/news/164938/joint-statement-from-the-house-of-commons-and-house-of-lords-commissions/>

The Commissions intend to agree a joint report, informed by advice from an independent panel, setting out their conclusions and putting forward recommendations for consideration by the two Houses. This is currently expected to take place before the summer recess.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

### ■ Chambers of Commerce: Finance

**Gareth Thomas:**

[\[5314\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how much funding her Department has allocated to each chamber of commerce for the provision of independent trade advice in (a) each of the last five years and (b) for 2022-23; and if she will make a statement.

**Gareth Thomas:**

[\[5317\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how much funding his Department has allocated to each Chamber of Commerce for the provision of independent trade advice via Local partnership funding or other similar schemes in (a) each of the last five years and (b) for 2022-23; what formula was used to determine the allocation of funds; and if she will make a statement.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The Department for International Trade (DIT) has not directly allocated funding to any chambers of commerce in the last five years.

The table below shows only those Delivery Partners that are funded by DIT that have links to the Chambers of Commerce and the already contracted costs which fall in FY22/23.

	SW	EM	WM	NE	NW
2017/18	£2,567,900	£2,365,053	£2,827,960	£1,477,420	£3,478,087
2018/19	£2,271,640	£2,389,440	£3,179,300	£1,432,920	£2,908,480
2019/20	£2,400,720	£1,936,718	£2,862,960	£1,472,920	£2,975,480
2020/21	£3,317,088	£2,937,240	£4,367,300	£1,949,920	£3,934,480
2021/22	£2,903,640	£2,705,940	£4,201,040	£1,694,920	£3,623,480
2022/23 (Q1 only)	£717,910	£676,485	£982,075	£423,730	£899,620
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£14,178,898</b>	<b>£13,010,876</b>	<b>£18,420,635</b>	<b>£8,451,830</b>	<b>£17,819,627</b>

Allocation of funding during the contracted periods has been based upon performance data, the numbers of businesses in each region, and levelling up requirements.

DIT looks forward to maintaining and developing strong partnerships with the Chambers of Commerce on local export initiatives and activities.

## ■ Energy Charter Treaty

**Ruth Cadbury:**[\[13147\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment her Department has made of the likelihood of an investor challenge being brought against the UK through the Energy Charter Treaty.

**Ruth Cadbury:**[\[13148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether her Department has made an assessment of the implications for its policies on the UK's net zero target of the judgments in Uniper vs Netherlands and RWE vs Netherlands in relation to the Energy Charter Treaty.

**Mr Ranil Jayawardena:**

The United Kingdom is engaged in the process to modernise the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) to ensure it is aligned with her climate objectives and advances the British and global clean energy transition. Given the substantial investment required

to support the energy transition, the ECT plays an important role in supporting these objectives by protecting British and global investments in clean energy.

The United Kingdom has investment agreements with Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) provisions with over 90 trading partners, including within the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT). There has never been a successful ISDS claim brought against the United Kingdom, nor has the threat of potential claims affected decisions taken by HM Government.

### ■ Overseas Trade: Cyprus

**Andrew Rosindell:** [\[6718\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether her Department has undertaken a recent assessment of the impact of the UK's departure from the EU on the Sovereign Base Areas in Cyprus; and what steps her Department is taking to encourage further trade between those areas and Cyprus.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The Sovereign Base Area (SBA) Protocol to the UK Withdrawal Agreement, stipulates that the SBAs remain in the EU Customs Territory. As such, they remain aligned with EU Free Trade Agreements. The SBAs do not have any commercial ports or airports and do not import or export to any third countries, aside from the Republic of Cyprus.

## JUSTICE

### ■ Bill of Rights

**Steve Reed:** [\[13141\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether he has plans to submit the proposed Bill of Rights for pre-legislative scrutiny.

**James Cartlidge:**

The Bill of Rights is a flagship piece of legislation to be brought forward this Parliamentary session. It is important that the provisions in the Bill are subject to full public and Parliamentary scrutiny and our consultation on the Bill of Rights received over 12,000 responses. The Government is considering these responses and will be publishing a response in due course. We are also preparing a formal response to the recommendations in the Joint Committee on Human Rights' report on the Bill of Rights. We therefore do not intend to submit the Bill for pre-legislative scrutiny.

### ■ Open Prisons: Prisoners' Transfers

**Steve Reed:** [\[13142\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the press release entitled Offenders to face toughest test yet for open prison moves, published by his department

on 5 June 2022, whether he has made an estimate of the number of potential moves that will be assessed by the Lord Chancellor each year under.

**Steve Reed:**

[\[13143\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the announcement of 5 June 2022, Offenders to face toughest test yet for open prison moves, whether he plans to publish an annual summary of his decision making through the new process.

**Kit Malthouse:**

From 6 June, all indeterminate sentence prisoners recommended for a move to open conditions by the Parole Board will face much stricter criteria. The new rules will mean the Deputy Prime Minister can block any such prisoner moving to an open prison unless they can demonstrably pass a tough three-step test including:

- Proving the prisoner is assessed as low risk of abscond; and
- a period in open conditions is considered essential to inform future decisions about release and to prepare for possible release on licence into the community; and
- a transfer to open conditions would not undermine public confidence in the Criminal Justice System.

It is expected that the Parole Board will make fewer recommendations than was the case under the previous criteria, although no formal estimate has been made of the number of recommendations which will need to be considered by Ministers personally or by officials under approved delegated authority.

There are no plans to publish an annual summary of decisions made in the new process.

## ■ Parole

**Steve Reed:**

[\[13140\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when he plans to bring forward legislative proposals to reform the parole system.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The Root and Branch Review of the Parole System was published on 30 March 2022 and set out a number of reforms to the parole system, some of which will require primary or secondary legislation. The review reaffirms the government's intention, as part of our commitment to make the parole system more transparent, to allow for some parole hearings to be held in public; that requires a change to the Parole Board Rules which will be implemented via a Statutory Instrument later this year.

The review also made a number of commitments that will require primary legislation, namely: changes to the statutory release test to make clear public protection is the overriding consideration; new ministerial powers to oversee release decisions in the 'top-tier' cohort of the most serious parole cases; and mandating that Parole Board members with a law enforcement background sit on panels for these top-tier

offenders. The necessary legislation will be brought forward as soon as the parliamentary timetable allows.

Other measures to strengthen the parole system, which do not require legislation, are already being implemented - such as the change we have announced to introduce, from 6 June, a tougher test and ministerial oversight when considering the most serious offenders for a move to open prison conditions.

## LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

### ■ Building Safety Regulator

**Sarah Olney:** [9089]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if his Department will publish a timeline for the creation of the proposed Building Safety Regulator.

**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 published a transition timeline with the Building Safety Bill and will shortly be updating this, following on from the Bill's receipt of Royal Assent on 28 April 2022.

### ■ Building Safety Regulator: Staff

**Sarah Olney:** [9088]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what estimate he has made of the number of additional staff that will be employed by the Health and Safety Executive to form the Building Safety Regulator in (a) 2022, (b) 2023, and (c) 2024.

**Stuart Andrew:**

Section 8 of the impact assessment for the Building Safety Bill contains estimates about the cost and staffing requirements for the new Building Safety Regulator. This analysis is available at: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-02/0139/BuildingSafetyBillImpactAssessment.pdf>.

Estimates for staffing requirements are currently being refined as the HSE operationalise delivery of their functions.

### ■ Building: Safety

**Daisy Cooper:** [9171]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the written statement of 12 May 2022 by the Welsh Minister for Climate Change entitled Update on building safety, if he will (a) take steps to amend the pledge letters



with developers and (b) include measures in future legal agreements with developers that will facilitate matching and proportionate commitments to leaseholders across the UK.

**Stuart Andrew:**

Housing and building safety are devolved matters and the progress of remediation in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland is a matter for the devolved administrations.

Ministers from all governments met to discuss building safety and wider issues of mutual interest on 24 May as part of the first meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Group for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities chaired by the Secretary of State and agreed to work together.

The Department has a close-working relationship with the devolved administrations on building safety. Officials meet with representatives of all three devolved administrations regularly to discuss building safety.

■ **Children: Social Services**

**Alexander Stafford:**

[\[9214\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether he has plans to incorporate the findings of the independent review of children's social care in the Government's levelling up agenda.

**Neil O'Brien:**

To level up we must make progress on children's social care reform to ensure that all young people enjoy a safe and happy childhood and realise the best outcomes possible. We remain committed to doing that. We will fully consider how the findings of this review and the Government's Levelling Up agenda align ahead of publishing the Government's detailed response and implementation strategy later this year.

■ **Community Development**

**Damien Moore:**

[\[10009\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps his Department is taking to give residents greater say over local developments.

**Stuart Andrew:**

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill includes a number of measures to give residents a more effective voice, including more accessible and locally-relevant plans, mandatory design codes, street votes and digital powers which will transform the way that information can be accessed. Comments on planning applications will continue to be taken into account as part of the decision-making process.

■ **Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (Amendment) (England) Order 2022**

**Layla Moran:**

[\[13234\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will publish in full the statistical and management information his Department used to inform

the decision to lay SI 2022 No. 521, The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (Amendment) (England) Order 2022; and if he will make a statement.

**Eddie Hughes:**

We are collecting information on homelessness duties accepted in respect of Ukrainian households, including those who have arrived under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, and will publish data in due course.

■ **Leasehold: Reform**

**Tulip Siddiq:** [\[9076\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether his Department's planned legislation on leasehold reform will (a) abolish marriage value, (b) grant leaseholders the right to extend lease agreements to 999 years, (c) reduce ground rent to a peppercorn and (d) change the valuation process for extending a lease so that the landlord can only charge a nominal amount.

**Tulip Siddiq:** [\[9077\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether his Department's legislative proposals on leasehold reform will apply to (a) existing and (b) future leaseholders.

**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 improve fairness and transparency in the leasehold market.

We have already taken action to end unfair practices in the leasehold market, beginning with the Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Act 2022, which comes into force on 30 June 2022. 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. 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 will make it cheaper and easier for leaseholders to extend their lease or buy the freehold of their property, including allowing existing and future leaseholders to extend their lease by 990 years at a peppercorn rent, abolishing marriage value and capping the treatment of ground rent in the valuation calculation at 0.1% of the property value. We will enable leaseholders, where they already have a long lease, to buy out the ground rent without the need to extend the term of the lease.

We have been clear about our commitment to addressing the historic imbalance in the leasehold system and further legislation will follow later in this Parliament.

## ■ Regional Planning and Development

**Damien Moore:**

[\[10008\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment his Department has made of the role of early intervention in achieving the Government's levelling up agenda.

**Neil O'Brien:**

A central aim of the levelling up agenda is to address the unacceptable fact that, to a large extent, children's life chances are determined by where in the UK they grow up, and the Levelling Up White Paper confirmed the importance placed by the Government on early intervention. The Government has 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.

## ■ Social Rented Housing: Repairs and Maintenance

**Chi Onwurah:**

[\[13112\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what additional funding the Government has provided to local authorities for the repair of social housing following significant damage from storms (a) Arwen, (b) Malik and (c) Corrie in the winter of 2021-22.

**Stuart Andrew:**

For the severe weather events Arwen, Malik and Corrie, no specific additional funding was available for local authorities to repair social housing. The impacts of severe weather events, such as those resulting from storms over the winter of 2021-2022 are traumatic for those communities they impact, and the Government has support routes in place to assist local authorities for emergencies such as these.

The Government is committed to improving the safety and decency of social housing in all areas of the country.

All social rented homes are still required to meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard. The Standard requires that homes are free of serious hazards, are in a reasonable state of repair, have reasonably modern facilities and services such as kitchens and bathrooms, and have efficient heating and effective insulation.

## ■ Students: Energy

**Matt Western:**

[\[9106\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how much and what proportion of the £144 million discretionary fund provided to local authorities to tackle the rise in energy bills has been disbursed to students as of 25 May 2022.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

Students that were living in a property in council tax bands A – D on 1 April 2022 are eligible for the main council tax rebate, aside from those living in student halls. Any

student that is impacted by rising energy costs can apply to their local council for discretionary support. My Department does not hold data on the characteristics of households benefiting from discretionary support.

## NORTHERN IRELAND

### ■ Buses: Northern Ireland

**Kerry McCarthy:** [\[13068\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how many buses in total are currently operating in Northern Ireland; and what proportion of these buses are (i) electric, (ii) hybrid-diesel, (iii) biomethane, (iv) diesel and (v) other fuels.

**Conor Burns:**

Transport is a devolved matter within the competence of the Northern Ireland Executive. Specific questions on public transport and the bus fleet in Northern Ireland should be directed to the Department for Infrastructure.

Through the New Decade, New Approach agreement, the Government provided £50 million to support low carbon transport in Northern Ireland, enabling the Northern Ireland Department for Infrastructure to commit to ordering 100 low-carbon buses to be deployed in Belfast and Londonderry.

### ■ Northern Ireland Protocol

**Jim Shannon:** [\[13130\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, whether he has had discussions with EU representatives on proposals to remove the Northern Ireland Protocol.

**Conor Burns:**

The Foreign Secretary leads on our negotiations with the EU and she has had extensive exchanges through both informal channels and the structures under the agreement.

We will continue to talk with the EU and our preference remains a negotiated outcome but while the EU discusses their position and their mandate, we will take steps to solve the problems created by the Protocol and restore the Executive. We are not scrapping the Protocol - we are protecting the elements that work and fixing those that don't. We remain open to discuss any new proposals but we can no longer wait to address the issues we face now.

**SCOTLAND****■ Scotland Office: Consultants**

**Angela Rayner:** [\[11690\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, how much his Department spent in total on external recruitment consultants in (a) 2019, (b) 2020 and (c) 2021; how many full time equivalent posts were filled as a result of that expenditure; and how many of those posts were filled by people recruited from outside the civil service.

**Mr Alister Jack:**

The Scotland Office is a small Ministerial Department which does not employ any staff directly. Those that join do so on an assignment, loan or secondment from other government Departments, principally the Scottish Government and the Ministry of Justice, who remain the employers.

Over the period in question, the Scotland Office did not incur any expenditure on recruitment consultants and as such the remaining questions are not applicable.

**TRANSPORT****■ Airports: Vetting**

**Louise Haigh:** [\[13192\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with HMRC on using PAYE validation services for airport staff awaiting security clearance.

**Robert Courts:**

Officials from my department have been in regular contact with HMRC. The HMRC employment letters (part of the PAYE validation services) are used as part of the background checks that industry must undertake.

In early May I agreed that the aviation industry could use HMRC employment history letters as a suitable form of reference check (with safeguards) for airport security staff – this will help to reduce the time it takes to recruit staff.

Security clearances are separate government checks and these are being undertaken in a timely manner.

**■ Department for Transport: Expenditure**

**Gill Furniss:** [\[13211\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to her Department's publication, DfT: spending over £500, January 2022, how many days of work DEKRA Automotive Ltd completed for the payment of £52,204.22 made on 24 January 2022.

**Andrew Stephenson:**

The contract was not paid on the basis of day rates.

DEKRA were paid based on the number of inspections they conducted of chargepoint installations that OZEV have provided grant funding for. The contract started on the 22nd of September 2021 and ended on the 31st of March 2022

**Gill Furniss:**

[\[13212\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to her Department's publication, DfT: spending over £25,000, March 2022, what work 23RED Ltd completed for the payment of £71,720 made on 2 March 2022.

**Andrew Stephenson:**

In March 2022, spend of £71,720 was paid to 23 Red for the development of the departments 'It's everyone's journey' campaign. The campaign aims to support our ambition of equal access on public transport by creating a more supportive and considerate environment. The department ran a short burst of campaign activity to raise awareness of the heightened needs of disabled people using public transport in the new COVID-19 environment.

The ['World of Difference' campaign assets](#) were developed – including, digital audio, social assets and out of home posters in bus and train carriages. Additionally, we continued to engage partners across all transport modes and disability organisations to deliver key campaign messages through trusted voices.

## ■ Department for Transport: Public Expenditure

**Louise Haigh:**

[\[13187\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether Ministers (a) approved or (b) were aware of spending for (i) 20/01/2022, CALDERS, £2,500.04, Team awayday costs, (ii) 01/12/2021, ZINGEVENTS.CO.UK, (iii) £2,074.28, Team away day - 38 people, (iv) 23/11/2021, PAYPAL SERVANIMALS, £2,850.00 Workshop for team awayday, (v) 15/11/2021, THEMINDGYM.COM, £2,700.00, Facilitator for team awayday, (vi) 15/11/2021, THEMINDGYM.COM, £2,700.00, Facilitator for team awayday and (vii) 23/11/2021, PAYPAL SERVANIMALS, £2,538.00, Workshop for team away day.

**Andrew Stephenson:**

Department for Transport (DfT) has robust internal controls that ensure approval of all expenditure by senior management in line with business objectives prior to procurement of goods or services.

DfT is compliant and has a process in place in line with HM Treasury guidance.

**Gill Furniss:**

[\[13210\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to his Department's publication, DfT: spending over £500, January 2022, if he will publish an itemised list of purchases made under the £2,500.04 payment to Calders on 20 January 2022 under the description, team awayday costs.

**Andrew Stephenson:**

Under the Transparency policy, the department does not publish itemised lists. Total transactional amounts per invoice are published. This specific transaction was paid under one invoice amounting to £2,500.04.

DfT is compliant and has a process in place in line with HM Treasury guidance,

■ **Driving: Spain****Virginia Crosbie:**[\[13285\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to work with the Directorate-General for Traffic in Spain to ensure that UK citizens who are resident in Spain can continue to drive there.

**Trudy Harrison:**

The UK and Spanish Governments are working to reach an agreement on driving licence exchange as a priority. The Secretary of State for Transport discussed the issue with Spanish ministers on 29 April 2022 and talks have rapidly accelerated since.

■ **M18****Sir Greg Knight:**[\[13062\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans he has to widen to three lanes the remaining two-lane stretches of the M18 motorway; and if he will make a statement.

**Trudy Harrison:**

National Highways will consider this stretch of the SRN within its South Pennines Route Strategy. The evidence identified through this process will be vital to allow informed decisions to be made on recommendations about future investment priorities, including improvements to the existing network and enhancement choices. We anticipate that National Highways will publish these strategies later in the year.

■ **Motorways: Accidents****Sir Greg Knight:**[\[13061\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent steps he has taken to reduce the time taken to reopen a motorway or major road after an accident; what his latest assessment is of the effectiveness of initiatives between his Department, the police and emergency services to achieve that aim; and if he will make statement.

**Trudy Harrison:**

National Highways own and maintain the Strategic Road Network, made up of English motorways and principal A roads. Its priority is safety for road users on the network. Incidents on the road network are dealt with as quickly as possible to keep traffic moving.

National Highways lead the CLEAR initiative, which is a multi-agency approach involving blue light response, recovery operators and health, safety and well-being

responders who work with National Highways traffic officers to respond to an accident. All agencies collaborate to examine, assess and design ways to clear our roads as quickly as possible.

Working in partnership with the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) and breakdown and recovery operators, National Highways leads the SURVIVE Group (Safe Use of Roadside Verges in Vehicular Emergencies) to improve safety for all road users.

## ■ Network Rail: Pay

**Dr Matthew Offord:** [\[11656\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the salary range is for the eight members of staff employed by Network Rail whose primary roles focus on diversity and inclusion.

**Wendy Morton:**

The salary ranges for the eight posts at Network Rail whose primary focus is diversity and inclusion are:

- 1 role at Band 2B (£65,480-£96,768)
- 4 roles at Band 3B (£42,971-£63,504) – this includes one vacant role
- 1 role at Band 4C (£40,107-£59,270)
- 1 role at Band 5 (£19,000-£42,435) – this role is currently vacant
- 1 role at Band 6 (£17,290-£32,085)

## ■ Public Transport: Disability

**Bell Ribeiro-Addy:** [\[13243\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to ensure all public transport providers fulfil their duty under the Equality Act 2010 to be disability accessible.

**Wendy Morton:**

The government's vision is for disabled people to have the same access to transport as everyone else so they can travel confidently and easily.

Most transport operators have a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments to enable disabled people to access their services, and enforcement of this is a matter for the Courts.

Accessibility requirements and enforcement mechanisms vary by transport mode. Where government has responsibility for enforcement, it works proactively to identify and eliminate non-compliance. Where local authorities and/or regulators are responsible for enforcement, the government seeks to raise their awareness of the importance of accessibility, for example by publishing best practice guidance.



## ■ Railways

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[11753\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the potential increase in the number of people travelling by rail for (a) business and (b) leisure following the recovery from the covid-19 outbreak.

**Wendy Morton:**

In line with our published guidance, the Department has developed scenarios of possible rail demand to reflect uncertainty, including how passengers respond post-Covid-19, and these inform decision making.

The Department continues to work closely with the industry to encourage rail use. Recent initiatives include:

- National marketing campaigns reminding potential passengers of the benefits and good value of rail travel.
- The Great British Rail Sale, the first ever nationwide rail sale. The Great British Rail Sale helped save families money, and connect them with friends and families. Over 1.3 million tickets were sold, offering around £7million worth of savings for passengers.
- Industry focus on promoting good value rail products such as rail cards, flexible season tickets and Advance tickets on a national, local and regional level.
- The Department is also working with operators and Network Rail to ensure that service levels are appropriate to passenger demand, whilst prioritising the good performance passengers need, and delivering good value for the taxpayer.

## ■ Railways: Fares

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[11750\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the impact of the cost of rail travel on people's choice of transport; and if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of reducing the cost of tickets to make rail a cheaper and more accessible travel option.

**Wendy Morton:**

The Department takes guidance from the Passenger Demand Forecasting Handbook on the effects of changes to fares on rail demand. There are a number of factors which impact passenger demand, including most notably in recent times the pandemic's impact on passenger travel.

Whilst rail fares affect each passenger slightly differently, we have a number of railcards in place that offer discounts against most rail fares. We have saved a generation of passengers at least a third off their fares through the 16-17 and 26-30 'millennial' railcard and went even further in November 2020 by extending these savings to former servicemen and women through a new Veterans Railcard.

More recently, we launched the Great British Rail Sale, the first ever nationwide rail sale. Over 1.3 million tickets were sold, offering around £7million worth of savings for passengers.

## ■ Railways: Freight

**Gill Furniss:** [13213]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what framework his Department has in place to enable relevant stakeholders to feed into the implementation of the Future of Freight Strategy.

**Trudy Harrison:**

The Government will work with the Ministerially-chaired Freight Council, which includes chief executive officer representation from the freight transport trade associations, on the delivery of the Future of Freight plan, continuing the constructive relationship we had with them in order to develop the plan.

We will consider if and how the structure of the Freight Council might be adjusted to best support implementation.

## ■ Railways: Pay

**Mr Richard Holden:** [8210]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what information his Department holds on the (a) average starting salary, (b) average salary (including bonuses and overtime), (c) highest salary (including bonuses and overtime) paid to a (i) train driver and (ii) tube driver in the UK in each of the last three years.

**Wendy Morton:**

Information relating to salary is managed and set by the individual Train Operating Companies in line with their annual budgets. The Office for National Statistics publishes detailed statistics on pay by occupation at:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandwork/nghours/datasets/occupation4digitsoc2010asetable14>

Data from the above statistics states that for 'train and tram drivers', median annual gross pay was:

2021 = £59,189

2020 = £55,546

2019 = £56,102

The 80th percentile figures, where the top 20% of employees are paid above this figure, are

2021 = £70,352

2020 = £67,709

2019 = £67,037

Transport in London is devolved to the Mayor of London and Transport for London (TfL).

#### ■ **Roads: Accidents**

**Dr Rupa Huq:**

[\[11771\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of bringing forward legislative proposals to make it mandatory for drivers to report a collision with a cat.

**Trudy Harrison:**

The Government has made no assessment of the potential merits of introducing a legal requirement for drivers to stop and report collisions with cats. A focus for this Government is to make roads safer for all users, which will in turn reduce the risk to all animals.

Under section 170 of the Road Traffic Act 1988, a driver is required to stop and report an accident involving specified animals including horses, cattle, asses, mules, sheep, pigs, goats or dogs, but not cats or wild animals. This requirement arises from their status as working animals rather than as domestic pets. To introduce such a measure within the provision of section 170, would require primary legislation.

#### ■ **Roads: Safety**

**Gill Furniss:**

[\[13214\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he plans to publish the Road Safety Strategic Framework.

**Trudy Harrison:**

We are currently working on our Road Safety Strategic Framework (RSSF) which will be based upon the Safe System approach. This will include a new cross departmental governance structure to explore key issues with actions plans being developed at a later date.

We plan to publish the later in the RSSF as soon as possible.

#### ■ **Speed Limits: Cameras**

**Kim Leadbeater:**

[\[11918\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Answer of 22 January to Question 100639, when his Department's review of DfT Circular 1/2007 on the use of speed cameras will be (a) completed and (b) published.

**Trudy Harrison:**

The Department is currently preparing a revised draft of DfT Circular 1/2007 in light of stakeholder feedback. We plan to further engage with interested parties over the summer, with a view to publishing later in 2022.

**TREASURY****■ Cash Dispensing****Amy Callaghan:****[9178]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the announcement of 19 May 2022 of new powers for the Financial Conduct Authority to protect access to cash, what the criteria will be for deciding on expectations for reasonable distance for people to travel when depositing or withdrawing cash.

**John Glen:**

The government recognises the importance of cash to the daily lives of millions of people across the UK, particularly to those in vulnerable groups, and has announced that it will legislate to protect access to cash in the Financial Services and Markets Bill.

In May, the government published a summary of responses to the Access to Cash consultation. This set out the government's intention to establish the Financial Conduct Authority as the lead regulator for retail cash access and provide it with appropriate powers for ensuring that designated firms continue to ensure the provision of deposit and withdrawal facilities across the UK. The FCA's powers will allow it to address cash access issues at both a national and local level.

HM Treasury will publish its expectations in a policy statement, which the FCA will be required to have regard to in carrying out its functions. The government intends to enable HM Treasury to specify baselines for reasonable access to cash withdrawal and deposit facilities across the UK, including in rural and urban areas, initially on the basis of current cash access provision.

Around 96% of the population are within two kilometres of a free-to-use cash access point. This includes free-to-use ATMs, bank branches and Post Office branches.

**■ Help to Buy Scheme****Rachael Maskell:****[13173]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Answer of 21 April 2022 to Question 154169 on Help to Buy Scheme, what steps he plans to take to ensure that people are able to use their investment in a Help to Buy ISA in (a) York and (b) other areas where housing costs exceed the £250,000 threshold, including properties that are designed for first time buyers.

**John Glen:**

As first-time buyers tend to buy smaller (and therefore cheaper) properties, the Help to Buy: ISA scheme's property price cap of £250,000 for properties outside London (£450,000 within London) allows the Government to target support more precisely at the people the scheme is intended to help. [Over the past year, 94k property completions have been supported by the scheme, including 17k in the Yorkshire and Humber].

While the Government keeps all savings policy under review, individuals with a Help to Buy: ISA can transfer their savings to a Lifetime ISA without incurring any penalties. The Lifetime ISA allows first-time buyers to benefit from the Government bonus when purchasing properties up to £450,000 anywhere in the UK.

Further information on the Lifetime ISA together with a comprehensive list other forms of home purchase support schemes can be found on the Government's website below:

<https://www.ownyourhome.gov.uk/>

## ■ Medical Equipment: Energy

**Dan Jarvis:**

**[13137]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his Department has plans to increase financial support for patients using large volumes of electricity for medical equipment to treat health conditions at home.

**Helen Whately:**

Living with a long-term illness or disability can impact significantly on the cost of living. This is why the Government invests heavily in supporting disabled people who are both in and out of work through the welfare system.

The Government is helping people with the rising cost of energy bills by providing financial support worth £550 to most households. Households with a domestic electricity meter will receive a universal rebate of £400 through the Energy Bills Support Scheme. In addition to this, English households living in Council Tax Bands A-D are receiving a £150 rebate. None of this has to be repaid.

The Government is providing further support for vulnerable households, through the Warm Home Discount of £150 for up to 3m people, and the continuation of Winter Fuel Payments and Cold Weather Payments.

The Government is also offering an automatic one-off £150 disability cost of living payment to individuals in receipt of non-means tested disability benefits, paid by September.

The Government continues to support vulnerable groups through NHS services. The additional funding announced at the Spending Review, made possible by the new Health and Social Care Levy, means that the NHS resource budget will increase to over £160 billion in 2024-25. These investments will allow the NHS to continue providing the services people need.

## ■ Research: Finance

**Bill Esterson:**

**[11666]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans he has to bring forward legislative proposals to introduce tax credits for Research and Development.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The Government offers two separate Research and Development (R&D) tax reliefs, the Research and Development Expenditure Credit (RDEC) and an additional Corporation Tax deduction for Small and Medium-sized enterprises. Both are available to loss-makers as well as profit-makers.

The estimated total number of R&D tax credit claims for the year ending March 2020 was 85,900, with total support claimed £7.4 billion. This corresponds to £47.5 billion of R&D expenditure.

The Government is currently undertaking a review of the reliefs. The objectives of the review are to ensure the UK remains a competitive location for cutting edge research, that the reliefs continue to be fit for purpose, and that taxpayer money is effectively targeted.

**■ UK Infrastructure Bank****Rachel Reeves:**[\[13106\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps the UK Infrastructure Bank will take to ensure public funds invested in third party funds will directly support levelling up and help reduce emissions.

**John Glen:**

The UK Infrastructure Bank operates within a strategic framework set by government but has operational independence in its day-to-day activity, including investment decisions. UKIB has dual objectives of investing in projects to help mitigate and adapt to climate change, and to support regional economic growth across the UK. The Bank is required to have regard to both of these objectives in setting its investment policies and assessing all transactions, including any that involve investment in third party funds. I have asked the Bank to write to you directly on the approach that it takes in making decisions on investments in third party funds.

**Rachel Reeves:**[\[13107\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for what reason the UK Infrastructure Bank is investing via third party funds rather than directly.

**John Glen:**

The UK Infrastructure Bank makes independent investment decisions based on its four investment principles: · The investment helps to support the Bank's objectives to drive regional and local economic growth or support tackling climate change. · The investment is in infrastructure assets or networks, or in new infrastructure technology.

- The investment is intended to deliver a positive financial return, in line with the Bank's financial framework.
- The investment is expected to crowd in significant private capital over time.

These principles help assess what projects should be taken forward in line with UKIB's objectives to tackle climate change and drive regional and local economic growth. The Bank's investment team assesses each proposition on a case-by-case

basis, working to identify the most appropriate financing structure in the context of the Bank's mandate. I have asked the Bank to write to you directly on the approach that it takes to its investments in third party funds.

**Rachel Reeves:**

[\[13108\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what analysis his Department has undertaken of how much has been invested by the UK Infrastructure Bank in (a) each nation of the UK and (b) each region of England; and if he will place a copy of that analysis in the Library.

**John Glen:**

The UK Infrastructure Bank has operational independence in its day-to-day activity, including investment decisions. As it builds its pipeline the UKIB will take a long-term approach to its interventions, aiming to achieve a broadly balanced portfolio where investments are reasonably distributed among different sectors within its remit and across different regions and nations of the UK. In the medium term the UKIB will develop a framework for monitoring its impact. So far the UKIB has completed seven investments. Details on the quantum of each investment and its location is published on the Bank's website.

## WORK AND PENSIONS

### ■ Energy: Merseyside

**Mick Whitley:**

[\[9160\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment her Department has made of the impact on levels of absolute poverty in (a) Birkenhead and (b) the Liverpool City Region of the anticipated increase in the energy price cap to £2,800 in the autumn of 2022.

**David Rutley:**

No such assessment has been made.

We have announced a new £15 billion support package targeted at those most in need bringing the total cost of living support to £37 billion this year.

This package will benefit over 8 million households in receipt of means-tested benefits with the most vulnerable households getting one-off support worth £1,200 this year, including a new £650 cost of living payment.

### ■ Household Support Fund

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[9925\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to her oral contribution on 26 May 2022 in the House, in what way the increases to the Housing Support Fund will be distributed.

**David Rutley:**

From October 2022, Government is providing an additional £500 million 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 further 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.

**Housing: York****Rachael Maskell:**[\[9926\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will make an assessment of the impact of house price increases in the centre of York on the broad market rental area boundaries to determine if the York boundary should change.

**David Rutley:**

Broad rental market areas are not determined by house prices. They are determined in accordance with requirements laid out in legislation. Each must contain a variety of property types and tenures, sufficient privately rented accommodation and access to facilities for health, education, recreation, banking and shopping.

Rent Officers at the Valuation Office Agency have responsibility for setting broad rental market area boundaries in England. Where rent officers decide that a boundary should be moved, they must carry out a review, consulting with affected local authorities among others, and submit a recommendation to the Secretary of State for the Department for Work and Pensions to make a decision.

**Motability: Electric Vehicles****Mark Tami:**[\[13647\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether she has made an assessment of the potential merits of reducing the deposit required for electric vehicles under the Motability scheme.

**Chloe Smith:**

The Department works closely with Motability and is responsible for the disability benefits that provide a passport to the Motability Scheme. Motability is an independent charitable organisation that is wholly responsible for the terms and the administration of the Scheme, along with oversight of Motability Operations. Therefore no assessment of the deposit has been undertaken by DWP.

**Training: Universal Credit****Margaret Greenwood:**[\[11711\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Answer of 10 February 2022 to Question 118547 on Universal Credit, how many and what proportion of Universal Credit claimants were undertaking part-time training whilst in receipt of



Universal Credit in the last three years; and how many people on Universal Credit took up full time short course training courses, excluding Kickstart, whilst in receipt of Universal Credit in the last three years.

**Mims Davies:**

Data relating to the number and proportion of claimants undertaking part-time and full time training is not centrally held.

■ **Universal Credit**

**Alison McGovern:**

[\[7973\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he would make an assessment of how long it would take to implement an uplift to (a) Universal Credit and (b) legacy benefits.

**David Rutley:**

There are no plans to make an assessment of how long it would take to implement an uplift to Universal Credit and Legacy Benefits.

The government is providing over £15bn in further support, targeted particularly on those with the greatest need. This package is in addition to the over £22bn announced previously, with government support for the cost of living now totalling over £37bn this year. This means that millions of the most vulnerable households will get £1,200 of one-off support in total this year to help with the cost of living, with all domestic electricity customers receiving at least £400.

This additional support means that eight million households on means-tested benefits will get £650 paid directly into their bank accounts in two lump sums - one in July, the other this autumn. There will also be separate one-off payments of £300 to pensioner households and £150 to individuals receiving disability benefits.

To support people who need additional help later in the year, the Government is providing, from October, an extra £500 million of funding. In England, £421m will be used to extend the Household Support Fund. The Devolved Administrations will receive £79m. This is in addition to the £1bn already provided for this support.

**Stephen Crabb:**

[\[9854\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many households in receipt of universal credit and subject to deductions (a) with children and (b) without children had (i) up to five per cent, (ii) between six and 10 per cent, (iii) between 11 and 15 per cent, (iv) between 16 and 20 per cent, (v) between 21 and 25 per cent and (vi) more than 25 per cent of the Standard Allowance deducted in the most recent month for which data are available.

**David Rutley:**

The information requested for Universal Credit Households with children with deductions is provided in the attached spreadsheet.

The UK Government recognises the importance of safeguarding the welfare of claimants who have incurred debt. Under Universal Credit there is a co-ordinated

approach to deductions from benefit, which supports claimants to manage their financial obligations. We carefully balance our duty to the taxpayer to recover overpayments with our support for claimants.

**Attachments:**

1. [Spreadsheet \[9854 Spreadsheet.xlsx\]](#)

■ **Universal Credit: Carers**

**Stephen Timms:**

**[13029]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps her Department has taken to support unpaid carers applying for Universal Credit on behalf of people with complex disabilities undergoing the process of managed migration.

**David Rutley:**

We recently restarted work to design and deliver a service for people to move to Universal Credit. We are currently taking forward a discovery phase focussing on controlled, small volumes. During this phase we will seek to understand how best to support claimants when making their claim to Universal Credit, including where claimants receive additional support from people who are not their appointees to make their claim.

A variety of support is in place for those issued with migration notices, including for individuals with health conditions and disabilities. Our current support consists of:

- A dedicated phonenumber.
- Further guidance on website [Welcome to GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
- Specially trained staff in JCP's and service centres who can identify local tailored support; and
- Support through the Help to Claim

**Virginia Crosbie:**

**[13284]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits and effect of permitting the exclusion of a one-off bonus for carers, awarded after the covid-19 pandemic by the Welsh Government, when calculating universal credit entitlement.

**David Rutley:**

No such assessment has been made.

A Universal Credit award is calculated on the basis of the set benefit rate against money coming in to ensure fairness of treatment for all claimants against the money that they have earned. This means as earnings increase Universal Credit is gradually reduced. This is a long-standing principle of means-tested benefits.

Bonuses are earnings and are treated in the same way as any other earnings. This is already true for tax and other purposes, regardless of whether or not an individual is

claiming a benefit. All earnings, above any applicable work allowance, are subject to the 55% taper and the Universal Credit award is calculated on that basis.

## WRITTEN STATEMENTS

### BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

#### ■ Storm Arwen Review: Publication of the Final Report

**Minister of State (Minister for Energy, Clean Growth and Climate Change) (Greg Hands):** [\[HCWS84\]](#)

The Energy Emergencies Executive Committee Storm Arwen Review was commissioned in December 2021 by the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, due to unacceptable levels of power disruption following Storm Arwen. The Interim Report was published in February 2022, and the Final Report has now been completed and published on gov.uk.

The review has been a joint endeavour between government, industry and the regulator (Ofgem) with the aim of identifying lessons to be learned and actions to take forward. These actions will drive improvements to Great Britain's electricity network resilience to severe weather events. The actions recommended by this review address concerns under the three pillars of system resilience, consumer protection and additional support.

The majority address improvements to be made across all electricity Distribution Network Operators regardless of their impact during this particular storm. Lessons from subsequent storms that hit the UK in February 2022 have also been incorporated and reflected as part of this final report. While improvements will be made, no electricity system can be totally immune from disruption.

The Energy Emergencies Executive Committee will be responsible for the implementation of these actions, in collaboration with other partners as appropriate, alongside my Department which will ensure the delivery and implementation of the actions recommended.

### CABINET OFFICE

#### ■ Transforming for a Digital Future: Government's 2022-25 Roadmap for Digital and Data

**Parliamentary Secretary (Mrs Heather Wheeler):** [\[HCWS83\]](#)

Later today, I will publish *Transforming for a Digital Future: Government's 2022-25 Roadmap for Digital and Data*, which sets out an ambitious plan to ensure that, by 2025, we deliver a transformed, more efficient digital government that provides better outcomes for everyone. I have requested that a copy of the full text be deposited in the libraries of both Houses in Parliament.

#### **The Importance of Digital and Data**

Digital and data are key to unlocking many of this government's priorities, from generating efficiencies to Net Zero and Levelling Up. Better digital systems and access to

data will allow smaller teams across government to work faster, make better decisions, and deliver better policies. Modern technology will minimise waste and reduce our reliance on paper-based forms. A more digitally-skilled civil service, working across the UK, will ensure that citizens get access to the same great services no matter where they live.

### **The Opportunity**

Government has some excellent digital services and examples of digital transformation, but we still need to harness the full potential of digital transformation at scale. Many services are in need of improvement to deliver the right outcomes, our technology is in need of refreshing to give value for money, we have significant and persistent gaps in skills and expertise, and our business systems are in need of reform to keep pace with the digital age.

If we maintain the current course, we will miss opportunities to deliver the experiences and outcomes that citizens expect and we have committed to deliver, we will see talented digital and data professionals choosing to work elsewhere, and we will miss out on efficiency savings.

### **Cross-Government Support and Collaboration**

This roadmap has been collectively agreed by the Cabinet Economic and Domestic Implementation Committee.

The roadmap is the result of an unprecedented level of collaboration from digital leaders across government. The Central Digital and Data Office (CDDO) in the Cabinet Office has worked with representatives from departments to develop the roadmap, including regular engagement with the Permanent Secretary level Digital and Data Board.

CDDO will continue to work closely with departments to support and monitor progress against the roadmap. Each mission has a senior civil servant 'executive sponsor' who will act as an advocate for that mission and support work to progress against the specific commitments.

As a result, I am confident that there is sufficient support and momentum behind this roadmap to ensure we will meet all of the commitments it sets out by 2025.

### **What We Will Deliver by 2025**

The roadmap sets out a bold vision for change which is supported by a set of clear, feasible and measurable commitments that departments have collectively agreed to deliver between now and 2025.

By 2025 the most frequently used critical services will have great user experience and incorporate efficient processes that reduce their cost to run. We will provide a single, efficient and accessible digital identity process for citizens, and ensure that data which is central to priority government objectives will be safely shared and used to improve policy and service delivery. We will build digital technology in a consistent way, improving the quality of what we build and our speed to deployment. We will be an employer of choice for digital talent, with highly skilled teams and leaders, and have funding structures and

delivery approaches that enable and incentivise modern, efficient and user-centric investment and high quality services.

The pace of technological change and the growing expectations of citizens and businesses mean we must renew our focus and go further than ever before to realise the opportunities presented by digital transformation. I am confident that, by fulfilling the commitments set out in the roadmap, we will be able to do exactly that.

## HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

### ■ Health Update

**Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (Sajid Javid):** [\[HCWS87\]](#)

In 2019, this Government set the bold ambition for England to be Smokefree by 2030 – reducing smoking rates to 5% or less.

Today, Dr Javed Khan OBE published his Independent Review on Smokefree 2030, providing this Government with a wide range of recommendations for how we can achieve this ambition.

Tragically, smoking remains the single biggest cause of preventable illness and death across the country. There are still almost six million smokers in England - and two out of three will die from smoking unless they quit.

Although smoking rates have fallen, we know that they are currently not falling fast enough.

The Government is committed to levelling up society and extending the same chances in life to all people and all parts of our country. However, smoking is one of the largest drivers of health disparities and rates vary substantially across different parts of the country. As stated by Dr Khan in his Independent Review, at its most extreme, smoking prevalence is 4.5 times higher in Burnley than in Exeter.

Smoking is a significant drain on the household finances of our most disadvantaged families. In Halton in Cheshire, smokers spend an estimated £3,551 a year on tobacco, nearly 15% of their income. Reducing smoking presents a huge economic opportunity in higher disposable income and higher labour productivity.

Smoking is particularly high amongst certain populations, and one third of all cigarettes smoked in England are smoked by people with a mental health condition. Nearly 10% of mothers smoke at the time of giving birth, increasing the risk of sudden infant death syndrome by over three times compared to mothers who do not smoke. Further, the risk of stillbirth is increased by at least 60% if the father smokes. Smoking is also known to increase the risk of miscarriage.

Behind all of these statistics are individuals, families and communities who are suffering from the harms of tobacco. This Government is committed to doing more to help smokers to quit and stop people from taking up this deadly addiction. We also know that most smokers want to quit.

For these reasons, we asked Dr Khan to undertake this Independent Review to help the Government reduce the devastation that smoking causes in our communities. There are a number of recommendations in Dr Khan's Independent Review. The Government will now consider its response.

There is a call for greater investment – from local authority-led stop smoking services, through to improved data and evidence. The government is already investing funding through the public health grant, but we will examine where we can go further.

There is a call to offer vaping as a substitute for smoking. Vaping is far less harmful than smoking and is an effective quitting device. It is recognised that there is much more Government can do to tackle the myths and misconceptions that surround vaping. We have worked with the MHRA to provide [guidance](#) to support bringing e-cigarettes to market as licensed therapies and this Government will take forward a range of work on vaping as a substitute for smoking in due course.

Dr Khan also calls for the NHS to prioritise further action to stop people from smoking. Smoking costs the NHS £2.5 billion every year. The benefits of focusing on preventing smoking-related illnesses, rather than treating them, are clear for patients and the NHS themselves.

This Government is determined to address the challenges raised in the Independent Review and to meet the Smokefree 2030 target. We know that more action needs to be taken to protect our people from this dangerous addiction.

The Department will now carefully consider the recommendations set out in this Independent Review. The Independent Review will help to inform our upcoming White Paper on Health Disparities, which we plan to publish this summer. To complement this, the Department will also be publishing a new Tobacco Control Plan in due course.

We would like to thank Dr Khan for his far-reaching work on the Independent Review, and for his clear and challenging Recommendations.

A copy of The Independent Khan Review will be deposited in the Libraries of both Houses.

## ■ Medical Examiners

**Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Patient Safety and Primary Care) (Maria Caulfield):**

[\[HCWS85\]](#)

It is our intention to work towards commencing implementation plans for the statutory medical examiner system from April 2023, recognising the need for all relevant government departments to be ready and aligned to enable successful implementation. The statutory medical examiner system will be centrally funded in England. This follows the required amendment to the Coroners and Justice Act 2009, which has now been made through the Health and Care Act 2022, to host medical examiners in England in NHS bodies rather than local health authorities.

The National Medical Examiner has published the report for year 2021 which sets out the non-statutory medical examiner system progress to date. The medical examiner system

will introduce an additional layer of scrutiny of the cause of death by the medical practitioner, improving the quality and accuracy of the medical certificate of cause of death and thereby informing the national data on mortality and patient safety. The medical examiner system will increase transparency and facilitate discussions with the bereaved about any concerns they may have, providing new levels of scrutiny to improve detection of criminal activity or poor practice.

After the statutory medical examiner system has been introduced, all non-coronial deaths will be scrutinised by a medical examiner, for both burials and cremations.

## HOME OFFICE

### ■ Public consultation on the draft statutory guidance on the Serious Violence Duty

**The Minister of State for Crime and Policing (Kit Malthouse):** [\[HCWS86\]](#)

The Government is today announcing the publication of a consultation on the draft statutory guidance on the Serious Violence Duty (the Duty) which will be issued by the Secretary of State as statutory guidance under Chapter 1 of Part 2 of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 to support specified authorities and organisation exercising functions in relation to the Duty.

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 introduced the Duty to ensure specified authorities, being police, fire and rescue authorities, local authorities, specified health authorities and criminal justice agencies and organisations work collaboratively, to share data and information, understand the causes and consequences of serious violence, focusing on prevention and early intervention and put in place plans informed by evidence to prevent and reduce serious violence. In addition, section 6(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, has been amended to ensure that serious violence is an explicit priority for Community Safety Partnerships and that a strategy is in place to explicitly tackle serious violence.

The Duty is a key part of the Government's programme of work to reduce serious violence and put an end to the tragedies afflicting our communities. It is very important we work together, across government, statutory, private, and voluntary sectors to deliver this crucial change. The Government has made £130m available this financial year (22/23) to tackle serious violence, including murder and knife crime.

This Government committed to update and formally consult on the draft statutory guidance published in May 2021 on before the Duty's implementation. Officials have revised the guidance by engaging with other government departments, stakeholders and wider partners. Government amendments are also reflected in the new draft, these:

- provide clarity that the definition of violence for the purpose of the Duty includes domestic abuse and sexual violence,
- exclude patient information and in addition health or social care authorities cannot share personal information under the data sharing provisions in respect of the Duty,



- restrict data requests from local policing bodies (PCCs, and in London the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime and the Common Council of the City of London as police authority) to information already held by an authority to whom the request is made,
- that the Secretary of State lays a copy of the final statutory guidance for the Serious Violence Duty in Parliament,
- clarify on the face of the legislation that specified authorities must publish a strategy and that regulations will provide further detail about the publication or dissemination of a strategy.

Specific guidance is included for authorities operating in Wales, to reflect the distinct Welsh legislative and operational context as well as additional content on housing and homelessness. The outline policy for secondary legislation on the publication and dissemination of local partnerships serious violence strategies and local policing bodies' discretionary role to support the development and implementation of the local serious violence strategy is included.

The consultation, which launches today, **9 June**, will run for a period of six weeks, closing on **21 July**. Once the response to the consultation along with a final version of the guidance have been published, the Duty and associated secondary legislation will be commenced to enable local partnerships to work towards publication and dissemination of their serious violence strategies.

A copy of this consultation and the draft statutory guidance will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses and also made available on GOV.UK.

## JUSTICE

### ■ Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme Review – supplementary consultation 2022

#### The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice (Tom Pursglove): [\[HCWS88\]](#)

Today I have laid before Parliament a public consultation on one of the eligibility rules of the statutory Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme 2012 (the Scheme). This follows the Criminal Injuries Compensation Review 2020 in which we consulted on proposals to improve the experience of victims applying for compensation, by making the Scheme simpler and easier to navigate.

The statutory Scheme exists to compensate victims of violent crime in Great Britain, to recognise, through compensation, the injuries and harm they experienced. The so-called unspent convictions rule has been an eligibility requirement since the first statutory scheme came into force in 1996. The 2012 Scheme sets out the circumstances in which an award will be withheld or reduced where the applicant has an unspent conviction. In the 2012 Scheme an exclusion was introduced which means that an applicant is not eligible if they have an unspent conviction that resulted in a custodial or community

sentence. The rationale for this is to prevent individuals who have committed serious illegal acts benefitting from state-funded compensation, to reflect the degree of harm done to others and the cost to society of offending behaviour.

Since 2012 there have been varying calls for abolition of the rule or reform of it to re-introduce discretion, particularly in relation to certain victim groups or specific circumstances such as compulsion or childhood trauma. As part of our review of the Scheme leading up to the 2020 consultation, options for reform were carefully explored and in the consultation our conclusions for proposing no change to the rule were explained.

In July 2021 the Supreme Court determined that the rule in the 2012 Scheme is lawful and proportionate, and stated that the exclusionary approach is an acceptable one and has the advantage of leading to consistency and clarity. The Supreme Court also noted that the legislator is entitled to adopt a Scheme with clearly defined rules for determining entitlement to publicly-funded compensation. However, in a separate case the High Court found that the Government had not met a legitimate expectation to consult on reform of the unspent convictions rule. This was because the 2020 consultation did not ask a specific question on whether it should be revised in line with a recommendation made by the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse in 2018. As required by the High Court we are publishing this supplementary consultation to invite views on reform of the rule.

We are looking at the rule afresh. The consultation poses broad questions about retaining the rule unchanged, which remains an option, and on the following potential reforms: introducing exemptions so that not all claims are automatically rejected on the basis of a specified unspent conviction; amending the terms of the rule to reduce the number of claims that are automatically rejected; and removing the exclusionary part of the rule so that no claims are automatically rejected.

After this second consultation we will decide whether or not to revise the rule and share our conclusions and proposals about reform of the Scheme as a whole following our comprehensive review.

The consultation is available in full at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/criminal-injuries-compensation-scheme-review-supplementary-consultation>. The consultation will close on 5 August 2022.

## TRANSPORT

### ■ Transport Update

**Secretary of State for Transport (Grant Shapps):**

**[HCWS89]**

Today, my Department launches a public consultation on the primary legislative changes required to deliver structural reform of our railways. This follows publication of the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail (“Plan for Rail”) in May 2021 which heralded the start of the biggest transformation of Great Britain’s railways in three decades, and announcement in the Queen’s Speech on 10 May 2022 to introduce a Transport Bill to Parliament which

will modernise rail services, put passengers and freight customers first, deliver for taxpayers and combine the best of the public and private sectors.

The Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail highlighted the need for change. It was clear our railways had become fragmented, the system was complicated, and passengers deserved better. This alongside spiralling costs, delays to upgrades and commercial failures pointed to a railway in need of fundamental reform. Getting this right means we can ensure this historic industry delivers for its users, setting it on a more sustainable and secure footing. It also means delivering a stronger, more levelled up and increasingly green economy, of which the railways are a crucial part.

Many of the commitments set out in the Plan for Rail do not require legislation in order to take forward, and the government is already working in close partnership with the rail industry to deliver rapid improvements for passengers and freight customers. For example, new flexible season tickets went on sale last summer and we continue to work with train operators to roll-out digital ticketing to make journeys easier. We are also undertaking a comprehensive accessibility audit of stations across Great Britain, continuing to cut the costs and time of infrastructure work through Project SPEED and developing a 30-year Whole Industry Strategic Plan.

In addition to this, we have launched the Great British Railways Transition Team (GBRTT), under the leadership of Andrew Haines, to drive forward reforms and develop the model for a new arms-length body, Great British Railways, including its initial structure, leadership and people. GBRTT is focused on establishing a new, customer focused, industry culture, driving revenue recovery efforts and establishing an Interim Strategic Freight Unit to work collaboratively with the sector, ensuring an immediate focus on delivery of the government's ambitions for rail freight. The Great British Railways Transition Team is also currently overseeing a competition for the location of a national headquarters for Great British Railways, to be based outside of London, in line with this Government's commitment to levelling up.

However, primary legislation is required to deliver key elements of structural reform set out in the Plan for Rail. This includes providing Great British Railways, with the powers and authority it needs to act as the single guiding mind for the railways, ending years of fragmentation. The consultation launched today seeks views of all those with an interest in our railways, to help shape these reforms.

The consultation is focused across three key areas as outlined below.

The first is on the establishment of Great British Railways, including its proposed functions and duties and how we propose to legislate and work with stakeholders to enable Great British Railways to become the single guiding mind for the railways.

The second is focused on how we will ensure clear accountabilities in the rail sector through a new governance framework, including the regulator's role in providing independent scrutiny and challenge.

The third centres on reform of wider industry structures and processes that are needed to deliver transformation of the railways and a new industry culture, including a new Passenger Champion role for Transport Focus and proposals for open data sharing.

Great British Railways is key to delivering a customer-focussed railway. The plans outlined in this consultation will deliver a rail system that is the backbone of a cleaner, greener public transport system, offering passengers and freight customers a better deal and greater value for money for taxpayers. The private sector has played an integral role in improving our railways over the past 25 years - these plans are designed to take the best of the private sector and fuse it with a single guiding mind that can drive benefits and efficiencies across the system as a whole.

I hope that all of those with an interest in our railways will find the time to participate and share their views through this consultation. Sharing your views will help to ensure the legislative changes we enact will deliver the vision set out in the Plan for Rail, securing our railways so that they are able to flourish into the future and as we approach their bicentenary in 2025.