



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 15 June 2022 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:37 P.M., 15 June 2022). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

CONTENTS

ANSWERS	5	■ Government Departments:	
ATTORNEY GENERAL	5	Contracts for Services	12
■ Treasury Counsel	5	■ National Cyber Security Centre: Staff	12
BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY	6	COP26	13
■ Carbon Emissions	6	■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]	13
■ Chronic Illnesses: Weather	7	DEFENCE	14
■ Clinical Trials	7	■ Afghanistan: Refugees	14
■ Construction: Materials	7	■ Armed Forces:	
■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Media	8	Commonwealth Games 2022	15
■ Electrical Goods	8	■ Armed Forces: HIV Infection	16
■ Electronic Equipment: Electric Cables	8	■ Armed Forces: Housing	16
■ Energy Company Obligation	9	■ Armed Forces: Recruitment	17
■ Nuclear Power	9	■ Armed Forces: Sexual Offences	18
■ Postgraduate Education	10	■ Challenger Tanks	18
■ Research Collaboration Advice Team	10	■ China: Defence	19
■ Special Guardianship Orders: Leave	11	■ Civil Defence	19
CABINET OFFICE	11	■ LE TacCIS Programme	19
■ Cabinet Office: Media	11	■ Libya: Armed Conflict	20
■ Cabinet Office: MG OMD	11	■ Ministry of Defence:	
		Commonwealth Games 2022	21
		■ Ministry of Defence: Media	21
		■ Ministry of Defence: MG OMD	21
		■ NATO: Military Exercises	22

■ Qatar: Football	22	■ Aviation: Air Pollution	35
■ RAF Lakenheath	22	■ Food: Waste	36
■ Ukraine: Military Aid	23	■ Glass: Recycling	36
DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT	23	FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE	37
■ BetIndex: Insolvency	23	■ Afghanistan: Refugees	37
■ Channel 4 Television: Privatisation	23	■ Bruno Araújo Pereira and Dom Phillips	37
■ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Media	25	■ China: Academic Technology Approval Scheme	38
■ Digital Technology: Advertising	25	■ Developing Countries: Famine and Humanitarian Aid	38
■ Football Index: Insolvency	25	■ Developing Countries: Food	39
EDUCATION	26	■ Developing Countries: Water	39
■ Adult Education: Finance	26	■ Falkland Islands: Sovereignty	40
■ Department for Education: Media	27	■ Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Hikvision	40
■ Department for Education: MG OMD	27	■ Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Media	40
■ GCE A-level and GCSE: Assessments	27	■ Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: MG OMD	41
■ National Implementation Board	28	■ Hong Kong: Politics and Government	41
■ Pre-school Education: Staff	29	■ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	41
■ Schools: Academic Year	29	■ Rwanda: Debts	42
■ Special Educational Needs	30	■ Rwanda: Humanitarian Aid	42
■ Students: Loans	30	■ Shavendra Silva	42
■ Teachers: Pay	31	■ Tropical Diseases	43
■ Teachers: Training	31	HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	43
■ Work Experience: Disability	32	■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]	43
ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS	33	■ Cancer: Barnsley	44
■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]	33	■ Cancer: Diagnosis	44
■ Agriculture: Seasonal Workers	33	■ Cancer: Medical Treatments	44
■ Avian Influenza: Disease Control	34	■ Cancer: Research	45

■ Cancer: Stockport	45	■ Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre	56
■ Carers: Kingston upon Hull	45	■ HM Passport Office	57
■ Chronic Fatigue Syndrome	46	■ Home Office: Media	57
■ Clinical Trials: Patients	46	■ Homes for Ukraine Scheme: Children	58
■ Dementia: Diagnosis	46	■ Homes for Ukraine Scheme: Vetting	58
■ Dementia: Drugs	47	■ Members: Correspondence	59
■ Dementia: Health Services	48	■ Migrant Workers: Domestic Abuse	60
■ Dental Services: Kingston upon Hull	48	■ Naturalisation: Applications	60
■ Dental Services: South Yorkshire	48	■ Passports: Applications	61
■ Females: Health Services	49	■ Passports: Dover Port	62
■ Gender Recognition: West Yorkshire	49	■ Refugees: Ukraine	62
■ General Practitioners	50	■ Visas: Applications	63
■ Health Professions: Protective Clothing	50	■ Visas: Married People	64
■ Heart Diseases and Kidney Diseases	50	■ Visas: Ukraine	64
■ Heart Diseases: Diagnosis	51	INTERNATIONAL TRADE	65
■ Hospitals: York	51	■ Environment Protection: Foreign Investment in UK	65
■ Long Covid: Health Services	52	■ Overseas Trade: Russia	66
■ Medical Treatments	52	JUSTICE	66
■ Mental Health Services: Durham	52	■ Crime: Victims	66
■ Mental Health Services: Waiting Lists	53	■ Criminal Injuries Compensation: British Nationals Abroad	67
■ NHS: South West	53	■ Domestic Abuse: Convictions	67
■ Wound Dressings: Procurement	53	■ Ministry of Justice: Media	68
HOME OFFICE	54	■ Ministry of Justice: MG OMD	69
■ Asylum	54	■ Parole	69
■ Asylum: Kurds	55	LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES	69
■ Asylum: Rwanda	55	■ Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities: Media	69
■ British National (Overseas): Hong Kong	56		

■ Homes for Ukraine Scheme	70	■ Treasury: Media	81
■ Leasehold: Ground Rent	70	WORK AND PENSIONS	82
■ Leasehold: Reform	71	■ Councillors: Universal Credit	82
■ Refugees: Ukraine	72	■ Department for Work and Pensions: Media	82
■ Rented Housing	72	■ Department for Work and Pensions: MG OMD	82
■ Right to Buy Scheme	73	■ Food Banks	83
TRANSPORT	73	■ Members: Correspondence	83
■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]	73	■ Pensions: Debts	84
■ Air Traffic Control: Coronavirus	73	■ Social Security Benefits: Cost of Living	84
■ Airlines: Competition	74	■ State Retirement Pensions	85
■ Chesterfield Canal: Tunnels	75	■ State Retirement Pensions: British Nationals Abroad	86
■ Department for Transport: Expenditure	75	■ Universal Credit: Cost of Living	86
■ Department for Transport: MG OMD	76	WRITTEN STATEMENTS	88
■ EasyJet	76	DEFENCE	88
■ Freight	76	■ Defence AI Strategy Launch	88
■ Housing: Charging Points	77	■ Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services Inspection Reports of the Royal Navy, Royal Military and Royal Air Force Police	88
■ Railways: Tickets	77	HOME OFFICE	89
■ Roads: Safety	77	■ Drugs strategy guidance for local delivery partners	89
■ Shipping: Crew	78	TRANSPORT	90
■ Shipping: Pay	78	■ Future of Freight Plan	90
■ Travel Agents: Competition	78		
TREASURY	79		
■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]	79		
■ Fuels: Costs	80		
■ Tax Allowances: Health Professions	81		

Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

ATTORNEY GENERAL

■ Treasury Counsel

Emily Thornberry: [\[15210\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, if she will publish the (a) description of responsibilities and (b) terms of reference under which the First Treasury Counsel is currently employed by her Department.

Emily Thornberry: [\[15211\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, when she last held a meeting in person with the First Treasury Counsel to discuss (a) priority issues within the remit of her Department and (b) his work responsibilities and performance.

Emily Thornberry: [\[15212\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how much has been spent from the public purse on the procurement of external legal advice by her Department in each month from the 1 June 2021 to 31 May 2022.

Suella Braverman:

First Treasury Counsel is a senior self-employed advocate who undertakes civil litigation and advisory work for all Government departments. The Attorney General appoints First Treasury Counsel through a fair and open competition. First Treasury Counsel's responsibilities are:

- To be the Government's main advocate in civil litigation affecting the Crown. First Treasury Counsel has responsibility for dealing with the wide range of litigation affecting the Government. First Treasury Counsel will help to shape the way that the Government handles its litigation and as a result will help to shape the way that public law develops.
- To advise civil servants and Ministers in conference and in writing.
- To play a key role in leading the Attorney General's panels and to participate in the selection of panel members.
- To speak at training events and conferences for members of the Government Legal Service.
- To play an important role in advising the Government. It is therefore important that First Treasury Counsel is able to give sound, practical and robust legal advice to Ministers and can inspire their confidence.
- To appear before a wide range of Courts in some of the most important public law cases of the day. First Treasury Counsel must be able to inspire the Judiciary's confidence both as regards legal ability and integrity.

First Treasury Counsel is appointed on the basis that:

- They must do exclusively Government work for the duration of their appointment;
- No particular level of work or remuneration is guaranteed;
- They are self-employed;
- They must have dedicated administrative support within their chambers/office to support a very busy and varied practice as First Treasury Counsel; and
- The period of appointment is indefinite and terminable by either side at any time.

Whether and how often the Attorney General seeks and receives external legal advice relates to her function as a Law Officer and chief legal adviser to the Government. It is a longstanding convention, accepted by governments of all parties, not to disclose whether the Law Officers have been asked to give legal advice, have given legal advice, or the contents of any such advice.

This convention protects the Law Officers' ability to give full and frank legal advice on some of the most contentious and difficult issues the Government may consider.

Within the limits of that convention, it is possible to say that, due to the volume and significance of the litigation and legal issues where First Treasury Counsel is instructed for the government, the Attorney General or the members of her Office have frequent contact with First Treasury Counsel.

The Attorney General and the Attorney General's Office are subject to the same requirements and oversight in relation to the use of public funds as any other minister or Government department, as set out in the relevant guidance from HM Treasury.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Carbon Emissions

Dame Diana Johnson:

[\[14450\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on the role of the UK's net zero targets in meeting COP26 commitments.

Greg Hands:

My rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State regularly meets with Cabinet colleagues to discuss net zero targets and progress towards these. The Government's Net Zero Strategy is a cross-economy strategy which keeps the Government on track for meeting carbon budgets and the UK's 2030 Nationally Determined Contribution.

The Government's leadership on climate change at home, including reducing emissions faster than any other G7 economy, means that the Government is well placed not just to meet commitments made at COP26, but also to continue to drive forward international action and encourage others to deliver on their commitments in this critical decade of delivery.

■ Chronic Illnesses: Weather

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[13650\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department has plans to provide relief payments on energy costs to people suffering from cold-related conditions.

Greg Hands:

As announced on 26 May, the Government will be providing a £150 one-off disability Cost of Living Payment to the 6 million people who receive disability benefits. The Government is also providing an additional one-off £300 payment for UK pensioners and £400 for all domestic electricity customers through the expansion of the Energy Bills Support Scheme (EBSS). The Government will also continue to provide support through the Warm Home Discount Scheme and Cold Weather Payments, which help to ensure the most vulnerable are better able to heat their homes over the colder months.

■ Clinical Trials

Chi Onwurah:

[\[13707\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate his Department has made of the number of new clinical trial starts in the UK for Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products within the last 12 months; and whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of measures to incentivise companies to launch new therapies in the UK.

George Freeman:

The Government wants NHS patients to benefit from innovative and effective new medicines and accelerated access through clinical research medicine via trials is a major pillar of the Life Sciences Vision. Responsibility for clinical trials sits with DHSC/NIHR but the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has recommended several ATMP that are now routinely funded for NHS patients. Recent initiatives such as the Innovative Licensing and Access Pathway (ILAP) and the Innovative Medicines Fund will further support the rapid introduction of effective new medicines, including ATMP, for the benefit of NHS patients.

Innovate UK and Medical Research Council, as part of UKRI have funded clinical trials in the UK for Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products (ATMP). Data is collected on an annual basis and information for 2022 is not yet available. From January 2021 – December 2021 there were 31 new ATMP clinical trial starts in the UK.

■ Construction: Materials

Andrew Lewer:

[\[14604\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department is taking steps to support roofers experiencing liquidity challenges in the context of inflation on roofing materials.

Lee Rowley:

The Government is aware that construction materials price inflation is creating *liquidity challenges* for some businesses in the sector. We are working closely with the Construction Leadership Council's (CLC) Product Availability Group to monitor product and material availability and mitigate the impact of price increases and we would encourage any companies who are concerned about this to get in touch with the CLC so that their comments and views can be considered a part of that work.

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Media**Emily Thornberry:**[\[13662\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what total cost to the public purse, inclusive of VAT, was incurred by his Department between May 2018 and May 2022 for media buying services provided under the Crown Commercial Service's media buying framework agreement reference RM6003.

George Freeman:

The Media Buying framework agreement (RM6003) started 7 November 2018 and ended 21 May 2022 and has now expired.

The framework agreement was awarded to OMD Group Ltd (OmniGov) following a competitive tendering process in 2018. Customers used this framework agreement by putting in place a call off.

Electrical Goods**Fleur Anderson:**[\[14641\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he plans to bring forward regulations to require new portable electronic devices to use a USB Type-C charger.

Paul Scully:

The Government is aware of the proposal of the EU for a single charging solution for certain electronic devices. There are currently no plans to introduce similar requirements in domestic law, but we will monitor developments in this area.

Electronic Equipment: Electric Cables**Yasmin Qureshi:**[\[14462\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of standardising charging cables for portable electronic devices.

Paul Scully:

The Government is aware of the proposal of the EU for a single charging solution for certain electronic devices. There are currently no plans to introduce similar requirements in domestic law, but we will monitor developments in this area.

■ Energy Company Obligation

Alan Brown: [\[15734\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he plans to bring forward legislative proposals for ECO 4 before the summer recess; and if he will make a statement.

Greg Hands:

The Government is working quickly to lay regulations as early as possible. A Written Ministerial Statement will be issued once the ECO4 regulations are laid.

■ Nuclear Power

Judith Cummins: [\[13746\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to page 21 of his Department's publication entitled British energy security strategy, published 7 April 2022, what steps his Department has taken to ensure that the Great British Nuclear Vehicle is (a) established and (b) operational in 2022.

Greg Hands:

The Government appointed Simon Bowen as Industry Adviser to lead the set-up of the new Great British Nuclear body on 13 May. With Simon's support, the Government is working with industry to develop options for GBN's scope and remit, and to establish GBN in line with the ambitions set out in the British Energy Security Strategy, published in April 2022.

Judith Cummins: [\[13747\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will commission an independent assessment of the adequacy of his Department's plans to meet his ambition that 24GW of electricity will be produced by nuclear power by 2050.

Greg Hands:

The Government committed to establish Great British Nuclear in the British Energy Security. This new body will be charged with helping nuclear projects through the development process and realising the Government's ambition of generating up to 24GW of nuclear-sourced energy by 2050.

Judith Cummins: [\[13748\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 20 May 2022 to Question 759 on Nuclear Power, on what basis will the assessments of (a) value for money and (b) technology readiness be made.

Greg Hands:

The Government will follow HM Treasury Green Book guidance to assess the value for money and deliverability of future nuclear projects. The Government is in constructive commercial negotiations on the Sizewell C project, which proposes to use the Regulated Asset Base (RAB) funding model established by the Nuclear Energy (Financing) Act 2022. In addition to satisfying the Green Book guidance, all

projects seeking to use the RAB model must demonstrate that they are both sufficiently advanced and likely to result in value for money, against the criteria set out in [Nuclear RAB Model: statement on procedure and criteria for designation](#).

■ Postgraduate Education

Chi Onwurah: [\[13705\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what data his Department collects on PhD students who fail (a) to complete their projects or (b) at the viva stage, broken down by (i) gender, (ii) race and ethnicity, (iii) social class and (iv) disability.

George Freeman:

BEIS does not hold data regarding completion of PhD courses for different student characteristics.

■ Research Collaboration Advice Team

Alicia Kearns: [\[15778\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many requests for support the Research Collaboration Advice Team has received from universities since its inception.

Alicia Kearns: [\[15779\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if his will publish the outcomes of requests submitted by universities to the Research Collaboration Advice Team.

Alicia Kearns: [\[15780\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many university referrals to the Research Collaboration Advice Team were made in relation to a Chinese linked project; and what the outcomes of those referrals were.

George Freeman:

The Research Collaboration Advice Team (RCAT) has engaged with most research-intensive universities to provide support and advice. It is crucial to maintain the confidence of universities when they have identified potential national security risks in international collaboration, therefore there are no current plans to publish the outcomes of requests for advice, nor the countries to which they refer. The RCAT continues to review its processes to ensure we are as transparent as possible when sharing information, without infringing on the assumption of confidence that the model is based on. The RCAT will reach full operational capacity by September.

■ Special Guardianship Orders: Leave

Steve McCabe:

[\[14415\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of introducing paid leave for people who have undertaken special guardianship orders.

Paul Scully:

The Government recognises the important role that Special Guardians play looking after children.

Statutory guidance is clear that local authorities should consider financial help for special guardians. Qualifying special guardians are also entitled to annual leave, the right to request flexible working and unpaid parental leave to help them balance their family and work responsibilities.

The recently published Independent Care Review made recommendations to support special guardians and kinship carers. The Government is carefully considering all the recommendations in the Care Review and will respond in due course.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Cabinet Office: Media

Emily Thornberry:

[\[13672\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what total cost to the public purse, inclusive of VAT, was incurred by his Department between May 2018 and May 2022 for media buying services provided under the Crown Commercial Service's media buying framework agreement reference RM6003, exclusive of any procurement of media buying services related to the covid-19 outbreak.

Mr Jacob Rees-Mogg:

The Media Buying framework agreement (RM6003) started on 7th November 2018 and ended on 21st May 2022.

The framework agreement was awarded to OMD Group Ltd (OmniGov) following a competitive tendering process in 2018.

During the requested period (May 2018 to May 2022), the Government Communication Service in the Cabinet Office had a total spend of £101,852,321.90 (excluding COVID-19 spend) through this framework.

■ Cabinet Office: MG OMD

Emily Thornberry:

[\[13673\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the (a) procurement reference, (b) start date, (c) end date and (d) maximum value, inclusive of VAT, is of the contract that his Department has agreed with Manning Gottlieb OMD for the provision of strategic media

activation services under the terms of the Crown Commercial Service's media services framework agreement reference RM6123.

Mr Jacob Rees-Mogg:

The Media Services (RM6123) framework agreement includes the provision of strategic media activation services (LOT1) and was put in place following a competitive tender in December 2021. Customers can use this framework agreement through a call-off contract. Manning Gottlieb OMD is the supplier.

The framework commenced on 14th December 2021 and is due to end on 13th December 2025.

The specific contract details for the Government Communication Service, based in the Cabinet Office is as follows: Contract Reference number: CCTS22A37, Start Date: 24 May 2022, Expiry Date: 01 July 2022 and Total Contract Value: £1.5m.

■ **Government Departments: Contracts for Services**

Kirsten Oswald:

[\[14512\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether his Department issues guidance to companies that deliver public-facing services on behalf of the Government on establishing routes where MPs can raise issues on behalf of constituents.

Mr Jacob Rees-Mogg:

The Cabinet Office does not issue guidance to service providers on establishing routes where MPs can raise issues on behalf of constituents. However, MPs are able to raise any issues with government suppliers through existing channels - by writing to the Secretary of State, writing to the Department through MP correspondence, or through Parliamentary questions.

Those dissatisfied with government services can also raise issues directly with the responsible government department. Departments provide details on their complaints procedure on their GOV.UK pages. If, having followed the stages of the complaints procedure the complainant remains dissatisfied, our published guidance recommends that members of the public contact their MP and ask for your complaint to be referred to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman. The Ombudsman can carry out independent investigations into complaints about government departments, agencies and some public bodies.

■ **National Cyber Security Centre: Staff**

Angela Rayner:

[\[16971\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 8 June 2022 to Question 11692 on National Cyber Security Centre: Staff, whether there has been an increase in the number of officials working within the NCSC since January 2021.

Michael Ellis:

We do not comment on increases or decreases in the number of officials working within individual GCHQ departments for reasons of national security.

COP26■ **[Subject Heading to be Assigned]****Felicity Buchan:**[\[900529\]](#)

To ask the President of COP26, what assessment he has made of the role of nature in delivering agreements made at COP26.

Rebecca Pow:

Nature-based solutions have the potential to deliver up to a third of the cost-effective mitigation required by 2030 to meet the Paris Agreement's 2-degree goal. They are also central to adaptation.

At COP26, we brought nature into the heart of the summit for the first time. 143 countries, representing 91% of the world's forests, pledged to collectively halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030.

We are now focused on implementation, and are working with partners throughout our Presidency to turn commitments into action.

Chris Law:[\[900530\]](#)

To ask the President of COP26, what discussions he has had with (a) Cabinet colleagues and (b) international counterparts on the development of a loss and damage fund.

Alok Sharma:

As the Hon. Gentleman is aware, COP26 was the first COP where a section of the "Cover Decisions" were devoted to Loss and Damage. We agreed a new "Glasgow Dialogue on Loss and Damage". This Dialogue was formally launched in Bonn last week.

Mick Whitley:[\[900532\]](#)

To ask the President of COP26, what assessment his Department has made of the potential implications for the UK's decarbonisation targets of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's report entitled Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change.

Alok Sharma:

The UK is committed to Net Zero by 2050 and has an ambitious 2030 emission reduction target, which the independent "Climate Change Committee" has noted is aligned with the Paris Temperature goals.

Our Net Zero Strategy, published last year, set out our plan to decarbonise our economy.

Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:[\[900534\]](#)

To ask the President of COP26, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on facilitating the UK's climate objectives and COP26 commitments through trade deals.

Rebecca Pow:

Last month my Right Honourable Friend, the Secretary of State for International Trade set out the UK's priorities for green trade and how free and fair trade can play a critical role in driving the global green transition.

Our free trade agreements are one lever to removing barriers to green trade, strengthening bilateral cooperation on climate change and the environment and supporting the delivery of the environmental commitments secured through the UK's COP26 Presidency.

For example, both the Australia and New Zealand Free Trade Agreements have included affirmations of each party's commitments to address climate change, including the Paris Agreement, and recognise the importance of achieving our respective goals.

DEFENCE**■ Afghanistan: Refugees****Caroline Lucas:**[\[13694\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy applications have not yet been concluded due to an (a) initial decision not being made and (b) appeal not yet taking place.

James Heapey:

As of 8 June 2022, there are 15,340 applications awaiting an initial decision and 335 requests for review are awaiting an outcome.

John Healey:[\[14429\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the Answer of 27 May 2022 to Question 156377 on Afghanistan: Refugees, how many Afghans with confirmed eligibility for relocation to the UK under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy are in Afghanistan as of 8 June 2022.

James Heapey:

As of 8 June 2022, there are 671 ARAP principals with confirmed eligibility for relocation to the UK who were in Afghanistan at the point that they confirmed their location with the casework team. It is not always possible to know whether all eligible personnel are still in the country as some have eligibility for resettlement to other allied countries and/or many have already travelled to a neighbouring country.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:[\[14519\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy, how many cases are outstanding (a) in total and (b) for female judges as of 8 June 2022; and what the average time taken to process a case is.

James Heappey:

As of 8 June 2022, there are 15,340 applications awaiting an initial decision. It is not possible to provide a breakdown based on gender or job title.

We are working at pace to consider each application on a case-by-case basis and timelines for processing applications vary significantly from case to case, due to the complexity and personal circumstances of each applicant.

John Healey:[\[15181\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the Answer of 28 April 2022 to Question 156378 on Afghanistan: Refugees, how many and what proportion of applications under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy received by his Department in (a) April and (b) May 2022 (i) have been processed with a final decision given and (ii) await a decision on eligibility as of 9 June 2022.

James Heappey:

Applications are being processed almost entirely in the order they were received. Many applications received each month are duplicates of existing applications or are being submitted by Afghan citizens with no eligibility. We are working to accelerate the speed at which we reject these applications whilst continuing to work through the large volume of more likely legitimate applications received.

John Healey:[\[15184\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many applications to the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy have been rejected since 1 January 2022.

James Heappey:

Since 1 January 2022, 534 ARAP principals have been rejected and have received a rejection letter.

John Healey:[\[15185\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, the average length of time it has taken to process an application to the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy since 1 May 2022.

James Heappey:

Information on the average time taken to process an application is not currently available. We are working at pace to consider each application on a case-by-case basis and timelines for processing applications vary significantly from case to case, due to the complexity and personal circumstances of each applicant.

■ Armed Forces: Commonwealth Games 2022**John Healey:**[\[15706\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many armed forces personnel are planned to support the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

James Heappey:

Under Op UNITY the UK will currently provide up to 1,000 military personnel in support of the Commonwealth Games, with capacity to deploy additional personnel if required.

■ **Armed Forces: HIV Infection****Luke Pollard:**[\[15761\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 14 March 2022 to Question 136647 on Armed Forces: HIV Infection, on which date the Government plans to announce the implementation of the new policy allowing people living with HIV to join and fully serve within the armed forces.

Leo Docherty:

An announcement is expected shortly, in June 2022.

■ **Armed Forces: Housing****John Healey:**[\[15707\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much service personnel and families have paid in disputed charges for serving family accommodation in each year since 2010.

Jeremy Quin:

Data on disputed charges for Service Family Accommodation (SFA) is only centrally held from 2017 onwards.

The table below provides a breakdown of the raised disputed charges for SFA since 2017 by Financial Year:

Financial Year	Total
2017-18	£73,298.62
2018-19	£6,948.72
2019-20	£35,974.12
2020-21	£38,954.89
2021-22	£42,270.85
Total	£197,447.20

Disputed Charges are charges for which Service Personnel do not feel they should be held responsible. Each case is investigated using supporting evidence, including photographs, and the 14 day Move-in Report.

In line with Joint Service Publication 464, when Service Personnel and their families move out of UK SFA, they may be liable for charges for damages or deficiencies that

are not classed as fair wear and tear, or because they have failed to prepare the property to the correct move-out standard, for example, lack of cleanliness.

■ Armed Forces: Recruitment

John Healey:

[\[13042\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much his Department spent on the recruitment systems for the (a) Army, (b) Royal Air Force and (c) Royal Navy in each of the last five years.

Leo Docherty:

The requested information is provided in the following tables:

Royal Navy (RN)

Financial Years 2017-18 to 2021-22 (£ million)

2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
£1.00	£1.00	£1.00	£1.83	£4.06

Notes:

1. The RN is unable to provide information on their share of the overall build costs for Defence Recruiting System (DRS).
2. The RN did not commit to extending the DRS contract on 11 March 2022. Therefore, costs in 2020-21 include application development, licence costs and initial set up equipment for an interim recruitment solution provided by PegaSystems which will bridge the gap until the Armed Forces Recruitment Programme goes live in 2025.
3. Costs in 2021-22 include application development costs and licence costs, plus Wi-Fi upgrades in Armed Forces Careers Offices to conduct aptitude testing.

British Army

Calendar Years 2017 to 2021 (£ million)

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
£10.51	£14.76	£4.44	£15.01M	£8.46

Notes:

1. Figures for 2017 and 2018 include the Army's share of the cost of installing the DRS. All figures relate to expenditure on DRS.
2. Figures for 2020 include the cost of purchasing the intellectual property rights to DRS from Capita.
3. Figures for 2021 include the cost of cloud implementation.

Royal Air Force (RAF)

Financial Years 2017-18 to 2021-22 (£ million)

2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Unknown	£0.96	£1.18	£1.79	£4.37

Notes:

1. The RAF is unable to provide information on their share of the overall build costs for DRS.
2. The RAF did not commit to extending the DRS contract on 11 March 2022. Therefore, costs in 2020-21 include application development, licence costs and initial set up equipment for an interim recruitment solution provided by PegaSystems which will bridge the gap until the Armed Forces Recruitment Programme goes live in 2025.
3. Costs in 2021-22 include application development costs and licence costs, plus Wi-Fi upgrades in Armed Forces Careers Offices to conduct aptitude testing.

■ **Armed Forces: Sexual Offences****Stephanie Peacock:**[\[14578\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 19 May 2022 to Question 1522 on Armed Forces: Violent and Sex Offender Register, whether (a) all service personnel convicted of a sexual offence will now be discharged following the introduction of the Zero Tolerance policy and (b) exceptional circumstances may still prevent discharge in some cases.

Leo Docherty:

As stated in my answer to the hon. Member of 19 May 2022 in response to UIN 1522, under the Zero Tolerance to Sexual Offences policy all Service persons who are convicted of a sexual offence or who are placed on the Sex Offenders Register will be dismissed from the Armed Forces as a matter of course.

■ **Challenger Tanks****John Healey:**[\[13643\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what total saving will result from the retirement of a third of the Challenger tank fleet as set out in the 2021 Defence Command Paper.

Jeremy Quin:

The Integrated Review Defence Command Paper is committed to modernising our fleet of Challenger 2 tanks to Challenger 3 standard.

At this stage, the future support costs for the transition of the Challenger 2 fleet into the enduring support costs for Challenger 3, including any disposal plans, are still being developed.

■ China: Defence

Jim Shannon: [\[15259\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent discussions he has had with his (a) European and (b) US counterparts on tackling Chinese military aggression.

James Heappey:

The Secretary of State for Defence regularly speaks with his counterparts in Europe and the US, in both bilateral and multilateral groupings, on the threats and challenges to global defence and security. China's military aggression and cooperation to manage malign Chinese activity globally frequently feature as part of these discussions.

Most recently this has included with the Northern Group in Iceland last week, the US Deputy Secretary of Defense in London on 26 May 2022 and the US Secretary of Defense in Washington D.C. on 12 May 2022. Further regular discussions are also held bilaterally by the Department.

■ Civil Defence

Dr Jamie Wallis: [\[14615\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of re-establishing the Civil Defence Corps.

James Heappey:

The Ministry of Defence has no plans to consider the establishment of a Civil Defence Force at this time. Such matters would fall within the remit of the Home Office. Defence support to Government Departments or civilian authorities in the UK is undertaken via the Military Aid to the Civil Authorities (MACA) system which is the mature and well-understood process that enabled Defence to support the Government's successful response to COVID-19 over the last two years.

■ LE TacCIS Programme

John Healey: [\[13638\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 27 May 2022 to Question 5335 on LE TacCIS Programme, how many months late is the first element of the Morpheus capability.

John Healey: [\[13639\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 27 May 2022 to Question 5335 on LE TacCIS Programme, whether delays to the first element of the Morpheus capability will delay Morpheus reaching (a) initial and (b) full operational capability.

John Healey: [\[13640\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 27 May 2022 to Question 5335 on LE TacCIS Programme, how many further elements of the Morpheus capability must be completed to reach (a) initial and (b) full operational capability.

Jeremy Quin:

The first phase of the MORPHEUS capability was the demonstration of a lab-tested system; this was due to be delivered in December 2020, delivery against the related EvO TP Contract is late.

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) are actively considering how best to deliver the totality of the Morpheus project including the delivery of a number of subsequent capability elements necessary for a fielded system. The quantity of these additional 'building blocks' depends on their definition and the number of contracts they are delivered through; MOD is considering both of these issues.

Future IOC and FOC dates are currently undetermined pending ongoing negotiations. The MOD is committed to minimising any delay to the ultimate fielding of this capability.

■ **Libya: Armed Conflict**

Kenny MacAskill: [\[15767\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what support UK armed forces provided to the Tripoli Revolutionary Brigade in advance of its takeover of the Libyan capital in August 2011.

Kenny MacAskill: [\[15768\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department made an assessment of the (a) ideology, (b) capability and (c) effectiveness of the Tripoli Revolutionaries Brigade during the conflict in Libya in 2011.

Kenny MacAskill: [\[15769\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department made an assessment of the (a) ideology, (b) capability and (c) effectiveness of the February 17th Martyrs Brigade during the conflict in Libya in 2011.

Kenny MacAskill: [\[15770\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, which armed Libyan groups the UK trained during the conflict in Libya in 2011; and where that training took place.

James Heapey:

As stated in my responses in June and October 2021 to Questions 14221, 14222 and 14223, throughout 2011 the UK Government sought to respond to rapidly changing and volatile dynamics in order to protect Libyan civilians and wider UK interests. The UK's objective was clear: protect civilians and promote stability in Libya in accordance with the UN Security Council Resolution 1973 and in support of NATO's Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR.

Given the amount of time that has elapsed since 2011 I would be happy to provide the hon. Member with a fuller written answer concerning assessments produced of the two Libyan brigades in due course.

■ **Ministry of Defence: Commonwealth Games 2022**

John Healey:

[\[15186\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what support his Department is providing to the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

James Heapey:

Defence will provide a range of assistance to support delivery of the Commonwealth Games, as is standard practice for events of this scale. This includes the provision of Ceremonial assets, advisory teams, Explosive Ordnance Disposal capabilities and Counter-Unmanned Aerial Systems. In addition, Defence has worked constructively with West Midlands Police and will be readying several hundred Service personnel to support with venue security. Defence will continue to engage closely with the Home Office and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to scrutinise and triage any future requests for military support.

■ **Ministry of Defence: Media**

Emily Thornberry:

[\[13682\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what total cost to the public purse, inclusive of VAT, was incurred by his Department between May 2018 and May 2022 for media buying services provided under the Crown Commercial Service's media buying framework agreement reference RM6003.

Leo Docherty:

To date, the total expenditure incurred by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) under the Crown Commercial Service RM6003 framework agreement for media buying services is £93.1 million (inclusive of VAT).

The MOD contracts under this framework agreement have historic contract end dates. However, one contract has not been officially closed and there may be some residual spend which has not yet been processed on the MOD contracts reporting tool.

■ **Ministry of Defence: MG OMD**

Emily Thornberry:

[\[13683\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the (a) procurement reference, (b) start date, (c) end date and (d) maximum value, inclusive of VAT, is of the contract that his Department has agreed with Manning Gottlieb OMD for the provision of strategic media activation services under the terms of the Crown Commercial Service's media services framework agreement reference RM6123.

Leo Docherty:

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) has placed one call off contract under the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) media services framework agreement RM6123, with the company OMD Group Limited, of which Manning Gottlieb OMD is a trading division. The information requested can be found in the table below:

MOD CONTRACT REFERENCE	CCS CONTRACT REFERENCE	START DATE	END DATE	MAXIMUM CONTRACT VALUE (EX VAT)
703984450	CCCO22A03	23/05/2022	13/12/2025	£80,000,000

To date, there has been no expenditure on this contract and hence the contract value has been provided excluding Value Added Tax.

■ NATO: Military Exercises

John Healey:

[\[14428\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many UK (a) personnel and (b) platforms will be involved in the NATO exercise Dynamic Mongoose, which will begin on 13 June 2022.

James Heapey:

NATO exercise Dynamic Mongoose is an anti-submarine and anti-surface warfare interoperability exercise conducted within the Greenland, Iceland, United Kingdom Gap. Bringing together nine NATO Allies, the exercise is designed to practice, demonstrate and refine the Alliance's continued adaptation to an ever-evolving and challenging regional security environment. The UK contribution will include approximately 200 Service personnel, a Type 23 Frigate (HMS Portland), and a Poseidon-8 maritime patrol aircraft.

■ Qatar: Football

John Healey:

[\[15705\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department plans to deploy UK military planes for Government travel to the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

James Heapey:

The Department has not been tasked with providing aircraft to take Government Ministers to the World Cup in Qatar.

■ RAF Lakenheath

Caroline Lucas:

[\[13690\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 31 May 2022 to Question 7960, what the purpose is of the infrastructure programmes and projects his

Department has agreed to deliver on behalf of the United States Visiting Forces at RAF Lakenheath.

Jeremy Quin:

The purpose of the infrastructure programmes and projects at RAF Lakenheath is to develop and deliver work to support the European Deterrent Initiative and European Consolidation Initiative across the United States Visiting Forces estate.

■ **Ukraine: Military Aid**

John Healey:

[\[14418\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the three M270 multiple rocket launch systems provided to Ukraine will be replaced to ensure the same number of available launchers for use within the UK armed forces as before.

James Heappey:

I can confirm that the Department is fully engaged with industry, allies and partners to ensure that all equipment granted in kind to the armed forces of Ukraine is replaced as expeditiously as possible.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ **BetIndex: Insolvency**

Sarah Owen:

[\[13828\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will make it her policy to provide redress to the people affected by the collapse of BetIndex Ltd, the operators of Football Index.

Chris Philp:

The Government appreciates the significant impact that the collapse of the novel gambling product Football Index had on former customers. We recognise the frustration and anger that this situation has caused and the hardship that some people have suffered as a result. However, there is no compensation scheme for losses caused by a gambling firm ceasing to operate and the Government does not think it would be appropriate to use public funds for these purposes.

■ **Channel 4 Television: Privatisation**

Jesse Norman:

[\[15238\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, in what way her Department intends to treat the revenue from any sale of Channel 4.

Julia Lopez:

The Government will look to use some of the proceeds from the sale of Channel 4 to deliver a new creative dividend for the independent production sector.

Jesse Norman: [\[15239\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what estimate her Department has made of the projected (a) economic and (b) social returns from the privatisation of Channel 4; and on what assumptions those projections have been made.

Julia Lopez:

The Government consulted extensively on the future of Channel 4, and the views and evidence gathered from a wide range of stakeholders has informed the Government's assessment of any potential impact of a change of ownership. The Government published its [sale impact analysis](#) on 28 April.

Jesse Norman: [\[15240\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what her Department's valuation is of Channel 4 as of 9 June 2022; and on what assumptions that valuation has been made.

Jesse Norman: [\[15241\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what estimate her Department has made of the projected cash return from the privatisation of Channel 4; and on what assumptions that projection has been made.

Julia Lopez:

Channel 4 has a strong reputation for innovative and diverse content, a proactive strategy to be a digital first provider, and huge popularity with a range of audiences, including valuable younger audiences. The Government expects this will appeal to a broad range of different purchasers.

As with the sale of any government asset, any sale of Channel 4 will involve a careful assessment process to ensure value for money for the taxpayer.

Jesse Norman: [\[15242\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment her Department has made of the impact of the privatisation of Channel 4 on its annual levels of investment in independent television and film production companies.

Julia Lopez:

The Government consulted extensively on the future of Channel 4, and the views and evidence gathered from a wide range of stakeholders has informed the government's assessment of any potential impact of a change of ownership. The Government published its [sale impact analysis](#) on 28 April.

Channel 4 has done an excellent job in supporting the UK production sector and thereby delivering on one of its founding purposes. Forty years on, independent production in the UK is now booming, with revenues having grown from £500 million in 1995 to £3 billion in 2019. Companies are increasingly less reliant on Public Service Broadcasters (PSBs), including Channel 4 for commissions.

Channel 4 still has an important part to play in supporting the sector and our wider creative economy. Channel 4 will still be required to commission a minimum volume

of programming from independent producers, in line with the quotas placed on other PSBs.

Channel 4 has strong relationships with independent producers right across the UK and there is no reason this should change. The Government expects a new owner to want to build on and develop those relationships.

The Government believes that in the long run the UK production ecosystem will benefit from a more sustainable Channel 4. A change of ownership that improves Channel 4's access to capital could increase spending on production.

■ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Media

Emily Thornberry:

[\[13660\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what total cost to the public purse, inclusive of VAT, was incurred by her Department between May 2018 and May 2022 for media buying services provided under the Crown Commercial Service's media buying framework agreement reference RM6003.

Julia Lopez:

Between 1st May 2018 and 30th April 2022, the Department spent a total of £718,632.36 (inclusive of VAT) on Media Buying services provided under Crown Commercial Service's Media Buying Framework Agreement, RM6003.

■ Digital Technology: Advertising

Steve McCabe:

[\[14416\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of action taken by large technology companies to ban third party companies from using certain advertising platforms.

Chris Philp:

The Government is committed to promoting competition in digital markets. A draft Digital Markets, Competition and Consumer Bill was announced as part of the Queen's Speech 2022. This draft legislation will set out new rules for digital markets, which will rebalance power between major tech firms and the businesses and consumers that rely on their services such as advertisers. We will publish the draft bill as soon as parliamentary time allows.

■ Football Index: Insolvency

Mike Amesbury:

[\[13816\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department is taking to ensure the adequacy and effectiveness of the (a) Gambling Commission and (b) Financial Conduct Authority, in the context of the collapse of Football Index.

Chris Philp:

The independent review into the regulation of Football Index, undertaken by Malcolm Sheehan QC and published last September, identified lessons to be learnt and provided recommendations for both the Gambling Commission and the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA).

Both regulators have taken steps to address the issues identified in the report. The Gambling Commission has updated the frameworks for risk based regulation so that product novelty is properly considered alongside other factors in determining the level of scrutiny an operator is placed under. The Commission has also consulted on tighter rules for the terminology used to describe gambling products.

The Commission and FCA have also worked together to strengthen their Memorandum of Understanding in response to Mr Sheehan's recommendations, including with new escalation routes and commitments on timeliness of responses to ensure regulatory impasses can not remain unsolved. The FCA has additionally nominated an Executive Director to oversee the relationship with the Commission.

Our Review of the Gambling Act 2005 called for evidence on the powers and resources of the Commission and how it uses them, and we will publish a White Paper in the coming weeks.

EDUCATION**■ Adult Education: Finance****Navendu Mishra:****[13832]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if his Department will make an assessment of the effectiveness of the Adult Education Budget business case processes.

Alex Burghart:

In the 2019/20 and 2020/21 academic years the department lowered the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) grant funded Adult Education Budget (AEB) reconciliation threshold from 97% to 68% and 90% respectively. We also introduced an associated business case process to support ESFA grant funded providers whose curriculum plans were affected by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Where approved, these business cases thereby enabled ESFA grant funded providers to cover their essential costs of delivery, where factors outside their control disrupted their recruitment plans.

The department recognises the challenges providers have faced because of the pandemic. But we also know that many providers have been able to continue to deliver successfully and have adapted the way that they teach. For the current academic year (2021/22) we plan to maintain the ESFA AEB reconciliation threshold at 97%.

Separate arrangements apply for devolved AEB which are the responsibility of the relevant Mayoral Combined Authority or Greater London Authority. This includes Stockport which is in a devolved area (Greater Manchester Combined Authority).

■ Department for Education: Media

Emily Thornberry: [\[13666\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what total cost to the public purse, inclusive of VAT, was incurred by his Department between May 2018 and May 2022 for media buying services provided under the Crown Commercial Service's media buying framework agreement reference RM6003.

Michelle Donelan:

The Media Buying framework agreement (RM6003) started on 7 November 2018 and ended 21 May 2022. It has now expired.

The framework agreement was awarded to OMD Group Ltd (OmniGov) following a competitive tendering process in 2018. Customers used this framework agreement by putting in place a call off. The total spend inclusive of VAT incurred by the Department for Education in respect of Media buying services under Crown Commercial Services was £45,736,529 for this period.

■ Department for Education: MG OMD

Emily Thornberry: [\[13667\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the (a) procurement reference, (b) start date, (c) end date and (d) maximum value, inclusive of VAT, is of the contract that his Department has agreed with Manning Gottlieb OMD for the provision of strategic media activation services under the terms of the Crown Commercial Service's media services framework agreement reference RM6123.

Michelle Donelan:

The Media Services (RM6123) framework agreement includes the provision of strategic media activation services (LOT1) and was put in place following a competitive tender in December 2021. Customers can use this framework agreement by putting in place a call off. Manning Gottlieb OMD is the supplier for strategic media activation services (LOT1). The framework commenced on 14 December 2021 and is due to end on 13 December 2025. The maximum value of the framework is £1,200,000,000 across all departments and public bodies, however, it should be noted this is the maximum value of spend that can go through the framework agreement and is not a committed spend.

■ GCE A-level and GCSE: Assessments

Sir Bernard Jenkin: [\[15159\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, he he will make an assessment of the impact of rail strikes on the ability of school pupils taking GCSE and A level examinations to travel to their exam locations; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Robin Walker:

The overwhelming majority of students are not reliant on rail transport to attend school or college, as only around 1% of 11 to 16-year-olds travel to school by train. However, the department does know that a small number of students in schools and a larger number in further education colleges will be affected either by rail disruption, or by busier roads and greater demand for other public transport. This means they will likely be experiencing additional stress and disruption at a time when they should be able to fully focus on doing their best in their exams.

Many students will be able to make alternative arrangements. Schools and colleges are also expected to play their part in supporting those students who are likely to be impacted or struggle to make alternative arrangements. Schools and colleges are also expected to have contingency arrangements in place to manage any possible disruption to exams and formal assessments, including late arrival of staff or students.

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) have published updated guidance for centres managing exams this summer. This outlines existing flexibilities, as well as changes to the normal rules for conducting examinations, and is designed to support centres experiencing disruption. This includes additional flexibility around published start times, which could be used if an invigilator is delayed by transport disruption. Where students arrive late, centres should consult JCQ guidance on what to do. In most cases, centres should allow students to take the paper, and exam boards will determine whether that paper can be accepted, depending on how late the student is.

■ National Implementation Board**Munira Wilson:**[\[13823\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he plans to take to ensure that the new National Implementation Board will take into account the views of children in local authority care when it considers the recommendations of the Independent Review of Children's Social Care.

Munira Wilson:[\[13824\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the oral statement of 23 May 2022 on the Independent Review of Children's Social Care, how and when the membership of the National Implementation Board will be determined.

Will Quince:

The department is considering the recommendations made in the Independent Review of Children's Social Care carefully with those with care experience and all interested stakeholders. We will publish an implementation strategy later this year, which will set out how the department will improve children's social care. This will include establishing a National Implementation Board that includes people with their own experience of the care system.

■ Pre-school Education: Staff**Catherine West:**[\[13796\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to help ensure that there are adequate numbers of early years teachers and practitioners.

Will Quince:

The department recognises the huge contribution that early years educators make to giving every child the best start in life, and we are committed to supporting the sector to develop a workforce with the appropriate knowledge, skills, and experience to deliver high-quality early education and childcare.

That is why the department announced up to £153 million in programmes to support workforce development as part of our work to support recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The department is also creating new early years training routes by increasing the number of places available for early years initial teacher training. Free level 3 early years qualifications are available through the Lifetime Skills Guarantee for adults without a level 3 or higher qualification, and from April 2022, eligibility was expanded to include adults who are unemployed or earning below the National Living Wage annually, regardless of any other qualifications held. Employer trailblazer groups have also developed level 2 and 3 apprenticeships, and in August 2021, the department launched a level 5 apprenticeship.

Catherine West:[\[13797\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the (a) implications for his policies of the report by the Early Years Workforce Commission entitled *A Workforce in Crisis: Saving Our Early Years*, published in 2021 and (b) impact of levels of pay on early years staff.

Will Quince:

The majority of the early years sector is made up of private, voluntary, and independent organisations who set their own rates of pay. However, the department acknowledges the concerns raised by the report, and more generally by the early years sector, regarding the perceived impact of salary rates and the link this has to workforce recruitment and retention.

The department is working with the sector to build our understanding of the early years workforce, and how we might support providers in this area.

■ Schools: Academic Year**Justin Tomlinson:**[\[13699\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of encouraging schools to use their powers to alter term dates in order to spread the demand for school holidays and reduce holiday costs for parents and school staff.

Justin Tomlinson:[\[13700\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of setting different school term times for different regions in order to spread the demand for school holidays and thereby reduce holiday costs for parents and school staff.

Mr Robin Walker:

The department does not have any plans to propose changes to term dates. School holidays are not determined at national level, they are agreed locally by trusts, schools, and local authorities (depending on school type). We believe that they are best placed to set school term and holiday dates in the interests of the pupils at their schools and their parents.

If schools do decide to change their term dates, they are required to act reasonably, giving parents notice and considering the impact on those affected. This includes pupils, teachers, the local community, parents' work commitments and childcare options for both parents and teachers.

Special Educational Needs**Mick Whitley:**[\[15378\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if his Department will make an assessment of the potential merits of allowing health workers to refer young people for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) assessments.

Will Quince:

Health professionals are key partners in identifying, assessing, and meeting the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The responsibility to decide whether a child or young person requires an education, health, and care (EHC) assessment rests with the local authority, but a range of partners can bring any child or young person who they feel may require an EHC assessment to the attention of the local authority. This explicitly includes health professionals. This is set out in paragraph 9.9 of the SEND Code of Practice 2015, which is statutory guidance.

Students: Loans**Dehenna Davison:**[\[13817\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has made a recent assessment of the potential merits of raising undergraduate student maintenance loan amounts in line with inflation.

Michelle Donelan:

Maximum grants and loans for living costs were increased by 3.1% this academic year (2021/22) and we have announced that they will increase by a further 2.3% in

the 2022/23 academic year. We are currently reviewing options for uprating in future academic years.

■ Teachers: Pay

Navendu Mishra: [\[13831\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if his Department will take steps to close potential pay differentials between school teachers and further education lecturers.

Alex Burghart:

It is for further education (FE) providers to set the terms and conditions of their staff and the department plays no role in setting FE teachers' pay. The department has made available an extra £1.6 billion for 16-19 education in the 2024/25 financial year, compared with the 2021/22 financial year, in the latest Spending Review. This is in addition to the £291 million for 16-19 education in the 2021/22 financial year, and the £400 million that the department provided in the 2020/21 financial year.

The department will also be investing nearly £52 million in the Further Education Workforce in the 2022/23 financial year, to continue to support the FE sector with the recruitment, retention, and development of teachers. This includes tax-free bursaries worth up to £26,000 each, which are available to support FE teacher training in priority subject areas for the 2022/23 academic year.

■ Teachers: Training

Munira Wilson: [\[15771\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure equity in the initial teacher education accreditation process for students.

Munira Wilson: [\[15772\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will issue guidance to initial teacher education accreditation providers to ensure that students are given the same information after submitting their application.

Mr Robin Walker:

The department's teacher recruitment campaigns are targeted at audiences of students, recent graduates, and potential career changers regardless of their identity or background. We take every effort to ensure that our advertising is fully reflective of this across the full range of marketing materials we use. New 'Bring It' creative materials, introduced in January 2022 also strongly reflect the diversity of our young target audiences and the fact that this generation value diversity and want reassurance that teaching is for people like them.

Last year, Apply for Teacher Training, our new application service for initial teacher training (ITT) in England, was rolled out nationally. Apply has been designed to be as user-friendly as possible and has been extensively tested with a diverse range of potential applicants to ensure it helps remove barriers to great teachers applying for ITT courses.

Apply for Teacher Training will also allow the department to collect more data, giving us greater insight into candidate behaviour and the behaviour of teacher training providers so that we can identify barriers and work to address them. The department will continue to work closely with ITT providers to explore, design and test new interventions to ensure teaching is an inclusive career that is open to candidates from all backgrounds.

This year, the department produced specific guidance for providers on how to treat candidates fairly during recruitment. This guidance is published here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/treating-candidates-fairly-when-you-recruit-trainee-teachers>.

As recommended by the independent review of the ITT market, all existing and new providers of ITT courses are required to undergo an accreditation process to demonstrate that, from September 2024, they will be able to meet the standard set by the new ITT Quality Requirements. The accreditation process is ongoing and the second application round will close on 27 June. All organisations that submit an application for accreditation as a provider of ITT are treated equitably, with applications assessed through an impartial process, by trained assessors.

■ Work Experience: Disability

Holly Mumby-Croft:

[13852]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he is taking steps to help increase the number of work experience opportunities targeted at people with a disability.

Alex Burghart:

The government is committed to ensuring that all learners, including learners with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), have access to a world-class education that sets them up for life and to develop the skills needed to get good jobs.

The department knows that with the right preparation and support, the overwhelming majority of young people with SEND are capable of sustained, paid employment. All professionals working with them should share that presumption and should provide the career advice and support that help young people to develop the skills and experience, and achieve the qualifications, that they need to succeed in their careers.

The government is committed to supporting pathways to employment for learners with SEND, including strengthening the Supported Internship programme, which is a structured, work-based study programme for 16 to 24-year-olds with SEND, who have an education, health, and care plan. The core aim of the programme is a substantial work placement, facilitated by the support of an expert job coach. To support this, the department is investing up to £18 million over the next three years, aiming to double the capacity of the programme.

The careers statutory guidance makes it clear that schools should offer work placements, work experience, and other employer-based activities as part of their careers strategy for year 8-13 pupils and that secondary schools should offer every young person at least seven encounters with employers during their education.

All schools and colleges are expected to work towards the Gatsby Benchmarks of good careers guidance. This includes experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience and ensuring opportunities for advice and support are tailored to the needs of each pupil.

The Careers & Enterprise Company is supporting schools and colleges to make links with employers and increase the opportunities for all young people to engage with the world of work.

The department have also introduced T Levels, high-quality technical qualifications for 16–19-year-olds that include a meaningful 9-week industry placement. We have introduced flexibilities to help as many SEND students as possible to access T Level industry placements, including allowing up to 105 hours of their placement to take place on the provider's site, for example, an on-site restaurant. This will enable students to prepare for their placement with an external employer, alongside pastoral support.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]

Jim Shannon:

[\[13723\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate he made of the number of waste exemptions that were renewed in England in the last 12 months.

Jo Churchill:

There were 18,337 registration renewal transactions in the last 12 months. A number of exemptions may be registered or renewed under each registration or renewal transaction. Customers can add or remove exemptions during the "renewal" process and amend their details if required.

■ **Agriculture: Seasonal Workers**

Daniel Zeichner:

[\[11700\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure that people on the seasonal worker visa scheme are not subject to labour exploitation.

Victoria Prentis:

The Government takes the issue of migrant welfare very seriously and tackling modern slavery is a key priority. In particular, in connection with the Seasonal Workers visa route that is one of the main routes for migrant workers to come each year and help with the harvest for the horticulture sector.

A key objective of the Seasonal Worker visa route 2022-24 is to ensure that migrant workers are adequately protected against modern slavery and other labour abuses.

The Home Office sponsored licencing system places clear and binding requirements and obligations on the scheme operators to safeguard workers under the scheme, including protecting workers' rights and ensuring effective enforcement of UK employment laws.

The operators of the Seasonal Worker visa route are licensed by the Gangmasters Labour and Abuse Authority (GLAA). They will ensure that all workers are placed with farms who adhere to all relevant legislation. Should a scheme operator lose their GLAA licencing at any point, their sponsor licence will be revoked with immediate effect.

Defra is working across Government and with the sector to take a number of targeted and widespread actions to ensure the safety of workers pre-arrival, in-country and on their return home.

On 6 April 2022, changes were implemented by the Home Office to ensure that seasonal workers are paid in line with skilled workers. Workers must be paid at least £10.10 for each hour they work. The minimum pay requirement for seasonal workers on the scheme has been designed to discourage poor conditions.

■ Avian Influenza: Disease Control

Kerry McCarthy:

[13065]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will take steps to (a) strengthen surveillance, testing and carcass collection and (b) put in place (i) disturbance minimisation and (ii) biosecurity measures in preparation for any future outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza in wild birds in the UK.

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 (WOAH) disease-free status. Defra's approach is set out in the Notifiable Avian Disease Control Strategy for Great Britain. Swift and humane culling of 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. 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) has a robust programme of wild bird surveillance and engages in year-round avian influenza surveillance of dead wild birds submitted via public reports and warden patrols. Between 5 October 2021 and 30 May 2022 over 2,570 wild birds have been tested. Of these, 1,085 have tested positive for H5 highly pathogenic avian influenza. There have been findings in 291 different locations in 50 different species in 77 different counties.

For further details of wild bird findings see the report (updated weekly) [of findings of HPAI in wild birds in Great Britain](#) and our [outbreak assessments](#).

Avian influenza experts from APHA conduct testing at our national reference laboratory. All diagnostic testing is conducted in line with WOAH standards as set out for [Avian Influenza in the OIE Terrestrial Manual](#). Initial results can be reported within several hours of samples arriving at the reference laboratory.

Dealing with disturbance issues is very site and species specific. Many of the wild bird populations at risk of avian influenza use sites protected for their bird interest in breeding and/or non-breeding seasons (e.g. as Special Protection Areas). Often these sites will already have site managers and wardens responsible for ensuring that disturbance is not a significant issue for the bird features. The Scientific Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds makes some recommendations about disturbance in its [January 2022 statement](#).

Our [biosecurity guidance](#) and [biosecurity self-assessment checklist](#) contain further details of the measures all bird keepers must continue to take to protect their birds from avian influenza. Even when an Avian Influenza Prevention Zone (AIPZ) is not in force, we recommend keepers continue to follow these biosecurity measures to protect their birds. An AIPZ makes it a legal requirement for bird keepers (whether they have pet birds, commercial flocks or just a few birds in a backyard flock) to follow strict biosecurity measures in order to reduce the risk of transmission of avian influenza to poultry and other captive birds from wild birds or any other source.

The UK has robust biosecurity measures in place to prevent avian influenza spreading, and a strong track record of controlling and eliminating outbreaks in the UK. The Government is clear that all operational livestock premises should implement strong biosecurity measures and report suspected disease immediately – and the Government and its delivery agencies continue to work closely with industry to ensure good flock management and husbandry practices are implemented on all farms regardless of size or scale.

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 upon the latest scientific, ornithological, and veterinary advice.

■ Aviation: Air Pollution

Tulip Siddiq:

[13793]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent discussions his Department has had with the Department for Transport on the impact of aviation induced cloudiness on the environment.

Jo Churchill:

Defra officials have regular discussions with officials from the Department of Transport on the impacts of transport including aviation on the environment. There is significant uncertainty about the impact of cloudiness or contrails from aviation which can lead to both warming and cooling effects. The Government is working closely with the academic community to better understand the non-CO₂ impacts from

aviation, and potential mitigation methods to ensure that future policy development is based on the latest available climate science.

Through the Jet Zero Consultation, the Government sought views on our approach to decarbonise aviation and also sought views on how to tackle non-CO₂ impacts.

■ Food: Waste

Beth Winter:

[\[14654\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much food waste was generated by UK households by (a) tonnage and (b) amount of greenhouse gas emission in each year since 2010.

Jo Churchill:

Periodic estimates of UK household food waste levels are undertaken by the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) with government funding:

- 2007 – 8.1 million tonnes
- 2015 – 7.1 million tonnes
- 2018 – 6.6 million tonnes

The next estimate reporting year is 2022/23.

WRAP have not estimated the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with only household food waste. They have estimated that food waste from manufacturing, retail, hospitality and food service and households together in 2018 was associated with approximately 36 million tonnes of GHG emissions each year.

■ Glass: Recycling

Daisy Cooper:

[\[13250\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 17 May 2022 to Question 478, what assessment he has made of the compatibility between the claims of the glass industry that including glass in a deposit return scheme could reduce recycling, reduce the products that can be made from recycled glass and increase overall carbon emissions, with the findings of the FEVE LCA study which shows that, on a cradle to cradle basis, every tonne of recycled glass saves 670 kg of CO₂ on average in the EU and that expressed in terms of percentages, melting 100 per cent cullet reduces the CO₂ emissions by about 58 per cent compared to a situation where no cullet is used.

Jo Churchill:

The Government agrees that recycling glass can reduce CO₂ emissions, and we are committed to improving recycling rates. Stakeholders expressed concern that including glass in a Deposit Return Scheme and consequently crushing glass in a reverse vending machine could reduce the options for recycling it, and risks increasing overall carbon emissions. The Government believes kerbside recycling of glass offers the best route to deliver high quality glass for recycling.

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE**■ Afghanistan: Refugees****Caroline Lucas:**[\[13692\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many places on the Afghan Citizen Resettlement Scheme were offered to (a) British Council and GardaWorld contractors and (b) Chevening alumni since the opening of the scheme on 6 January 2022.

James Cleverly:

Under the third pathway of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS), and in year one, the Government will consider eligible, at-risk Chevening alumni for resettlement, as well as eligible at-risk GardaWorld contractors and British Council contractors. The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office will be in touch with those eligible to support them through the next steps. We are not able to share further detail at this stage.

Caroline Lucas:[\[13693\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the Answers of 19 January 2022 to Question 101688 and 28 February 2022 to Question 125081 on Refugees: Afghanistan, how many (a) Chevening alumni and (b) British Council and Garda World contractors (i) have been notified about their applications to the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme and received information about arrangements for safe passage and (ii) are yet to be contacted about their places on the scheme.

James Cleverly:

Under the third pathway of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS), and in year one, the Government will consider eligible, at-risk Chevening alumni for resettlement, as well as eligible at-risk Gardaworld contractors and British Council contractors. The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office will be in touch with those eligible to support them through the next steps. We are not able to share further detail at this stage.

■ Bruno Araújo Pereira and Dom Phillips**Dame Diana Johnson:**[\[15207\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether (a) she or (b) her officials have made representations to her Brazilian counterpart on scaling up the emergency search operation for Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira, following their disappearance in the Javari Valley on 5 June 2022, in cooperation with local indigenous organisations.

Dame Diana Johnson:[\[15208\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the disappearance of British journalist Dom Phillips and indigenous rights

expert Bruno Pereira, if she will call on her Brazilian counterpart to urgently scale up the emergency search operation in cooperation with local indigenous organisations.

Vicky Ford:

My thoughts are with the families of Mr Phillips and Mr Pereira during this difficult time. On the 9th June I raised Mr Phillips and Mr Pereira's disappearance with the Brazilian Minister of Justice and Public Security at the Summit of the Americas, who assured us that the Brazilian authorities are doing all that can be done in air, boats and land. Officials at the British Embassy in Brazil continue to be in regular and close contact with the Brazilian authorities at the most senior levels for updates on the Brazilian search operation. We understand the remote location presents considerable logistical challenges and have requested the Brazilian Government do all that they can to support the investigation. I am extremely thankful and appreciative of their search and rescue effort to date.

Consular officials in Sao Paulo and London are providing support to Mr Phillips' family in Brazil and the UK.

■ **China: Academic Technology Approval Scheme**

Alicia Kearns:

[\[15781\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many applications for Academic Technology Approval Scheme certificates have been made by citizens of the People's Republic of China in each year since 2017.

Alicia Kearns:

[\[15782\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many applications for certificates under the Academic Technology Approval Scheme from Chinese citizens were (a) approved and (b) refused in each year since that scheme's inception.

Amanda Milling:

We are unable to release country-specific Academic Technology Approval Scheme information on the grounds of National Security.

■ **Developing Countries: Famine and Humanitarian Aid**

Chris Law:

[\[15275\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if the Government will re-commit to enacting and financing the G7 Famine Prevention and Humanitarian Compact 2021.

Amanda Milling:

The Famine Prevention and Humanitarian Crises Compact was agreed during the UK's G7 Presidency and we have provided our share of the \$7 billion in humanitarian assistance to the countries one step from famine in 2021. We have allocated a further £3 billion for humanitarian response over the next three years. We continue to deliver on our policy commitments in the Compact. For example, in 2021 we partnered with

the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and Germany to co-host the High-Level Event on Anticipatory Action, securing further commitments from the 75 participating Member States to scale up anticipatory action throughout the humanitarian system. In addition, we secured a commitment from the World Bank to double its Early Response Financing to \$1 billion to address emerging food security crises.

■ **Developing Countries: Food**

Chris Law:

[\[15273\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps the Government plans to take to ensure that global food and nutrition is prioritised at the upcoming G7 Leaders' Summit.

Amanda Milling:

The UK attaches a high priority to ensuring a strong and coherent G7 response that mitigates the risk of a global food price crisis and improves global food and nutrition security. We have been taking a leading role in G7 efforts to enable Ukraine to export its stored grain and in ensuring multilateral organisations deliver on their pledges such as the \$30 billion from the World Bank Group. We have been fully supportive of the G7 President led Global Alliance on Food Security to scale up support for food production and support to vulnerable peoples in developing countries in a needs-based, coordinated manner - we see it as building on rather than duplicating current structures and as helping to contain fragmentation of responses to the crisis globally.

■ **Developing Countries: Water**

Alex Norris:

[\[14596\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions she has had with her counterparts in other countries on progress towards universal access to (a) water, (b) sanitation and (c) hygiene in healthcare facilities.

Amanda Milling:

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

The Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development office continues to engage with international partners, including through the G7, G20 and the Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) forum, to ensure WASH is included in efforts to prevent the spread of infections including COVID-19, to prevent future pandemics, and to reduce the threat of anti-microbial resistance. We will also continue to pursue these objectives through our membership of the "WASH In Healthcare Facilities" international taskforce, through our bilateral programming such as our innovative hand hygiene partnership

with Unilever, and through our core multilateral funding including to the World Bank and the World Health Organisation.

■ **Falkland Islands: Sovereignty**

Alberto Costa: [\[14518\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what diplomatic steps her Department is taking to protect the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands.

Amanda Milling:

The United Kingdom has no doubt about its sovereignty over the Falkland Islands, the South Georgia & South Sandwich Islands, and surrounding maritime areas. Nor do we have any doubt about the principle and the right of self-determination for the Falkland Islanders. This means there can be no dialogue on sovereignty unless the Falkland Islanders so wish. The 2013 referendum - in which 99.8% of those who voted wanted to maintain their current status as a territory of the United Kingdom - made clear that the people of the Islands do not want dialogue on sovereignty. UK Ministers and officials work to support the Falkland Islanders in protecting their right to determine their own future, including at the UN Special Committee on Decolonization and in other multilateral fora.

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

Sir Iain Duncan Smith: [\[15788\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 9 June 2022 to Question 9828 and with reference to Answer of 23 February to Question 124950 and correspondence sent by the Biometrics and Surveillance Camera Commissioner to Hikvision on 16 July 2021 on The UK's Responsibility to Act on Atrocities in Xinjiang and Beyond, if she will review her Department's use of Hikvision cameras in response to the concerns raised in that correspondence.

Vicky Ford:

As has been the case under successive administrations, it is not government policy to comment on the security arrangements of government buildings.

■ **Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Media**

Emily Thornberry: [\[13674\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what total cost to the public purse, inclusive of VAT, was incurred by her Department and the former Department for International Development between May 2018 and May 2022 for media buying services provided under the Crown Commercial Service's media buying framework agreement reference RM6003.

Vicky Ford:

The total cost, including VAT, that was incurred between November 2018 and May 2022 was £766,650. Prior to November 2018, media buying was through a different agreement to RM6003.

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: MG OMD**Emily Thornberry:**[\[13676\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what the (a) procurement reference, (b) start date, (c) end date and (d) maximum value, inclusive of VAT, is of the contract that her Department has agreed with Manning Gottlieb OMD for the provision of strategic media activation services under the terms of the Crown Commercial Service's media services framework agreement reference RM6123.

Vicky Ford:

No contract has been awarded and the information remains classified as Official-Sensitive (Commercial).

Hong Kong: Politics and Government**Judith Cummins:**[\[13745\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the potential implications for its policies of the organiser of the annual June Fourth Vigil, Hong Kong Alliance, being accused as foreign agents by the HKSAR government under the national security law.

Amanda Milling:

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

We continue to make clear to mainland Chinese and Hong Kong authorities our strong opposition to the National Security Law. It is clear that this legislation is being used to curtail freedoms, punish dissent and shrink the space for opposition, free press and civil society.

As a co-signatory to the Sino-British Joint Declaration, we will continue to stand up for the people of Hong Kong, to call out the violation of their rights and freedoms, and to hold China to its international obligations.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**Judith Cummins:**[\[13744\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the potential implications for its policies of reports that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region government breached its obligations under The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as it arrested participants of vigils in memory of the Tiananmen Square massacre.

Amanda Milling:

The right to peaceful protest is fundamental to Hong Kong's way of life, and guaranteed in both the Sino-British Joint Declaration and the Basic Law. As a co-signatory to the Joint Declaration, we will continue to stand up for the people of Hong Kong, to call out the violations of their rights and freedoms, and to urge China to uphold the rights set out in the Joint Declaration and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, including freedoms of speech, the press and assembly.

■ **Rwanda: Debts****Claudia Webbe:**[\[14673\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether her Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of forgiving Rwanda's international debt.

Vicky Ford:

The FCDO regularly discusses macroeconomic and debt issues with the Rwandan authorities and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Rwanda is on track with its IMF policy coordination programme, and the latest IMF debt sustainability analysis assesses Rwanda as having a strong debt-carrying capacity, and a moderate risk of debt distress.

■ **Rwanda: Humanitarian Aid****Claudia Webbe:**[\[14672\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether the UK's humanitarian aid to Rwanda was reduced following the reduction in Overseas Development Aid in the last two years.

Vicky Ford:

As announced in 2020, the impact of the global pandemic on the UK economy has forced us to take the tough but necessary decision to temporarily reduce our spend on official development assistance (ODA) as a share of the UK's gross national income. This has led to a reduction in the budget allocations for our existing programmes in the last two years.

■ **Shavendra Silva****Dr Rupa Huq:**[\[14561\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of imposing sanctions on General Shavendra Silva; and whether she has made representations to her US counterpart to request information on General Silva following that country's decision to sanction General Silva in 2020.

James Cleverly:

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office is grateful for the submission by the International Truth and Justice Project in relation to General Shavendra Silva.

We also note the US decision to designate General Shavendra Silva. We keep all proposals under review and will continue to consider designations globally, guided by the objectives of the human rights sanctions regime and the evidence. However, it is not appropriate to speculate on who may be designated in the future, as to do so could reduce their impact.

■ Tropical Diseases

Claire Hanna:

[\[15395\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what (a) steps her Department plans to take and (b) investment her Department has committed in relation to helping to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals on neglected tropical diseases.

Amanda Milling:

The UK has made a substantial contribution to global progress on neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) and will continue to fund multilateral organisations which contribute to global progress on NTDs, such as the World Health Organisation. Our investments will continue to support countries, including those affected by NTDs, to strengthen their health systems to deliver essential health services. We will also continue to invest in research and innovation in new drugs and diagnostics through world-leading Product Development Partnerships (public private partnerships that are highly successful in developing health technologies) and other research organisations. This will include research on NTDs and other diseases.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]

Jim Shannon:

[\[13729\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the findings of the report by Logex and IVM, commissioned by NHS England, entitled International Comparison Medicines Uptake, in respect of severe asthma biologics; and if he will make a statement.

Gillian Keegan:

In response to the LOGEX's International Comparison Medicines Uptake 2021 report, NHS England and NHS Improvement's Accelerated Access Collaborative is supporting increased uptake of biologic therapy. This aims to improve identification of patients with potential severe asthma in primary and secondary care to enable referrals to severe asthma centres for consideration of their eligibility for biologic therapy. Patient outcomes are submitted to the UK Severe Asthma Registry.

NHS England and NHS Improvement's Severe Asthma Collaborative is developing capacity in severe asthma centres to streamline patient pathways to biologic therapy and reduce variation in prescribing and patient management. A toolkit has been produced to support clinical teams.

Jim Shannon:[\[13730\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will ensure that the NHS Core20PLUS5 programme supports increasing the number of disease management reviews for COPD patients who are at risk of having an exacerbation.

Maria Caulfield:

NHS Core20PLUS5 does not commit to increasing the number of disease management reviews for patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. However, it supports increasing the uptake of COVID-19, flu and pneumonia vaccines to reduce infective exacerbations and potential emergency hospital admissions.

■ **Cancer: Barnsley****Stephanie Peacock:**[\[15345\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate his Department has made of the number of people in (a) Barnsley East constituency and (b) Barnsley who are awaiting a cancer diagnosis as of 9 June 2022.

Maria Caulfield:

[Holding answer 14 June 2022]: The information is not held in the format requested.

■ **Cancer: Diagnosis****Chi Onwurah:**[\[13712\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of research into early detection and diagnostics for cancer; and how much his Department plans to spend on funding that research over the next 10 years.

Maria Caulfield:

No recent assessment has been made. However, through the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR), expenditure on cancer research was £73.5 million in 2020/21. The NIHR welcomes funding applications for research into any aspect of human health, including cancer. As with other Government funders of health research, the NIHR does not allocate funding for specific disease areas.

We are currently analysing responses received to the call for evidence, which will inform the 10-Year Cancer Plan. The Plan will set out how we will improve cancer services and further details will be available in due course.

■ **Cancer: Medical Treatments****Chi Onwurah:**[\[13713\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the extent to which the NHSE guidelines on improving multidisciplinary meetings for cancer treatment have been rolled out across the NHS.

Maria Caulfield:

No specific assessment has been made as implementation of the guidance is a matter for local clinical decision making.

■ Cancer: Research**Chi Onwurah:**[\[13714\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to (a) increase the diversity of the UK cancer research workforce and (b) ensure that it has the (i) capability and (ii) capacity to advance research.

Maria Caulfield:

The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) invests in expertise, specialist facilities, the research delivery workforce and support services across a range of clinical and research areas, including cancer. This investment enables the translation of scientific discoveries into new or improved treatments, diagnostics, medical technologies and services, and provides an environment for building capacity and skills. The NIHR is also the nation's largest funder of health and social care research training and is facilitating the involvement of early career researchers in its strategic initiatives to create an inclusive culture and establishing a stronger support for research leaders.

■ Cancer: Stockport**Navendu Mishra:**[\[13840\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 18 May 2022 to Question 998, on Cancer: Stockport, what the rate of cancer diagnoses in (a) Stockport constituency and (b) the Metropolitan Borough of Stockport was in each of the last five years; and what assessment his Department has made of the forecasted increase in people diagnosed with cancer over the next five years.

Maria Caulfield:

The data requested is not held centrally and no assessment has been made.

■ Carers: Kingston upon Hull**Dame Diana Johnson:**[\[13653\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of carers living in Hull.

Gillian Keegan:

The information requested is not held centrally. However, the 2011 Census reported that there were 6.5 million people providing unpaid care in the United Kingdom, with 5.4 million in England.

■ Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

Caroline Lucas:

[\[13689\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Written Statement of 12 May 2022, HCWS23 on Myalgic Encephalomyelitis / Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Announcements, whether representatives of the British Association of Clinicians in ME/CFS will be attending his forthcoming roundtable; and if he will make a statement.

Gillian Keegan:

The roundtable on research priorities for Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/ Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS) took place on 9 June. It was attended by members of the academic community, research charities and people with lived experience. The discussion will inform the newly convened UK Clinical Research Collaboration ME/CFS research subgroup. A representative from the British Association of Clinicians in ME/CFS will participate in this subgroup.

■ Clinical Trials: Patients

Daniel Zeichner:

[\[2513\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to increase patient recruitment numbers in non-covid clinical trials to pre-pandemic levels.

Maria Caulfield:

In May 2020, the National Institute for Health and Care Research issued a Restart Framework developed with stakeholders and the devolved administrations to support recommencing non-COVID-19 research activities, including patient recruitment.

In May 2021, a managed recovery approach was introduced to coordinate the recruitment to a sub-set of non-COVID-19 studies. This was intended to clear the path for other non-COVID studies paused or delayed in the early stages of the pandemic to return to the levels of recruitment that would normally be expected.

In March 2022, the Research Reset programme was launched, to request that research funders and sponsors review their study portfolios to assess the viability of delivery within existing capacity. The programme aims to focus resources on increasing recruitment to studies across all clinical areas, while ensuring that new studies can open and begin recruiting patients.

■ Dementia: Diagnosis

Daisy Cooper:

[\[11869\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of reasons for the fall in dementia diagnosis rates in St Albans; and if he will make a statement.

Gillian Keegan:

The pandemic had a significant impact on memory assessment services and general practitioner referrals to those services through the re-prioritisation of health and care provision and the instruction for older people to shield and remain at home. This ongoing disruption has impeded the recovery of the dementia diagnosis rate in England, including in St Albans.

In 2021/22, we allocated £17 million to address dementia waiting lists and increase the number of diagnoses. We will set out plans for dementia in England in the next 10 years later this year, which will include a focus on diagnosis.

Paul Girvan:**[9975]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the effect of timely dementia diagnosis on patient outcomes; and if he will make a statement.

Gillian Keegan:

The National Institute for Care Excellence's (NICE) quality standard on dementia states that timely diagnosis allows patients to access support and treatment at an earlier stage and families and carers can benefit from advanced care planning. The quality standard is available at the following link:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs184/chapter/Quality-statement-2-Diagnosis>

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

■ Dementia: Drugs**Tracey Crouch:****[13695]**

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

Gillian Keegan:

Officials have met with Alzheimer's Research UK to discuss this proposal and considered routes for accelerating access to medicines to improve outcomes for Alzheimer's patients with NHS England and NHS Improvement, including the experiences of the Vaccines Taskforce.

We will set out plans for dementia in England for the next 10 years later this year, including on diagnosis, risk reduction and prevention and research. The strategy will include ambitions for research to develop new disease-modifying treatments. We will continue to engage with stakeholders, including Alzheimer's Research UK, throughout the development of the strategy.

■ Dementia: Health Services

Sarah Owen: [\[13825\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to improve services for people living with dementia.

Gillian Keegan:

Following a dementia diagnosis, patients should receive information on local services and access to relevant advice and support as set out in the guidance 'After diagnosis of dementia: what to expect from health and care services', which is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/after-a-diagnosis-of-dementia-what-to-expect-from-health-and-care-services/after-diagnosis-of-dementia-what-to-expect-from-health-and-care-services>

We will set out plans for dementia in England for the next 10 years later this year, which will focus on the health and care needs of people living with dementia and their carers, including diagnosis, risk reduction and prevention and research.

■ Dental Services: Kingston upon Hull

Dame Diana Johnson: [\[13654\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department plans to take to reduce dentistry waiting lists in Hull.

Maria Caulfield:

In the last quarter of 2021/22, an additional £50 million was allocated to National Health Service dentistry to target patients in most need of urgent dental treatment, including vulnerable groups and children. NHS England's regional commissioners are working with local contractors to commission as much additional activity as possible, including in Hull. Between April and June 2022, NHS England and NHS Improvement have asked practices to deliver at least 95% of contracted units of dental activity to safely improve access for patients.

Following the recent closures of two NHS dental practices, NHS England will procure new NHS dental activity in Hull. This will be put to the market during the summer, using the funding available following the closure of these practices.

■ Dental Services: South Yorkshire

Stephanie Peacock: [\[15748\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what data his Department holds on the number of people registered with a NHS dentist in (a) Barnsley and (b) South Yorkshire in each year since 2010.

Maria Caulfield:

The information requested is not held centrally as dental patients are not registered to a specific practice. A practice can accept a patient for a course of treatment and are

no geographical restrictions on which dental practice a patient may attend, allowing the choice of where treatment is received.

■ Females: Health Services

Dame Diana Johnson:

[\[13659\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to improve women's health services.

Maria Caulfield:

On 23 December 2021, we published 'Our Vision for the Women's Health Strategy for England', which sets out ambitions to improve the health and wellbeing of women in England and reduce disparities. We will publish the Women's Health Strategy later this year.

In January 2021, NHS England and NHS Improvement established the Menopause Improvement Programme. This programme aims to improve clinical pathways to allow women to access personalised care and support, including access to hormone replacement therapy and is producing resources to develop the appropriate skills for healthcare professionals.

NHS England and NHS Improvement are also investing £127 million in 2022/23 for the National Health Service maternity workforce and to improve neonatal care. This is in addition to a £95 million investment in the recruitment of a further 1,200 midwives and 100 consultant obstetricians.

■ Gender Recognition: West Yorkshire

Jon Trickett:

[\[13051\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the letter from Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust to the hon. Member for Hemsworth stating that waiting times for gender services post-pandemic range from four to seven years, what steps he is taking to increase access to gender services in West Yorkshire.

Maria Caulfield:

[Holding answer 9 June 2022]: The National Health Service has established pilot gender identity clinics which are trialling new service models in sexual health and primary care services to reduce waiting times and improving patient outcomes. These pilots have been established in London, Manchester, Cheshire and Merseyside and the East of England, with a further clinic planned in Sussex later this year. The evaluation of the pilots will inform the future commissioning and provision of gender identity services.

The NHS is also working with existing providers of gender dysphoria services to increase clinical capacity where possible. In 2021/22, additional funding was provided for gender dysphoria services in West Yorkshire based at Leeds Partnership NHS Foundation Trust.

■ General Practitioners

Dame Diana Johnson: [\[13657\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to help improve access to GPs.

Maria Caulfield:

We have committed to supporting general practice to deliver an additional 50 million general practice appointments a year by expanding and diversifying the workforce. During the pandemic, £520 million was made available to improve access and expand general practice capacity, in addition to at least £1.5 billion announced in 2020. NHS England and NHS Improvement are also offering an interim telephony solution, which enables practices to use Microsoft Teams to increase capacity for incoming calls, while a longer-term strategic approach is developed.

■ Health Professions: Protective Clothing

Mrs Flick Drummond: [\[13757\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what guidance his Department has issued to healthcare professionals on wearing facial coverings in the presence of clinically vulnerable patients who request them to do so while delivering care.

Maggie Throup:

Face coverings have been required in healthcare settings throughout the pandemic, as set out in the Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) guidance. The United Kingdom IPC Cell monitor and review emerging evidence and continue to recommend universal masking in healthcare settings in IPC measures.

To accompany the updated IPC guidance with new COVID-19 pathogen-specific advice for health and care professionals, on 1 June 2022, the National Health Service advised that universal masking should be considered in settings where patients are at high risk of infection due to immunosuppression, such as oncology or haematology. This should be guided by local risk assessment. Face coverings should be worn by all care workers and encouraged for visitors in care settings and when providing care in people's homes.

■ Heart Diseases and Kidney Diseases

Chris Green: [\[6793\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Government's ambition of delivering five extra healthy, independent years of life by 2035, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that Integrated Care Systems prioritise improvements to the lower quality of life experienced by heart failure and chronic kidney disease patients.

Maria Caulfield:

NHS England is resourcing cardiovascular leadership roles in each integrated care system to prioritise improvements to the quality of life of heart failure patients. In

addition, NHS England is supporting patients in the community through the NHS@home scheme on managing heart failure. This scheme aims to support people living with heart failure through patient education and remote monitoring. Over 220,000 blood pressure monitors have been allocated across England to enable patients to measure their blood pressure remotely and share the results with their general practitioner practice, reducing the need for appointments and travel

The Renal Services Transformation Programme is developing pathways, tools and resources to support better healthcare outcomes for patients undergoing dialysis treatment. It will also provide ICSs with a whole-patient pathway approach to commissioning renal services

■ Heart Diseases: Diagnosis

Holly Mumby-Croft:

[\[13850\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to increase the diagnosis rate of cardiac conditions in people aged 14 to 35.

Maria Caulfield:

The diagnosis of cardiac conditions is based on the presentation of symptoms, rather than the age range of the patient.

Since July 2021, we have launched community diagnostic centres (CDCs) to increase diagnostic activity and reduce patient waiting times. CDCs offer checks, scans and tests in community and other health care settings and delivered over 880,000 diagnostic tests in 2021/22. This will support Primary Care Networks to increase the detection of conditions such as heart valve disease.

■ Hospitals: York

Rachael Maskell:

[\[13186\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of potential demand for a new district hospital in York.

Edward Argar:

No specific assessment has been made as local health infrastructure needs are determined by local health system planners in collaboration with NHS England and NHS Improvement.

As part of the Health Infrastructure Plan launched in 2019, the Government committed to build 40 new hospitals by 2030, funded by an initial £3.7 billion, alongside eight previously announced schemes. In July 2021, the Government announced the selection process for the further eight new hospitals. The proposal for trusts to submit an expression of interest closed in September 2021. There were no expressions of interest received for a new acute, mental health or community hospital in the city of York.

■ Long Covid: Health Services

Catherine West: [\[13800\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the impact of NHS nurse vacancies on care for patients with long covid.

Maria Caulfield:

No formal assessment made as National Health Service post-COVID-19 services are comprised of multidisciplinary teams, including nurses.

We are increasing the number of nurses by 50,000, in addition to the retention of the existing workforce, increasing training and education routes into nursing and using international recruitment opportunities to supply the NHS with a long-term sustainable nursing workforce.

■ Medical Treatments

Chi Onwurah: [\[15257\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has had discussions with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the suitability of the current 3.5 percent discount rate applied for assessing cost effectiveness of Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products (ATMP); and what assessment he has made of the potential merits of lowering this rate to better assess the long-term value and transformative effect of ATMPs.

Edward Argar:

[Holding answer 14 June 2022]: The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is an independent body responsible for the methods and processes used in the development of its guidance and recommendations. NICE recently concluded a comprehensive review of its methods and processes for health technology evaluation, including consideration of the discount rate and published its updated manual on 31 January. Officials from the Department of Health and Social Care and HM Treasury were engaged throughout the review.

Following a public consultation, NICE concluded that while there was some evidence to support a change to the reference case discount rate, it was appropriate to maintain the existing reference case discount rate of 3.5% due to wider policy and fiscal implications. NICE has retained the flexibility for its committees to apply a lower non-reference case discount rate of 1.5% in exceptional circumstances. This flexibility has previously been applied by NICE when evaluating advanced therapeutic medicinal products, such as its positive appraisal of the gene therapy Zolgensma for the treatment of spinal muscular atrophy.

■ Mental Health Services: Durham

Mr Richard Holden: [\[13842\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what resources his Department is providing for mental health provision in (a) North West Durham and (b) County

Durham; and what steps his Department is taking to improve mental health provision in those areas.

Gillian Keegan:

The information requested is not held at constituency level. In 2021/22, the planned expenditure on mental health services for County Durham Clinical Commissioning Group, including learning disabilities and dementia, was £162.1 million.

NHS England and NHS Improvement are reviewing mental health provision through the County Durham Community Mental Health Transformation Programme. The Programme is working with people with lived experience of mental illness and stakeholders to improve how mental health support and care is provided in local communities.

■ **Mental Health Services: Waiting Lists**

Dame Diana Johnson:

[\[13656\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what is the current length of waiting lists for mental health (a) consultations and (b) treatments in England.

Gillian Keegan:

The information is not collected in the format requested as there is currently no waiting time standard. In February 2022, NHS England and NHS Improvement published the outcome of the consultation on the potential to introduce five new access and waiting time standards for mental health services. We are now working with NHS England and NHS Improvement on the next steps.

■ **NHS: South West**

Daisy Cooper:

[\[14619\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, on what dates he has met with NHS leaders in (a) Devon and (b) the South West of England since 26 June 2021.

Edward Argar:

[Holding answer 13 June 2022]: My Rt hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care met with Suzanne Tracey from the Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust on 4 May 2022.

■ **Wound Dressings: Procurement**

Andrew Selous:

[\[2393\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the impact of NHS Supply Chain's decision to reduce the number of wound care products and suppliers available to the NHS on Medtech supply chain resilience; and in what way those procurement activities align with the Government Life Sciences' vision to increase UK Medtech manufacturing capability and capacity.

Edward Argar:

NHS Supply Chain balance the needs of product availability, choice, supply resilience and delivering value for money. The most widely used products are held in stock in the United Kingdom within the NHS Supply Chain network and suppliers are contractually obligated to hold additional minimum stock levels to service the framework contract for wound care products within distribution networks.

Expert clinicians in the National Wound Care Strategy Programme have contributed to the development of appropriate high-quality specifications for products, including a classification system which support clinical decisions on the selection of wound care products. This will provide greater clarity to clinicians on comparable products, make alternative products easier to identify and adopt in the event of supply disruption and enhance supply chain resilience.

The NHS Supply Chain's procurement activity is not designed to increase the UK's manufacturing capability and capacity. The Office of Life Science's Life Sciences Innovation Manufacturing Fund, launched in March 2022, encourages growth in the sector's capacity and capability. The forthcoming Medical Technologies Directorate's strategy will align with the Life Sciences Vision to support increased domestic manufacturing.

Andrew Selous:[\[2395\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress has been made by NHS Supply Chain in introducing value-based procurement into the provision of wound care products; and what impact it has had on the choice of products available.

Edward Argar:

NHS Supply Chain is currently exploring three forthcoming Value Based Procurement opportunities in the provision of wound care products. Initial NHS Supply Chain pilot tests have indicated potential benefits in areas such as waste reduction and number of products used, allowing patients to move from inpatient to day care, reduction in infection rates and operational productivity.

Specific discussions on the introduction of Value Based Procurement in the provision of wound care products are ongoing and further information, including on any expected impact on the choice of products available, will be available in due course.

HOME OFFICE■ **Asylum****Stephen Kinnock:**[\[14501\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 6 June 2022 to Question 8017 on Asylum, how long is the Foundation Programme and Mentoring Period for newly appointed asylum decision makers; by which date all of the 820 asylum caseworkers are expected to have completed their Foundation Programme

and Mentoring Period; and (c) what her timescale is for reaching her department's target number of 1000 asylum decision makers.

Stephen Kinnock:

[\[14502\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish the weekly Home Office targets for the number of (a) asylum claims to be processed, (b) Principal Stage decisions to be made and (c) asylum application conclusions.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 13 June 2022]: The foundation training programme and mentoring framework for new Decision Makers (the Decision Maker Programme) is a 22-week programme.

Our newest Decision Makers are currently expected to complete training and mentoring by 24 November 2022, however we have an ongoing programme of training. We continue working towards our target of 1,000 decision makers.

The Home Office already publishes data on the number of asylum claims being processed and concluded. This information can be found at Asy_04 and Asy_02a of the published Immigration Statistics: [List of tables - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immigration-statistics)

■ Asylum: Kurds

Yasmin Qureshi:

[\[13086\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has made an assessment of the potential risks to Kurdish asylum seekers of being deported to Iraq.

Tom Pursglove:

[Holding answer 14 June 2022]: All asylum and human rights claims are carefully considered on their individual merits in accordance with our international obligations. Each individual assessment is made against the background of any relevant caselaw and the latest available country information. Our position on Iraq is set out in the relevant country policy and information note on the gov.uk website.

Where someone establishes a well-founded fear of persecution or serious harm in their country, they are normally granted protection and are not expected to return there. The Home Office only seeks to return those whose asylum claim have been unsuccessful. By definition, they do not need protection and not at risk on return.

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's travel advice to British nationals is not the correct legal test for determining whether or not a person qualifies for international protection or whether to remove a foreign national with no right to remain in UK.

■ Asylum: Rwanda

Olivia Blake:

[\[15401\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether it is her policy to publish all minutes from the meetings of the Joint Committee of the UK-Rwanda partnership.

Olivia Blake: [\[15402\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Memorandum of Understanding between the UK and Rwanda for the provision of an asylum partnership arrangement, who the UK Co-Chair of the Joint Committee is.

Olivia Blake: [\[15403\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the Joint Committee, as described in the Memorandum of Understanding between the UK and Rwanda for the provision of an asylum partnership arrangement, is currently operational.

Tom Pursglove:

[Holding answer 14 June 2022]: The Joint Committee met for the first time on 31 May in Rwanda. More details will be published on the Joint Committee in due course.

■ British National (Overseas): Hong Kong**Stuart C McDonald:** [\[11709\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Answer of 25 April 2019 to Question 245815, when British National (Overseas) Passport Holders from Hong Kong will be able to use the United Kingdom's e-passport gates.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 13 June 2022]: Our vision for the future of the border, including the roll out of Electronic Travel Authorisations (ETAs), includes increasing the number of passengers who can be checked on arrival by an automated process, rather than needing to speak with an Immigration Officer on arrival.

■ Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre**Mary Kelly Foy:** [\[14613\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether any women detained in Derwentside immigration removal centre have been given a notice of intent for planned removal to Rwanda.

Tom Pursglove:

[Holding answer 13 June 2022]: The latest published Immigration Statistics detail the number of notices of intent issued and can be found online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-september-2021/how-many-people-do-we-grant-asylum-or-protection-to>

A breakdown of these figures into gender is not currently available however we are working to bring inadmissibility and nationality data in line with current reporting and hope to publish that information in the near future.

Official statistics published by the Home Office are kept under review in line with the code of practice for statistics, taking into account a number of factors including user needs, as well as quality and the availability of data. Information on future Home

Office statistical release dates can be found in the '[Research and statistics calendar\(opens in a new tab\)](#)'.

■ HM Passport Office

Drew Hendry:

[13166]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has carried out an assessment of the (a) coverage and (b) accessibility of Passport Offices for people (i) in rural areas and (ii) without personal transport in (A) Scotland, (B) Northern Ireland, (C) Wales and (D) England.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 14 June 2022]: The vast majority of passport applicants have no need to travel to a passport office to access services, with online applications being the cheapest and simplest way to get your passport, alongside the availability of check and send services at Post Offices across the UK.

Appointments are currently required to access urgent services and are made available from 8 passport offices located across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. However, the applicant need not attend an urgent service appointment personally and may instead authorise someone to attend on their behalf.

■ Home Office: Media

Emily Thornberry:

[13684]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what total cost to the public purse, inclusive of VAT, was incurred by her Department between May 2018 and May 2022 for media buying services provided under the Crown Commercial Service's media buying framework agreement reference RM6003.

Emily Thornberry:

[13685]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the (a) procurement reference, (b) start date, (c) end date and (d) maximum value, inclusive of VAT, is of the contract that her Department has agreed with Manning Gottlieb OMD for the provision of strategic media activation services under the terms of the Crown Commercial Service's media services framework agreement, reference RM6123.

Kevin Foster:

13685

The internal procurement reference is C22703. The start date for this Contract is 20th May 2022 and the initial end date is 20th May 2023, with the end date of Maximum extension period being 13th December 2025.

The maximum value for the initial period is £11,940,000 including 20% VAT. No minimum spend is guaranteed as this is a Call-Off Agreement.

13684

The information requested for total cost is not held at sufficient granularity over the time period requested, and would only be available at disproportionate cost.

■ Homes for Ukraine Scheme: Children

Catherine West: [11784]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what is her Department's policy on awarding visas to minors travelling with non-parental relatives who are their legal guardians under the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

Kevin Foster:

The Homes for Ukraine scheme is run and maintained by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities. More information can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homes-for-ukraine-scheme-frequently-asked-questions>

■ Homes for Ukraine Scheme: Vetting

Wendy Chamberlain: [5492]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of sponsors under the Homes for Ukraine scheme require additional security checks.

Wendy Chamberlain: [5493]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of applications under the Homes for Ukraine scheme are on hold while their sponsors undergo further security checks.

Wendy Chamberlain: [5495]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the (a) shortest, (b) longest and (c) average length of time is for additional security checks on sponsors to be completed under the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 24 May 2022]: Relevant security checks are undertaken on all applications.

We have robust safeguarding checks in place on the Homes for Ukraine scheme – this includes checks on accommodation by local authorities, checks on an individual's immigration status to ensure they can fulfil the six month accommodation requirement, and checks on the Police National Computer and Warning Index.

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

■ Members: Correspondence**Mr John Baron:**[\[13649\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the correspondence of 4 February, 8 March, 11 April and 12 May 2022 from the hon. Member for Basildon and Billericay regarding a constituent, case reference JB36201.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 14 June 2022]: The Home Office responded to the Hon. Member's correspondence on 8 June 2022

Anne McLaughlin:[\[13756\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the correspondence of 19 May 2022 from the hon. Member for Glasgow North East regarding the Queen's Speech debate on 11 May 2022.

Tom Pursglove:

[Holding answer 13 June 2022]: I apologise for the delay; the Home Office will respond shortly.

Dan Carden:[\[13813\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department plans to respond to the email of 3 May 2022 sent to the urgent queries inbox from the hon. Member for Liverpool Walton regarding Annika Greco.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 13 June 2022]: The Home Office responded to the Hon. Member's correspondence on 8 June 2022.

Debbie Abrahams:[\[14493\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the correspondence of 27 October 2021, 10 November 2021, 7 December 2021, 12 January 2022 and 17 February 2022 from the hon. Member for Oldham East and Saddleworth, reference DA43798, when her Department plans to make a decision on case MPAM/0198564/21, in the context of the decision date of 29 May 2022 having passed.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 14 June 2022]: All Asylum Further Submissions lodged in the UK are carefully considered on their individual merits against a background of relevant case law and up to date country information.

We ensure those seeking asylum based on their Further Submissions are given every opportunity to disclose information relevant to their claim before a decision is taken. We aim to make decisions on Further Submissions cases as quickly as possible whilst ensuring the required security checks have been conducted.

We do not comment publicly on individual cases.

■ **Migrant Workers: Domestic Abuse**

Owen Thompson:

[\[15312\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if her Department will take steps to ensure that migrant women who are victims of domestic abuse can be granted residence in the UK which is not dependent on the spouse or partner who is the perpetrator of that abuse.

Rachel Maclean:

Tackling domestic abuse is a key priority for this Government and we are committed to supporting all victims of domestic abuse. Anyone who has suffered domestic abuse must be treated as a victim first and foremost, regardless of immigration status.

On 30 March, we published the Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan which will seek to transform the whole of society's response to prevent offending, support victims and pursue perpetrators, as well as to strengthen the systems in place to deliver these goals.

Support is provided to migrant victims of domestic abuse through our Destitute Domestic Violence Concession (DDVC) which enables those victims, who entered the UK on certain partner or spousal visas, three months access to public funds, which can be used to fund safe accommodation.

Migrant victims can also apply for settlement through the Domestic Violence Indefinite Leave to Remain Rules (DVILR). The intention is to safeguard eligible victims by offering them leave independent of the abusive partner.

Following the Government's review of support for migrant victims in 2020, last year we launched the Support for Migrant Victims Scheme to provide a support net for victims who are not eligible to apply under the DDVC.

The 12-month pilot, run by Southall Black Sisters and their delivery partners, and supported with £1.5 million of Government funding, has provided wraparound support services for migrant victims of domestic abuse with no recourse to public funds. Support includes: accommodation, subsistence, and counselling.

The pilot and independent evaluation aims to ensure that we have a robust evidence base to inform future policy decisions. The evaluation will be producing a final report in Summer 2022.

In the interim, we will provide £1.4 million in 2022-23 to continue to fund support for migrant victims of domestic abuse, whilst we take on board vital lessons learned from the pilot to inform future policy decisions.

■ **Naturalisation: Applications**

Steve McCabe:

[\[13630\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will issue guidance to people seeking to naturalise who have been informed that their application may be

withdrawn despite being told that they should use the UKVCAS Identity Verification (IDV) app, rather than book a biometrics test.

Steve McCabe:

[13631]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average processing time is for naturalisation applicants using the UKVCAS Identity Verification (IDV) app.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 14 June 2022]: 13630 This is a known issue with the integration of the IDV app and existing systems, resulting in the automatic issue of a letter in error. Applicants who contact the department are being advised how to proceed. Such applications will not be withdrawn. A technical fix has now been implemented to stop the letters being issued in error.

13631 Data is not held in respect of the processing times of applications specifically involving use of the IDV app. Once an application reaches systems from which such data can be drawn, the method of ID verification is not recorded.

Overall performance against service standards is published quarterly. The most recent data set was published on 26 May 2022 here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/visas-and-citizenship-data-q1-2022>

■ Passports: Applications

Angela Crawley:

[11739]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applicants have paid for fast-track passports in each month between May 2021 and May 2022.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 13 June 2022]: Urgent services are only required where an applicant needs a passport sooner than ten weeks. Since April 2021, people have been advised to allow up to ten weeks when applying for their British passport.

Between March and May 2022 approximately 98.5% of applications processed were completed within ten weeks. If an application from the UK has been with Her Majesty's Passport Office for more than the published timeframe and the applicant is travelling in the next two weeks, then it will be prioritised at no additional cost.

Mike Amesbury:

[13815]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Answer to the Question from the Rt hon. Member for Holborn and St Pancras at Prime Minister's Questions on 25 May 2022, Official Report, Column 286, how many and what proportion of passport applications submitted over the last three months were processed within six weeks.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 13 June 2022]: Since April 2021, people have been advised to allow up to ten weeks when applying for their British passport as more than 5 million people delayed applying due to the pandemic.

The vast majority of applications continue to be dealt with well within 10 weeks.

Catherine West: [\[14572\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how long applicants for a British passport (a) renewal and (b) replacement must wait before requesting their application is upgraded by Her Majesty's Passport Office.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 13 June 2022]: Any customer who has submitted a passport application using Her Majesty's Passport Office's standard service and now needs their passport sooner, is advised to contact the Passport Adviceline to discuss any available options.

Stephanie Peacock: [\[15342\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what data her Department holds on the average processing time for a passport in each month since May 2021.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 14 June 2022]: Since April 2021, people have been advised to allow up to ten weeks when applying for their British passport as more than 5 million people delayed applying due to the pandemic.

Following the most recent monthly update, between March and May, over 90% of applications processed were completed within six weeks, with approximately 98.5% completed within ten weeks.

■ Passports: Dover Port

Anna McMorrin: [\[14595\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reason the Port of Dover are no longer accepting collective passports.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 13 June 2022]: The UK is a signatory to the 1961 Council of Europe treaty which provides for collective passports for young people. Continued acceptance of these passports from those who have ratified the treaty is current practice. The UK has not left the Council of Europe.

It should be noted several EU countries have declared they will no longer accept a collective passport issued by the UK under this treaty.

■ Refugees: Ukraine

Stephen Kinnock: [\[6781\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many unaccompanied minors are on the waiting list for (a) the Ukraine Family Scheme and (b) the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme; and how many people have been granted visas but are yet to arrive in the UK for each of those schemes.

Kevin Foster:

Unaccompanied minors are only eligible under the Homes for Ukraine scheme if they are reuniting with a parent or legal guardian in the UK – this is outlined in the Immigration Rules.

Under 18s are eligible to apply under the Ukraine Family scheme to join an immediate family member. To ensure the welfare and safety of minors, details of accompanying adults will need to be provided along with parental consent for the minor to travel without their parent(s). This is outlined in the Immigration Rules.

Data on the number of people issued under the Ukraine Family Scheme and Homes for Ukraine can be found 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/collections/ukraine-family-scheme-and-homes-for-ukraine-visa-data)

The Department for Levelling Up Housing & Communities are responsible for sponsorship and so should be able to provide further advice.

Janet Daby:**[6899]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure that Ukrainian refugees who have applied under the Ukraine Family Scheme from within the UK are not waiting significantly longer for approval than those applications made from Ukraine and the surrounding region.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 31 May 2022]: The Home Office is committing to processing applications as quickly possible, both those submitted overseas and the UK. To support this we are working at pace with our UK commercial partner, Sopra Steria, and local partners/devolved regions, to expand capacity to meet the demand for biometric enrolment appointments from those applying under Ukrainian schemes within the UK. We have also ensured sufficient casework capacity is deployed, including staff being loaned from other government departments.

■ Visas: Applications**Darren Jones:****[13807]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her Department's working definitions are of the level of service provision for a (a) super priority, (b) priority and (c) standard service visa application.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 13 June 2022]: Answer UKVI's definitions for super priority, priority, and standard visa services are as below: Out of Country Applications Super Priority – applies to both in and out of country applications UKVI will aim to make a decision by the end of the next working day after your appointment at the visa application centre to provide your biometrics. Priority – applies to both in and out of country applications UKVI will aim to make a decision within 5 working days of your appointment at the visa application centre to provide your biometrics. Standard UKVI will aim to make a

decision within 3 weeks of your appointment at the visa application centre to provide your biometrics. Settlement Priority – applies to both in and out of country applications UKVI will aim to make a decision within 6 weeks of your appointment at the visa application centre to provide your biometrics. Settlement Standard UKVI will aim to make a decision within 24 weeks of your appointment at the visa application centre to provide your biometrics. Further information is published at Visa decision waiting times: applications outside the UK - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) In Country Applications Switch/Extend a Student, Family, Ancestry, Work, Visitor, or Graduate Visa UKVI will aim to make a decision within 8 weeks of your appointment at the visa application centre to provide your biometrics. Switch/Extend a Hong Kong British National (Overseas) Visa UKVI will aim to make a decision within 12 weeks of your appointment at the visa application centre to provide your biometrics. Applying for Settlement You should usually get a decision on your visa within 6 months once you apply online. Further information is published at Visa decision waiting times: applications inside the UK - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

■ Visas: Married People

Kirsten Oswald:

[\[14508\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the change in service standard for spouse visa applications from 12 to 24 weeks will be applied to applicants in the system when the change came into effect or to new applicants only.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 13 June 2022]: Applicants were informed of the change to a 24-week service standard on 11 May 2022. This change applied to applicants who had already submitted Marriage & Family entry clearance applications as well as applying to new applicants.

■ Visas: Ukraine

Chi Onwurah:

[\[13115\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average time is it takes to issue a visa for Ukrainian families after the point they are approved.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 14 June 2022]: Permission to Travel letters are issued within 24 hours of a decision being made. If there is a family group this is within 24 hours of a decision being made on all applications within the group.

When the customer requires a vignette our commercial partner notifies customers their visa decision is ready for collection as soon as possible and within 24 hours of them receiving the vignette at the VAC.

Rachael Maskell:

[\[13779\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to Ukrainians fighting in the war who have been given 10 days' leave, whether she plans to take steps

to ensure that they can come to the UK to visit their families and have no impediment to obtaining a visa to do so.

Kevin Foster:

The UK has been at the heart of the international response to Russian aggression, taking a hard-headed approach based on military strength, economic security and deeper global alliances. Our aim remains clear: we will support Ukraine to succeed.

Home Office officials continue to work closely with the Government of Ukrainian on our measures to date to ensure our measures respond directly to their needs and asks, including on the development of the Ukraine visa schemes.

It should also be noted Ukrainian Law places restrictions on men aged 18 to 60 leaving the country at this time.

Stuart C McDonald:

[\[9025\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications have been received under the Ukraine Extension Scheme; how many of those applications (a) are from people in the UK on seasonal workers visas and (b) have been (i) successful and (ii) refused.

Kevin Foster:

The Home Office does not publish data on the number of applications which have been made under the Ukrainian Extension Scheme.

Published data on the number of people issued a visa through schemes launched as a response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine can be found on the GOV.UK webpage: [Ukraine Family Scheme and Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme \(Homes for Ukraine\) visa data - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

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

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Environment Protection: Foreign Investment in UK

Matt Vickers:

[\[13278\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps her Department has taken to increase foreign direct investment in the UK's green industries.

Mike Freer:

In a speech on 18 May, the Secretary of State for International Trade set out the UK's ambitions to become a global leader on Green Trade, including through driving greater investment into green industries that will boost economic growth, strengthen supply chains and increase exports, whilst cutting emissions.

The Department has already taken major steps to build the UK's green industrial base, including those detailed in my answer to the hon. Member for Stockton South

on 19 April 2022 (UIN 148430), and my answer to the hon. Member for Hendon on 30 November 2021 (UIN 79334).

To build on successes to date, this Autumn the Department for International Trade, along with the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy, will host a Green Trade and Investment Expo in the North East of England, to showcase green investment opportunities, as well as promoting the UK's climate solutions to overseas buyers.

■ Overseas Trade: Russia

Matt Vickers:

[\[13276\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment her Department has made of the effectiveness of UK sanctions against Russia on reducing trade with that country.

Mike Freer:

In lockstep with allies, we continue to impose the largest, most severe economic sanctions Russia has faced.

Sanctions imposed by the UK and international partners are having damaging consequences for Putin's ability to wage war, with around £275 billion – up to 60% of Russian foreign currency reserves – currently frozen.

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office analysis shows Russia is heading for the deepest recession since the Soviet Union's collapse, deeper than the 2008 global financial crisis. Estimates for Russia's GDP in 2022 range from -8% to -15%, with the IMF forecasting the economy to continue shrinking a further 2.3% in 2023.

JUSTICE

■ Crime: Victims

Anna McMorrin:

[\[15757\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether bereaved families are still entitled to claim compensation under the rules of Directive 2004/80/EC following the UK's departure from the EU.

Tom Pursglove:

EU Directive 2004/80/EC provides for EU Member States to have reciprocal compensation schemes for victims of violent crime or other persons affected by such a crime.

Following the UK's withdrawal from the EU in December 2020 any such agreements have now ended. The 1983 Council of Europe Convention on compensation for victims of violent crimes ('the Convention') remains applicable and has requirements in place for assisting victims of violent crime. Where the crime was committed in an EU Member State, UK victims of violent and bereaved families may be eligible to apply to the compensation scheme in that State, under the Convention.

EU and EEA nationals can continue to apply for compensation in the UK, under the 2012 Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme, including those not party to the Convention.

■ **Criminal Injuries Compensation: British Nationals Abroad**

Anna McMorrin:

[\[15756\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA) continues to facilitate bereaved families applying to the state where the crime occurred; and whether the EU Compensation Application Team (EUCAT) continues to exist within CICA to facilitate applications in a foreign language.

Tom Pursglove:

EU Directive 2004/80/EC provides for EU Member States to have reciprocal compensation schemes for victims of violent crime or other persons affected by such a crime. Under the requirements of the Directive, the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA) provided support to British citizens seeking to apply for compensation from EU Member States through its EU Compensation Assistance Team (EUCAT).

Following the UK's withdrawal from the EU in December 2020 any such agreements have now ended. The 1983 Council of Europe Convention on compensation for victims of violent crimes ('the Convention') remains applicable and has requirements in place for assisting victims of violent crime. Where the crime was committed in an EU Member State, UK victims of violent and bereaved families may be eligible to apply to the compensation scheme in that State, under the Convention.

CICA's EUCAT continues to exist and where the application was received on or prior to 31 December 2020, provides support to British citizens (including bereaved families) applying to the state where the crime occurred and assists with applications in a foreign language. Where the applicant meets the basic eligibility criteria this includes providing the appropriate application form and information about how to complete this, providing guidance on any supporting material which is necessary, forwarding the completed application form to the relevant authority where the injury occurred and providing information on how to respond to requests for further information. The EUCAT also facilitates the translation of documents where applications are made in a foreign language. CICA no longer provides this support for any applications received after 31 December 2020 following the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

Under the 2012 Criminal Injuries Scheme, EU and EEA nationals can continue to apply for compensation in the UK, including those not party to the convention.

■ **Domestic Abuse: Convictions**

Jim Shannon:

[\[13733\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department is taking to increase the number of convictions for domestic abuse in England and Wales.

Victoria Atkins:

The Government is absolutely committed to tackling domestic abuse. Our commitment is demonstrated by our landmark Domestic Abuse Act last year, and more recently the Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy and the Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan. The Act has established a wide-ranging statutory definition of domestic abuse that incorporates a range of abusive behaviours beyond physical violence, brings in important new protections and support for victims in court and creates new offences such as of non-fatal strangulation. Building on the Act, the Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan will seek to transform the whole of society's response in order to prevent offending, support victims and pursue perpetrators, as well as to strengthen the systems processes in place needed to deliver these goals.

We are also giving victims more time to report domestic abuse-related assaults, through the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act.

We expect these measures to make a significant difference to victims being able to give their best evidence in court and to ensure more perpetrators are brought to justice, and therefore to help drive up conviction rates. As a Government, however, we acknowledge that there is more to do to improve the experience domestic abuse victims have of the entire justice system. In May, we published our draft Victims Bill and wider package of measures, to put victims at the heart of the criminal justice system. The Bill will amplify victims' voices and entitlements, strengthen transparency and oversight of victims' treatment by criminal justice agencies, and improve support for victims.

■ **Ministry of Justice: Media**

Emily Thornberry:[\[13679\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what total cost to the public purse, inclusive of VAT, was incurred by his Department between May 2018 and May 2022 for media buying services provided under the Crown Commercial Service's media buying framework agreement reference RM6003.

James Cartlidge:

The Media Buying framework agreement (RM6003), which enables MoJ to buy advertising, started 7 November 2018 and ended 21 May 2022 and has now expired.

The framework agreement was awarded to OMD Group Ltd (OmniGov) following a competitive tendering process in 2018. Customers used this framework agreement by putting in place a call off.

The Ministry of Justice spend under RM6003 for financial years 2018/2019 to 2021/2022 is included in the table below. Spend details for financial year 2022/2023 (April and May 2022) is not yet available.

2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
£21,518.00	£50,594.19	£311,166.60	£1,178,749

■ Ministry of Justice: MG OMD

Emily Thornberry:

[\[13681\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the (a) procurement reference, (b) start date, (c) end date and (d) maximum value, inclusive of VAT, is of the contract that his Department has agreed with Manning Gottlieb OMD for the provision of strategic media activation services under the terms of the Crown Commercial Service's media services framework agreement reference RM6123.

James Cartlidge:

The Ministry of Justice does not have a contract with Manning Gottlieb OMD for the provision of strategic media activation services.

■ Parole

Jim Shannon:

[\[13735\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if his Department will take steps to ensure victims of abuse are informed when an offender is released from prison on early parole.

Victoria Atkins:

In England and Wales, victims who choose to participate in the Probation Service Victim Contact Scheme (VCS) are currently informed when an offender is released from prison. The Probation Service has the statutory responsibility, under the Domestic Violence Crime and Victims Act 2004 and the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime, for the VCS. The VCS provides victims of sexual and violent offences, where the offender receives a prison sentence of 12 months or more, or a hospital order, with the right, should they so choose, to be informed of key stages in an offender's sentence, including release from custody.

Where the offender is serving a determinate sentence, the release date is fixed. Victims will be informed of the expected month of release very early following sentence and will be updated with the week of release closer to the actual release date.

Where the offender is subject to discretionary release by the Parole Board, the victim will be informed early in the sentence of the month in which the offender will become eligible for consideration for release, and be informed of the Parole Board's decision, including if this is to release the offender.

LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

■ Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities: Media

Emily Thornberry:

[\[13661\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what total cost to the public purse, inclusive of VAT, was incurred by his Department between May 2018

and May 2022 for media buying services provided under the Crown Commercial Service's media buying framework agreement reference RM6003.

Eddie Hughes:

The total cost incurred by the Department between May 2018 and May 2022 for media buying services is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

■ **Homes for Ukraine Scheme**

Catherine West: [\[15740\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether his Department collects data on the number of (a) subsidence payments made to refugees under the Homes for Ukraine scheme and (b) thank you payments made to hosts under that scheme.

Catherine West: [\[15741\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what proportion of local authorities have received the full amount owed to them by the Government to cover the cost of payments owed to hosts and refugees under the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

Catherine West: [\[15742\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the efficacy of the system for issuing payments to refugees and hosts under the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

Eddie Hughes:

Relevant data will be published in due course.

■ **Leasehold: Ground Rent**

Helen Morgan: [\[14677\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the provisions of the Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Act 2022, if her will make an assessment of the potential merits of extending restricting ground rents charges to new leaseholders to include existing leaseholders.

Eddie Hughes:

The Government is committed to creating a fair and just housing system that works for everyone and to delivering the second phase of our major two-part leasehold reform within this Parliament.

We have already taken action to end unfair practices in the leasehold market, beginning with the Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Act 2022 Act, which will come into force on 30 June. The Act will make homeownership fairer and more transparent for thousands of future leaseholders, by preventing landlords under new residential long leases from requiring a leaseholder to pay a financial ground rent.

We understand the difficulties some existing leaseholders face with high and escalating ground rents. In this Parliament our reforms will supercharge leaseholders' ability to buy their freehold, helping 4.6 million households genuinely to own their own home with significant discounts for those trapped with egregious, escalating ground rents.

Unfair practices have no place in the housing market. This is why we asked the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) to investigate potential mis-selling of homes and unfair terms in the leasehold sector. The Government has welcomed the action to tackle potential mis-selling and unfair terms in the leasehold sector and wants to see homeowners who have been affected obtain the justice and redress they deserve.

■ Leasehold: Reform

Tulip Siddiq:

[\[13787\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to leasehold reform, what steps the Government is taking to establish a (a) Redress Reform Working Group and (b) Housing Complaints Resolution Service.

Eddie Hughes:

In summer 2019 the department established the Redress Reform Working Group to help improve redress across the housing market and consider a Housing Complaints Resolution Service. We continue to work on improving redress and meet with members of the Redress Reform Working Group, and the group continues to meet independently and provides updates to the department.

There is a gap in redress for leaseholders where their freeholder does not employ a managing agent and carries out their own property management on their leasehold property. In such circumstances, the freeholder is not required to sign up to a redress scheme. As part of filling the gaps in redress the government intends to require freeholders of leasehold properties who do not employ a managing agent to join a redress scheme and will seek a suitable legislative slot to do so.

Tulip Siddiq:

[\[13788\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether he has plans to abolish leasehold as a form of property ownership.

Eddie Hughes:

Homeownership should provide people with far greater control over their homes and their lives. In the next Parliamentary Session we will legislate to reform the leasehold system, including by supercharging leaseholders' ability to buy their freeholds and take control of their homes. For new builds, we will ban use of leasehold for houses. For flats we want to see widespread take up of commonhold so people can fully enjoy the benefits of true homeownership from the outset.

■ Refugees: Ukraine

Rachael Maskell: [13780]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether Ukrainian refugees that become homeless will be classed as out of area if they turn up within the boundaries of another local authority.

Eddie Hughes:

The most up to date guidance on homelessness support for Ukrainians can be accessed here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homes-for-ukraine-guidance-for-councils> and <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-code-of-guidance-for-local-authorities>.

Bob Stewart: [15217]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether his Department is taking steps to provide (a) guidance and (b) support to Ukrainian refugees seeking new accommodation after living with a sponsor.

Eddie Hughes:

We are actively exploring options to find suitable long-term accommodation for Ukrainians who stay in this country beyond their sponsorship.

■ Rented Housing

Navendu Mishra: [13836]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if his Department will take steps to ensure that there are more available affordable rental properties in response to the recently published survey by Propertymark which found that the number of available rentals had halved.

Eddie Hughes:

The Private Rented Sector remains an important part of the housing market, with 4.4 million households currently in the Private Rented Sector.

We are investing £11.5 billion in the 2021-26 Affordable Homes Programme, which will build up to 180,000 affordable homes, should economic conditions allow. Around half of these will be for sub-market rent, and half for affordable home ownership. We also strongly support expansion of the Build to Rent (BtR) market. BtR boosts housing supply, diversifies the private rental sector and increases quality and choice for renters in cities and towns across England. We have revised the National Planning Policy Framework and issued a new chapter of planning guidance to support the delivery of more BtR homes, including affordable rental homes.

■ Right to Buy Scheme

Mr Mark Harper: [\[15201\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what estimate he has made of the cost of the Right to Buy scheme announced by the Prime Minister in his speech on the 9 June 2022.

Mr Mark Harper: [\[15202\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with regards to the right to buy scheme, announced by the Prime Minister in his speech on the 9 of June 2022, what estimate he has made of the number of properties likely to be purchased in each of the next three years; and at what level the scheme is capped.

Stuart Andrew:

This Government is committed to the Right to Buy, which has helped nearly two million council tenants to realise their dream of home ownership.

As the Prime Minister has announced, we want housing association tenants to have the same opportunity as local authority tenants to be able to enjoy the benefits that homeownership brings.

We will be working closely with the housing association sector as we develop the scheme and will announce more details in due course.

TRANSPORT

■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]

Jim Shannon: [\[13718\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to reduce emissions from transport across the UK.

Trudy Harrison:

Last year the department published its Transport Decarbonisation Plan that provides a credible, deliverable pathway to reduce emissions and deliver transport's contribution to carbon budgets and net zero.

■ Air Traffic Control: Coronavirus

Louise Haigh: [\[15304\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department made an assessment of the potential merits of funding the training of air traffic controllers to prevent redundancy during the covid-19 outbreak.

Robert Courts:

Supporting the aviation workforce is a key priority for the Department, especially for highly skilled and highly trained roles such as air traffic controllers. During the pandemic, the government provided a range of commercial support measures to the

aviation sector, including the Coronavirus Jobs Retention Scheme, which provided critical support to workers across the aviation sector.

In addition, my department considered a range of measures to support skills retention, a key element for the sector's recovery plan following the pandemic. That's why in February 2021 the Department for Transport launched the Aviation Skills Retention Platform (ASRP) which allows former and current aviation sector workers who are currently out of work to register their skills, so they can be notified of relevant job vacancies, advice and upskilling opportunities.

In addition, in November 2021, the DfT launched the early-careers aspect of the ASRP, Talent View Aviation (TVA), to support early career skills development for people entering the aviation sector ranging from work experience, free training courses, and entry level roles.. Furthermore, we continue to deliver our skills outreach programme, *Reach for the Sky*, works with industry and educators to raise the profile of the roles available in the aviation sector, to inspire the next generation into aviation.

■ **Airlines: Competition**

Alexander Stafford: [\[15404\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of competition amongst airlines in the low-cost carrier sector.

Alexander Stafford: [\[15405\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to ensure that airlines which have significant market power in the low-cost carrier sector do not misuse their prominent market position.

Alexander Stafford: [\[15406\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of whether structural market features in the low-cost carrier sector are being misused by the few dominant airlines in the market.

Alexander Stafford: [\[15407\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to increase the number of major low-cost carriers operating low-cost outbound flights to holiday destinations from airports in the UK.

Alexander Stafford: [\[15408\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the impact on the consumer of each low-cost carrier holding close to 100 per cent of seat capacity in relation to flights to key holiday destinations from UK airports where they operate.

Alexander Stafford: [\[15409\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the impact on consumers at smaller regional airports in the (a) South West, (b) North West, and (c) North East of the lack of competition amongst low-cost carriers on outbound routes.

Alexander Stafford: [\[15412\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the merits of the Competition and Market Authority launching a market review to examine competition in the low-cost carrier sector.

Robert Courts:

The UK has a competitive aviation market, which operates predominantly in the private sector. Airports invest in their infrastructure to attract passengers and airlines, while airlines are well placed to deliver services to their customers by responding to demand for routes. Whilst we recognise the importance of maintaining a thriving and competitive aviation sector in the UK to deliver connectivity, levelling up and the supporting the Union, it is for airlines to determine the routes they operate based on their own assessment on whether routes are commercially viable.

Under competition law, responsibility for investigating individual competition issues falls to the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), the UK's competition authority. As an independent authority, the CMA has discretion to investigate competition cases which, according to its prioritisation principles, it considers most appropriate. The CMA also has powers to conduct detailed examinations of why particular markets may not be working well, and decide what remedial action is appropriate. Concerns about market competition can be submitted to the CMA.

■ Chesterfield Canal: Tunnels**Alexander Stafford:** [\[13849\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make an assessment of how best Highways England could implement Dr Geraint Coles' proposals to reinstate the Chesterfield Canal route under the M1.

Trudy Harrison:

I would encourage the Honourable Member to get in touch with National Highways who would be happy to discuss this matter.

■ Department for Transport: Expenditure**Gill Furniss:** [\[15744\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer given on 6 June 2022 to Question 13211 on Department for Transport: Expenditure, how many inspections were carried out under that contract.

Trudy Harrison:

Under the contract with DEKRA, I am aware that from 22nd of September 2021 to the 31st of March 2022, there have been approximately 629 audits of chargepoints that

were funded through the Electric Vehicle Homecharge Scheme and Workplace Charging Scheme.

■ **Department for Transport: MG OMD**

Emily Thornberry: [\[13680\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the (a) procurement reference, (b) start date, (c) end date and (d) maximum value, inclusive of VAT, is of the contract that his Department has agreed with Manning Gottlieb OMD for the provision of strategic media activation services under the terms of the Crown Commercial Service's media services framework agreement reference RM6123.

Andrew Stephenson:

Details of contracts valued over £10,000 are published on gov.uk and can be viewed using the Contracts Finder: <https://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder>

■ **EasyJet**

Jim Shannon: [\[13734\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with representatives of EasyJet on flight cancellations caused by IT failures at that company.

Robert Courts:

I am aware that as a result of an IT failure on 27 May easyJet enacted rehearsed contingency plans to managed unexpected events. This resulted in the cancellation and delay of some flights while the issue was resolved. Any IT failure is unfortunate but I have been reassured by easyJet that this was an isolated incident and was quickly resolved.

easyJet have were involved in the meeting I and the Secretary of State chaired on 1 June, they are also involved in the Strategic Risk Group which I chaired on Tuesday 14 June and will continue to chair weekly.

■ **Freight**

Rachael Maskell: [\[13769\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans he has for the future of freight; and if he will establish hubs for final mile deliveries on the edge of all major conurbations and cities.

Trudy Harrison:

This Government recognises the importance of freight and logistics to the UK economy, and has co-developed with industry a long-term cross-modal 'Future of Freight' plan for the sector that was published on 15 June 2022.

■ Housing: Charging Points

Rachael Maskell: [\[15281\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether all new homes are required to be built with charging facilities for (a) electric cars, (b) e-bikes and (c) e-scooters.

Trudy Harrison:

The government has introduced minimum requirements for all new buildings with associated parking to have EV charging infrastructure. This will lead to the installation of up to 145,000 new chargepoints across England every year. The new requirements come into force on 15 June 2022. E-bikes, e-scooters and other micro-mobility vehicles are compatible with a standard 3 pin plug.

■ Railways: Tickets

Rachael Maskell: [\[13768\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how his Department plans to integrate Transport for London's single ticketing infrastructure with that of Great British Railways.

Wendy Morton:

The Government has committed to expanding PAYG in the Southeast through extending the Transport for London (TfL) contactless system. This will significantly increase the number of passengers who will be able to travel using contactless ticketing between national rail and TfL modes. Further integration of these systems with National Rail will be a matter for TfL and Great British Railways.

Last year's spending review set aside £360 million investment to modernise industry ticketing and retailing systems. We also announced alongside the Integrated Rail Plan, an expansion of pay-as-you-go travel on rail to more than 700 stations in urban areas across the country including more than 400 in the north. This is in addition to our manifesto commitment to extend PAYG to more than 200 stations in the South East.

■ Roads: Safety

Gill Furniss: [\[15743\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 9 June 2022 to Question 13214 on Roads: Safety, whether she plans to undertake a consultation prior to publishing the Government's Road Safety Strategic Framework.

Trudy Harrison:

The RSSF will set out the vision over the longer term for road safety. This will be followed by action plans against the specific Safe System pillar areas next year. These will be developed in conjunction with the sector and road safety experts. It is at this stage we will consider wider public consultation.

■ Shipping: Crew

Alan Brown: [\[13763\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he is taking steps to help ensure that foreign flagged vessels serving UK ports maximise employment of UK seafarers.

Robert Courts:

We remain committed to maximising the employment of UK seafarers. That is why we support a proportion of the cost of seafarer training through our £30m Support for Maritime Training fund. A range of maritime apprenticeships are also available.

Maritime 2050's workforce vision focused on good maritime welfare. We are working to improve and reform seafarer employment protections and welfare, ensuring they are paid and treated fairly, irrespective of flag or nationality.

On 30 March, the Secretary of State for Transport announced his intention to change the law so that seafarers working on vessels that regularly use UK ports are paid at least the equivalent to national minimum wage, irrespective of the nationality of the seafarer or flag of the vessel.

■ Shipping: Pay

Alan Brown: [\[13761\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to ensure that pay for UK seafarers is protected.

Robert Courts:

Following P&O Ferries' disgraceful actions, the Secretary of State announced a nine point plan to improve seafarers protections. Legislation will be introduced as soon as Parliamentary time allows that intends to ensure that seafarers working on vessels that regularly use UK ports are paid at least an equivalent rate to the UK National Minimum Wage, irrespective of the nationality or the seafarer or flag of the vessel. We intend to achieve this by making access to UK ports conditional on vessel operators demonstrating that they are paying at least an equivalent rate to the UK National Minimum Wage to their seafarers while in UK waters. In parallel we are liaising with international partners to set up bilateral minimum wage equivalent corridors, in the territorial waters of each country, as well as working through international organisations to create a step change in seafarer welfare.

■ Travel Agents: Competition

Alexander Stafford: [\[15410\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment he has made of the impact of online travel agents on levels of competition for consumers in terms of (a) price, (b) protection, (c) convenience and (d) choice in the low-cost carrier sector.

Robert Courts:

The Government has not carried out a recent assessment of competition for consumers in the online travel agent sector.

Under competition law, responsibility for investigating individual competition issues falls to the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), the UK's competition authority. As an independent authority, the CMA has discretion to investigate competition cases which, according to its prioritisation principles, it considers most appropriate. The CMA also has powers to conduct detailed examinations of why particular markets may not be working well, and decide what remedial action is appropriate. Concerns about market competition can be submitted to the CMA.

TREASURY

■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]

Jim Shannon:

[\[13724\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the obligations of employment agencies and umbrella companies under schedule 44, section 2 of The Income Tax (Earnings and Pensions) Act 2003.

Lucy Frazer:

Most agency workers must be treated as employees for Income Tax and National Insurance contributions (NICs) purposes by the agencies that pay them. These agencies are required to make deductions of Income Tax and employee NICs, where these are due, from the workers' pay in the same way and at the same level as with direct employees. The agencies will also be liable to pay employer NICs, where these are due, in respect of payments to the workers.

The rules for agencies do not apply to umbrella companies, which engage workers under a contract of employment. Like all employers, umbrella companies are responsible for making deductions of Income Tax and employee NICs from their employees' pay and for paying employer NICs where they are due.

Jim Shannon:

[\[13725\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate his Department has made of the revenue that will accrue to the Exchequer from the loan charge.

Jim Shannon:

[\[13726\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether HMRC has received legal advice on pursuing employees and not employers on the use of the Loan Charge.

Jim Shannon:

[\[13727\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people seeking refunds due to the changes made by the Morse Review have been refunded by HMRC.

Lucy Frazer:

The Loan Charge was announced at Budget 2016 as part of a package of measures to tackle Disguised Remuneration (DR) tax avoidance. The forecast was last revised at Spring Statement 2022, with the latest estimated overall Exchequer yield of £3.4 billion for the entire package, which includes the Loan Charge.

In September 2019, the Government commissioned an Independent Review into the Loan Charge, led by Lord Morse. The Government accepted 19 of the 20 recommendations made by the review. Changes to the Loan Charge were estimated to reduce the forecast yield by £745 million at Budget 2020.

HMRC will go to the employer to settle the tax due or collect the Loan Charge in the first instance. Approximately 80 per cent of the £3.3 billion HMRC brought into charge through DR settlements between Budget 2016 and the end of March 2021 was from employers.

However, HMRC will consider other options to collect the tax where collection from the employer is not possible, such as when the employer no longer exists or is based offshore.

Following Lord Morse's Independent Loan Charge Review in 2019, HMRC established the DR Repayment Scheme 2020 to repay voluntary payments that taxpayers had agreed to make as part of settlements concluded before changes were made to the scope of the Loan Charge. Individuals and employers had until 30 September 2021 to apply to HMRC for a refund or waiver.

HMRC repays amounts that were paid in DR scheme settlements, and/or waives amounts of instalments due that have not yet been paid if certain conditions are met.

As of 3 June 2022, HMRC had processed approximately 1900 applications, of which approximately 1300 had received either a repayment, a waiver, or both.

Approximately 600 of the applications processed at that date were either invalid or ineligible.

Jim Shannon: [\[13728\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the number of promoters and operators of schemes now subject to the Loan Charge who have been prosecuted.

Lucy Frazer:

I refer my hon. Friend to the answer that was given on 01 April 2022 to the Question UIN 145811.

■ Fuels: Costs

David Duguid: [\[15329\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will bring forward further fiscal measures to help tackle recent increases in fuel costs.

Helen Whately:

At Spring Statement 2022 in response to fuel prices reaching record levels, the government announced a temporary 12-month cut to duty on petrol and diesel of 5p per litre.

This is the largest cash-terms cut across all fuel duty rates at once, ever, and is only the second time in 20 years that main rates of petrol and diesel have been cut. This

cut represents savings for households and businesses worth around £2.4 billion in 2022-23.

All taxes, including fuel duty, remain under review.

■ Tax Allowances: Health Professions

Stephen Farry:

[\[15398\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Answer of 31 May 2022 to Question 8221 on Tax Allowances: Health Professions, what assessment he has made of the potential for inflationary pressures to (a) drive pension growth and (b) cause medics to inadvertently exceed annual allowances and incur associated tax bills.

John Glen:

The Government is committed to ensuring that hard-working NHS staff do not find themselves reducing their work commitments due to the interaction between their pay, their pension, and the relevant tax regime.

The NHS pension scheme protects pensions in payment by increasing them by CPI and revalues accrued CARE benefits by CPI+1.5% each year.

99 per cent of pension savers make annual contributions below £40,000, the level of standard annual allowance which has applied from 2014/15. Individuals who breach the annual allowance on tax-relieved pension savings can also use an option called 'scheme pays', under which they can require their pension scheme to pay their annual allowance tax charge now (in return for an actuarially fair reduction in their pension), provided that the annual allowance charge is at least £2,000 and they have exceeded the annual allowance of £40,000. In England and Wales, the NHS Pension Scheme goes further, allowing Scheme Pays to be used on any annual allowance charges relating to accrual in that scheme.

■ Treasury: Media

Emily Thornberry:

[\[13664\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what total cost to the public purse, inclusive of VAT, was incurred by (a) his Department and (b) HM Revenue and Customs between May 2018 and May 2022 for media buying services provided under the Crown Commercial Service's media buying framework agreement reference RM6003.

Helen Whately:

Details of HM Treasury and HM Revenue and Customs' contracts procured using CCS' Media Buying framework agreement (RM6003) are published on the Contracts Finder website.

The spend inclusive of VAT on those contracts for each department during the period was:

HM Revenue & Customs: £8,090,157.00

HM Treasury: £238,450.90

WORK AND PENSIONS**■ Councillors: Universal Credit**

Simon Jupp: [\[13848\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether financial allowances received by elected local councillors count towards the Universal Credit work allowance.

David Rutley:

Allowances paid by Local Authorities to councillors for their official duties are earnings and are treated as such in the calculation of any Universal Credit award. All earnings, above any applicable work allowance, are subject to the 55% taper and the Universal Credit award is calculated on that basis.

The Universal Credit work allowance is an amount of earnings eligible households can earn before the single taper rate is applied to their earnings and their Universal Credit begins to be reduced. Those councillors with responsibility for a child or qualifying young person, and/or limited capability for work will be eligible for a work allowance.

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Media

Emily Thornberry: [\[13668\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what total cost to the public purse, inclusive of VAT, was incurred by her Department between May 2018 and May 2022 for media buying services provided under the Crown Commercial Service's media buying framework agreement reference RM6003.

Guy Opperman:

The Media Buying framework agreement (RM6003) started 7 November 2018 and ended 21 May 2022 and has now expired.

The framework agreement was awarded to OMD Group Ltd (OmniGov) following a competitive tendering process in 2018. Customers used this framework agreement by putting in place a call off.

Media Buying spend by the Department for Work and Pensions is included in spend data published on GOV.UK [DWP: departmental spending over £25,000 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

■ Department for Work and Pensions: MG OMD

Emily Thornberry: [\[13669\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the (a) procurement reference, (b) start date, (c) end date and (d) maximum value, inclusive of VAT, is of the contract that her Department has agreed with Manning Gottlieb OMD for the provision of strategic media activation services under the terms of the Crown Commercial Service's media services framework agreement reference RM6123.

Guy Opperman:

The procurement has taken place via Crown Commercial Framework RM 6123 (Lot 1).

(a) Procurement reference: Project_24904

(b) Start date: 22/06/2022

(c) End date: 21/05/2025

(d) Maximum value, inclusive of VAT = £54m. VAT is recoverable

Food Banks**Dame Diana Johnson:**[\[13651\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans she has in place to reduce the use of foodbanks.

David Rutley:

Foodbanks are independent, charitable organisations and the Department for Work and Pensions does not have any role in their operation. There is no consistent and accurate measure of foodbank usage at a constituency or national level.

We understand the data limitations in this area, and therefore from April 2021 we introduced a set of questions into the Family Resources Survey (FRS) to measure and track foodbank usage. The first results of these questions are due to be published in March 2023 subject to usual quality assurance.

Our commitment to include questions in the Family Resources Survey show how seriously we take this issue; the data is vital to ensure we understand the full picture.

We understand the pressures people are facing with the cost of living and have taken action to support families. That is why 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 totaling over £37bn this year.

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). Devolved administrations will receive £79 million through the Barnett formula.

Members: Correspondence**Rosie Cooper:**[\[15714\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will take steps to help ensure the hon. Member for West Lancashire receives a response from the Chief Executive of the Child Maintenance Group to the letter dated 7 March 2022, reference ZA59069, on a child maintenance dispute.

Guy Opperman:

When DWP receive correspondence from a Member of Parliament, we aim to fully resolve or agree a resolution within 15 working days of receipt. Complex issues may take longer to resolve.

Contact was made with the hon. members office on the 10 June 2022, where it was agreed an update would be provided by 17 June.

■ Pensions: Debts**Charlotte Nichols:**[\[14650\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if her Department will make an estimate of the number of people who have accessed their pension pots to repay debt in each of the last three years; and if she will make a statement.

Guy Opperman:

The most recent available evidence is the FCA's Financial Lives 2020 survey: [Financial Lives survey resources library | FCA](#). Pension Freedoms and debt policy is determined by HMT.

■ Social Security Benefits: Cost of Living**Steve McCabe:**[\[14414\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, in the context of the increase in the cost of living, what recent assessment she has made of the potential merits of introducing a £20 a week uplift to all legacy benefits.

David Rutley:

There are no plans to make an assessment of the potential merits of introducing a £20 uplift to all legacy benefits.

The government understands the pressures people are facing with the cost of living. These are global challenges, but the government has taken action to support and help families with cost-of-living pressures with a total package worth £37 billion in 2022-23.

This includes helping all domestic electricity customers in Great Britain to cope with the impact of higher energy bills, with £400 off their bills from October through the expansion of the Energy Bills Support Scheme (EBSS). This is a doubling of the £200 of support announced in February, and there will no longer be any repayments.

The government is supporting over 8 million households across the UK in receipt of eligible means tested benefits with a one-off Cost of Living Payment of £650, paid in two instalments. The government is giving additional UK-wide support to help disabled people with the extra costs they will face, with 6 million people who receive non-means tested disability benefits receiving a one-off disability Cost of Living Payment of £150.

Millions of low-income households will receive at least £1,200 of one-off support in total this year to help with the cost of living.

■ State Retirement Pensions

Sir Peter Bottomley:

[\[15166\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, which countries the UK has (a) bilateral or (b) reciprocal agreements on provision of the State Pension; when each of those agreements was made, whether UK pensioners resident in those countries receive yearly increases; and how many UK pensioners there were in each country as of 9 June 2022.

Guy Opperman:

The UK State Pension is payable worldwide and is up-rated annually in countries where there is a legal requirement to do so. This is a longstanding policy which has been supported by successive governments for over 70 years.

As of November 2020, 473,842 State Pension recipients residing in the European Union or countries which are members of the European Free Trade Association (Switzerland, Iceland, Norway, Lichtenstein) receive annual up-rating under various EU-Exit related agreements, including the UK-EU Withdrawal Agreement, which entered into force in 2020 and the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement, which entered into force in 2021.

Other countries with which the UK has a reciprocal agreement also allowing for State Pension up-rating, the date in which the particular agreement was made, and the number of State Pension recipients residing in these countries (as of November 2020) are:

- Barbados (1992) – 3,849 recipients.
- Bermuda (1969) – 718 recipients.
- Bosnia-Herzegovina* (1958) – 31 recipients.
- Israel (1957) – 5,077 recipients.
- Jamaica (1997) – 10,807 recipients.
- Kosovo* (1958) – no data.
- Mauritius (1981) – 1,007 recipients.
- Montenegro* (1958) – 0 recipients.
- North Macedonia* (1958) – 121 recipients.
- Serbia* (1958) – 9 recipients.
- Philippines (1989) – 3,144 recipients.
- Turkey (1961) – 1,870 recipients.
- USA (1984) – 126,977 recipients.

*Following the break-up of Yugoslavia, the UK agreement with former Yugoslavia now covers Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and

Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia are EU Member States covered by the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement.

The UK also has reciprocal social security agreements with New Zealand (1983) and Canada (1995) covering provisions for State Pension, but these agreements do not provide for annual up-rating. As of November 2020, 63,930 State Pension recipients reside in New Zealand and 126,426 recipients reside in Canada.

Source:

State Pension statistics by country of residence are currently available to November 2020 and these are available on Stat-Xplore here: <https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk>

Guidance for users is available at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/index.html>

■ State Retirement Pensions: British Nationals Abroad

Sir Peter Bottomley:

[15167]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, to list for each overseas country when resident UK pensioners do not receive yearly increases what the lowest current payment to a pensioner is who was entitled at retirement to a full basic UK state pension, stating the year the pension was frozen.

Guy Opperman:

The UK State Pension is payable worldwide and is up-rated in countries where there is a legal requirement to do so. This is a longstanding policy which has been supported by successive post-war governments for over 70 years.

Up-rating is paid to State Pension recipients in the UK, European Union, European Economic Area, Barbados, Bermuda, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Israel, Jamaica, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Mauritius, Montenegro, Serbia, Switzerland, The Philippines, Turkey, and the United States.

Information on the lowest full basic State Pension in payment, in each country where up-rating is not paid, is not readily available and to provide it would incur a disproportionate cost.

■ Universal Credit: Cost of Living

Steve McCabe:

[14413]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will make it his policy to reinstate the £20 a week uplift in the Universal Credit standard allowance in the context of the increase in the cost of living.

David Rutley:

There are no plans to reinstate the temporary increase to Universal Credit.

The government understands the pressures people are facing with the cost of living. These are global challenges, but the government has taken action to support and help families with cost-of-living pressures with a total package worth £37 billion in 2022-23.

This includes helping all domestic electricity customers in Great Britain to cope with the impact of higher energy bills, with £400 off their bills from October through the expansion of the Energy Bills Support Scheme (EBSS). This is a doubling of the £200 of support announced in February, and there will no longer be any repayments.

The government is supporting over 8 million households across the UK in receipt of eligible means tested benefits with a one-off Cost of Living Payment of £650, paid in two instalments. The government is giving additional UK-wide support to help disabled people with the extra costs they face, with 6 million people who receive non-means tested disability benefits receiving a one-off disability Cost of Living Payment of £150.

Millions of low-income households will receive at least £1,200 of one-off support in total this year to help with the cost of living.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

DEFENCE

■ Defence AI Strategy Launch

Minister of State for Defence Procurement (Jeremy Quin): [\[HCWS101\]](#)

Today I am pleased to publish the Defence Artificial Intelligence (AI) Strategy. This strategy sets out our ambitious plans to harness responsibly the game-changing potential of these ubiquitous, enabling technologies to rapidly modernise the UK's Armed Forces and secure our military edge. Our vision is that, in terms of AI, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) will be the world's most effective, efficient, trusted and influential Defence organisation for our size.

The Strategy articulates how we will transform the culture of Defence to become truly 'AI ready', developing the skills, technical enablers and Research and Development programmes to dramatically accelerate the adoption of AI-enabled systems and capabilities. In doing so we will champion and strengthen the UK's industrial and academic base to secure national strategic advantage in AI technologies, supporting the Government's wider ambitions for the UK to become a Science and Technology Superpower by 2030. The strategy also sets out how we will address the global security policy challenges associated with the use of AI in a defence context, from geostrategic technological competition to counter proliferation and strategic deterrence.

We recognise that getting right the ethics of military AI is a particularly important requirement. That is why, alongside the strategy, we are also publishing a policy document: *'Ambitious, Safe and Responsible - Our approach to the delivery of AI-enabled capability in Defence'*. This document sets out the robust controls framework that will be applied for all AI-enabled military capabilities, throughout system lifecycles, providing assurance to the public and our partners that our use of these systems will always be in line with UK values, standards and legal obligations.

We have engaged extensively with partners across Government, civil society and our allies in developing these approaches, and will continue to do so over the coming months.

I am placing copies of both documents in the Library of the House.

Attachments:

1. Ambitious Safe and Responsible [20220614-Ambitious Safe and Responsible_Final.pdf]
2. Defence AI Strategy [20220610-Defence_AI_Strategy_Final.pdf]

■ Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services Inspection Reports of the Royal Navy, Royal Military and Royal Air Force Police

Minister for Defence Personnel and Veterans (Leo Docherty): [\[HCWS104\]](#)

I wish to inform the House that I am laying today, on behalf of the Secretary of State for Defence, the reports from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary Fire and Rescue

Service (HMICFRS) Inspection of the Service Police (the Royal Navy Police, the Royal Military Police and the RAF Police).

The Armed Forces Act 2011 places a duty on HMICFRS to inspect and report to the Ministry of Defence on the independence and effectiveness of investigations carried out by each Service police force, and this is HMICFRS third statutory inspection report on the Service Police.

I welcome these reports on Service Police investigations into Rape, serious sexual assault, and domestic abuse investigations from an independent civilian authority. While the reports recognise that such investigations are done to comparable or higher standards than most civilian police forces, some areas of concern have been raised, specifically around the safeguarding of victims. We have work in hand to improve the safeguarding and support to victims of these most serious offences including through the setting up of the Victims and Witness Care Unit (VWCU), under the Defence Serious Crime Command which will be fully operational by December 2022. More widely, there were a total of 30 recommendations and 13 areas of improvement for the Royal Naval Police, 32 recommendations and 19 areas of improvement for the Royal Military Police and 30 recommendations and 21 areas of improvement for the Royal Air Force Police. A third of these were common to all three Services. The Department accepts the reports' findings and will consider the recommendations and areas for improvement in detail.

Copies of the reports will be available through the Journal Office.

Attachments:

1. Royal Air Force Police [royal-air-force-police-rape-serious-sexual-assault-and-domestic-abuse-investigations.pdf]
2. Royal Military Police [royal-military-police-rape-serious-sexual-assault-and-domestic-abuse-investigations.pdf]
3. Royal Navy Police [royal-navy-police-rape-serious-sexual-assault-and-domestic-abuse-investigations.pdf]

HOME OFFICE

■ **Drugs strategy guidance for local delivery partners**

The Minister of State for Crime and Policing (Kit Malthouse):

[\[HCWS103\]](#)

As the cross-government minister with responsibility for combating drugs, I am pleased to announce today the publication of guidance for local partners helping to deliver the commitments and ambitions laid out in the 10-year drugs strategy by this government in December.

This is an important next step in the ambitious whole-of-government plan to cut crime, save lives, and sets out a framework to help local partners reduce drug-related harm and monitor their progress.

Drugs can have devastating effects on individuals, families and neighbourhoods, and the cost to society is nearly £20 billion a year in England alone. Drug-related deaths are at the highest levels recorded, and drug use is associated with nearly half of all homicides

and acquisitive crimes such as robberies, burglaries, and thefts. The drivers behind drug-related harm are clearly complex and cut across the responsibilities of a range of different organisations.

As a result, dedicated funding of nearly £900m was announced with the strategy in December, taking the investment in combating drugs to £3 billion over three years across enforcement, treatment and recovery, and demand reduction.

Now, as the focus turns to implementation and delivery, local partners such as local authorities, public health services, police forces, prisons, and probation services are being asked to step up and fulfil their collective role as the engine room of this drugs strategy. It is these local delivery partners that are best placed to address the needs of their local communities.

The new guidance provides an important framework for how local partners in England should work together to reduce drug-related harm and drive join up across sectors and a framework for Combating Drugs Partnerships. A single Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) in each locality will chair these partnerships and be responsible for reporting to central government on local cross-cutting delivery against the National Combating Drugs Outcomes Framework, alongside their own specific organisational objectives.

The outcomes and metrics included in the framework aim to provide a clear line of sight between action and the impact experienced by individuals, families, and neighbourhoods across the country and in local areas. This is how delivery of the commitments and ambitions of the 10-year drugs strategy to level up the country will be most effectively monitored. The potential benefits are significant and wide-ranging, including improving people's safety, productivity and wider health and well-being.

I look forward to confirmation of the partnerships and working with the local SROs.

While this guidance is aimed primarily at partners in England, we have referenced Wales where it touches on reserved matters. More broadly we will continue to work with the devolved administrations to embed collaboration on these issues.

The guidance will be available on gov.uk and placed in the libraries of both Houses.

TRANSPORT

■ Future of Freight Plan

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport (Trudy Harrison):

[\[HCWS102\]](#)

As a proud, free-trading nation, moving goods domestically and abroad has always been the backbone of the United Kingdom's economy. Throughout the pandemic and in our work to deliver Brexit and a Global Britain we have been reminded of the vital role that the freight and logistics sector has supporting the supply chains that maintain our economic wellbeing. Across government we have worked collectively, and collaboratively with industry to mitigate disruption to our supply chains. We have delivered unprecedented action with 33 measures to help the sector tackle the shortage of HGV

drivers. This included making more driving test slots available than needed and introducing bootcamps, which has seen the number of available HGV drivers stabilise. We also provided vital support to ferry and freight operators to weather the start of the pandemic. This, alongside other actions, has led to sector reports of pressures easing following global challenges on the supply chain, and supported this highly effective and adaptable sector to maintain the smooth flow of goods into, out of and across the country.

It is now important that we look to ensure that the sector is ready to grasp opportunities in the medium- and long-term. The Future of Freight is the first time that the UK government has developed a long-term cross-modal plan for the freight and logistics sector. The plan is a collaboration with industry and we have engaged stakeholders extensively in its development, including through the Freight Council. It sets out how the UK government and industry have agreed to work more closely together, and with the Devolved Administrations, to deliver a world-class, seamless flow of freight across our roads, railways, seas, skies and waterways.

The vision set out in the plan is for a freight and logistics sector that is **cost-efficient, reliable, resilient, environmentally sustainable and valued by society** for its role in supporting our way of life. The plan is also clear on the importance of the sector to achieving some of the government's strategic priorities. The sector is ideally placed to support **Levelling Up** driving economic activity across all corners of the UK and providing secure employment, for example in ports and distribution centres sited in levelling-up priority areas, and opportunities in all our communities. The plan also supports our efforts to **strengthen the Union** improving connectivity across the United Kingdom.

The plan focuses on five priority areas of challenge identified with industry. It is the start of a long-term collaboration which will raise the status of freight within government. It sets out government and industry commitment to collaborate on a number of actions:

The National Freight Network : We will identify a National Freight Network (NFN) across road, rail, maritime, aviation, inland waterway and warehouse infrastructure. Our long-term aim will be to remove the barriers which prevent the seamless flow of freight.

Transition to Net Zero: We want to support the entire sector in its transition to Net Zero. We will launch the Freight Energy Forum with industry, focused on collaborating with industry to assess future energy and fuel needs and paths to providing the requisite infrastructure.

Planning: We will further embed freight in planning, transport and design policy and guidance, and ensure freight is represented in planning reform. We will publish a call for evidence with industry to support this work.

People & Skills : We will expand awareness of the sector and freight careers amongst the public, particularly through the industry-led and government-backed Generation Logistics communication campaign. This will maximise the impact of cross-government employment and skills programmes for the freight sector.

Data & Technology: We will maximise opportunities for uptake of innovative technology and digitalisation, including through delivery of a dedicated cross-modal £7m Freight Innovation Fund.

Moving goods efficiently has underpinned Britain's historical growth, prosperity and global influence. In today's increasingly interconnected and competitive global economy, we require a world beating freight and logistics sector that will deliver the greener, fairer, and stronger economy we need. A sector that will help build a truly Global Britain.

I will place a copy of the future of freight: a long term plan in the libraries of both Houses