



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 16 June 2022 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:48 P.M., 16 June 2022). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ **Coronavirus: Vaccination**

Daisy Cooper:

[\[14628\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department supports a proactive, predictive immunology approach to the development of the next generation of covid-19 vaccines.

George Freeman:

The Government supports a proactive approach to continue to develop the next generation of vaccines. Despite the highly successful national vaccination campaign, it is important we continue to study how to produce Covid-19 vaccines that induce robust, long-term protective immunity and which are effective across mutating variants.

To that end, following extensive engagement with academic and industry stakeholders, the Vaccine Taskforce are working with other stakeholders across government, to explore the establishment of a UK-wide Predictive Immunology Network, formed of centres of excellence spread across the UK.

The aim is to ensure the network will utilise the collaborative approach that was so successful during the pandemic, to bring together industry, academia, and the NHS to work towards a common goal and answer key immunology questions on how to improve vaccines including the next generation Covid-19 vaccines.

■ **Electrical Safety: Vulnerable Adults**

Grahame Morris:

[\[16916\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of requiring electricity providers to offer free electrical safety checks in the homes of vulnerable people; and whether he has had discussions with Ofgem on that matter.

Greg Hands:

Electricity distribution and supply companies, which are regulated by Ofgem, are responsible for providing the electricity supply up to and including the meter in a customer's property. Landlords and homeowners are responsible for electrical installation inside the property. The Electricity Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 require landlords to ensure the electrical installation in private rented properties are inspected and tested by qualified competent person at least every five years.

■ Energy Bills Rebate

Ruth Cadbury: [\[16978\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps the Government has taken to ensure that people who receive their energy supply through a third party can receive the £400 energy grant announced by the Government.

Greg Hands:

The Government knows that there will be different considerations for consumers depending on their circumstances and the way in which they pay their energy bills.

All domestic electricity customers who have a direct relationship with a licensed electricity supplier will be automatically eligible for this Scheme. The Government continues to work closely with consumer groups and suppliers to deliver the Scheme in a convenient way to domestic energy customers, including those who receive their energy supply through a third party.

■ Energy Bills Rebate: Houseboats

Ruth Cadbury: [\[16977\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he has taken to ensure residents who receive their energy supply through a mooring management company can receive the £400 energy grant recently announced by the Government.

Ruth Cadbury: [\[16979\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how individuals residing in residential barges can receive the £400 energy grant announced by the Government; and if he will make a statement.

Greg Hands:

The Government is aware that not all households have electricity provided through a domestic electricity supply contract, such as houseboat residents. This was raised in the government's technical consultation (Energy Bills Support Scheme – Managing the impact of the energy price shock on consumer bills) which closed on 23 May. Households without a domestic electricity supply contract are not eligible for the Scheme and the Government is exploring options for other ways in which they might receive similar support. Responses to the consultation are being analysed and the Government response will be published later in the summer.

■ Energy Supply

Dr Alan Whitehead: [\[16808\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that administrators of failed energy companies pay back debts to customers in the form of account credit balances before paying the secured creditors of energy suppliers that fail in future.

Greg Hands:

Under the Supplier of Last Resort process domestic consumers have their balances honoured when they transfer to a new supplier.

BEIS is working with Ofgem to understand how certain assets in an insolvency could be protected, and therefore to reduce the costs that eventually fall on customers when a supplier exits the market.

Green Deal Scheme: Complaints**Peter Grant:**[\[17007\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 13 June 2022 to Question 13758, on Green Deal Scheme, what his Department's timeframe is for processing all outstanding Green Deal complaints.

Greg Hands:

The Government aims to complete all Green Deal complaints as soon as possible, taking into account the requirements of the Green Deal Framework Regulations. It is not possible to provide a timeframe on completion due to the variance in individual cases and required stages within the complaints handling process.

Ofgem**Dr Alan Whitehead:**[\[16807\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure that Ofgem takes steps to ringfence customer credit balances to help prevent the costs of failed suppliers falling on customers again in the future.

Greg Hands:

Protecting customer credit balances is a matter for Ofgem and is part of their action plan to develop a package of measures to boost financial resilience in the energy retail market. Ofgem is currently engaging with stakeholders on a range of proposals on how best to tighten rules around credit balances, including a ringfencing mechanism.

Simple Energy: Insolvency**Dr Alan Whitehead:**[\[16805\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether Simple Energy, the parent company of Bulb Ltd, is in the same Special Administration Regime as Bulb Energy.

Dr Alan Whitehead:[\[16806\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what loans to Simple Energy have been serviced by payments to investing bodies while under the Special Administration Regime.

Dr Alan Whitehead:

[\[16809\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much has been paid in interest and loan repayments to Sequoia Economic Infrastructure Income Fund Ltd from Simple Energy while it has been under the Government Special Administration Regime.

Greg Hands:

Simple Energy Limited was taken in to 'ordinary' (not special) administration by its secured creditor on the same day as Bulb Energy entered special administration. Three individuals from Interpath Advisory were appointed administrators of Simple Energy Limited.

No payments have been made to service loans to Simple Energy Limited from investors during the Special Administration Regime (SAR).

This is a matter for the administrators of Simple Energy Limited which is in 'ordinary' and not special administration.

■ Small Businesses

Bob Seely:

[\[15371\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what his Department's definition of a SME is; whether micro-businesses, defined as a business that contracts ten or fewer employees, are included in his Department's SME programmes; and whether those programmes are adjusted to meet micro-businesses specific requirements.

Paul Scully:

There is no single formal definition of an SME used by the UK government in designing government schemes. Schemes have different eligibility criteria depending on their aims. All businesses, including micro-businesses can apply to government schemes if they believe they meet the eligibility criteria.

The Government provides a range of support that all businesses, including micro businesses can access. These include information on starting up and running a business on GOV.UK, one to one advice via our free Business Support Helpline and through 38 Growth Hubs across England, government backed Start-Up Loans, and businesses with 5 or more employees can access our Help to Grow schemes.

■ Small Businesses: Kingston upon Hull

Dame Diana Johnson:

[\[15205\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to support small businesses in Hull affected by the covid-19 pandemic.

Paul Scully:

The Government delivered a package of support for business including the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, business rates relief, grants and loans. Hull City

Council received £120m in grant support, reporting payments worth £99m to their businesses.

Two years on, and thanks to our successful vaccination programme, the immunity built up in the population and antiviral and therapeutics tools, the UK is in the strongest position to learn how to live with COVID-19 and end government regulation.

■ Working Hours

Thangam Debbonaire: [\[15733\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his policies of the (a) nature and (b) impact of the pilot of the 32 hour, four day working week, currently being undertaken by 70 UK companies.

Paul Scully:

The Government does not believe there can be a 'one size fits all' approach to work arrangements. That is why we put individual agency and choice at the heart of our consultation on "making flexible working the default", which closed on 1st December 2021. We are currently reviewing the responses and will respond in due course.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Chequers: Staff

Angela Rayner: [\[16972\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 7 June 2022 to Question 11686 on Chequers: Staff, whether the salaries of any staff employed at Chequers are paid for by the public purse.

Michael Ellis:

Chequers is not a government building; it is run and managed by an independent trust. Under the Chequers Estate Act 1958 it has been the practice, under successive Governments, for the Estate to receive a grant-in-aid payment. Staffing numbers and salaries are a matter for the Trust.

■ Veterans

Stephanie Peacock: [\[14590\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Government has begun research to create insight and understanding of public and employer's perception of veterans, as committed to in the Veterans Strategy Action Plan, and when this research will be published.

Leo Docherty:

In the Veterans' Strategy Action Plan 2022 – 2024, the OVA laid out its commitment to promote a positive public perception of veterans.

The Office for Veterans' Affairs commissioned YouGov in January 2022 to carry out a comprehensive research study into the public and employer's perception of veterans. The fieldwork for this project has now been completed and the research team is in the process of drafting the final report and findings.

COP26

■ Climate Change

Caroline Lucas: [\[15226\]](#)

To ask the President of COP26, what steps he is taking to ensure that parties revisit and strengthen the 2030 targets in their nationally determined contributions as necessary to align with the Paris Agreement temperature goal by the end of 2022, taking into account different national circumstances, as is required by the Glasgow Climate Pact.

Caroline Lucas: [\[15227\]](#)

To ask the President of COP26, what discussions he has had with (a) international and (b) regional multilateral organisations on urgently increasing knowledge-sharing and practical cooperation to support the effective implementation of enhanced Nationally Determined Contributions, including those of (a) G20 countries and (b) the UK's developing country partners.

Alok Sharma:

Since COP26, 11 NDCs have been submitted. The UK continues to push for all countries, particularly the major emitters, to revisit and strengthen their NDCs as necessary to align with the Paris temperature goal before the UNFCCC Synthesis Report deadline of 23 September. The UK, chairs the NDC Partnership with Jamaica, made up of more than 115 countries. We support member countries by offering a tailored package of expertise, technical assistance, and funding.

I have regular engagement with countries, partners and civil society, including through international fora such as the G7, G20, the recent May Ministerial on Implementation and Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting, among others.

DEFENCE

■ Afghanistan: Refugees

Dan Jarvis: [\[16958\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether Afghan interpreters resettled to the UK under the ex-gratia redundancy and resettlement scheme, due to being made redundant or resigning following a period of 12 months of work outside the wire, are eligible for new support measures offered to Afghan interpreters resettled through the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy scheme, including the provisions under (a) Op NEWHOPE and (b) Operation Warm Welcome Full Degree scholarships.

James Heappey:

All individuals relocated to the UK under the ex-gratia scheme are entitled to the same support package as those relocated through the ARAP scheme - this includes provisions under op Newhope and operation Warm Welcome.

Dan Jarvis:[\[16959\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the Answer of 14 January 2022 to Question 101733, on Afghanistan: Refugees, and the Answer of 28 January 2022 to Question 111584 on Afghanistan: Refugees, to what the R reference code relates on an Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy application.

James Heappey:

An 'R' reference code specifically denotes an application made under the ARAP scheme from 1 September 2021 onwards (Post Operation PITTING)

■ Armed Forces: Horses**John Healey:**[\[16852\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much his Department spent upgrading facilities to house horses in the last financial year.

Jeremy Quin:

In Financial Year 2021-22, the Department spent a total of £3,000 upgrading facilities to house horses.

■ Armed Forces: Housing**John Healey:**[\[14424\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 27 May 2022 to Question 5341 on Armed Forces: Housing, what estimate he has made of when the assessment of the survey results on the remaining 24 high rise buildings with flammable cladding will be completed.

Jeremy Quin:

The surveys completed by the Fire Engineering Consultancies on the remaining 24 high rise buildings with flammable cladding have been reviewed, and those responsible for the sites are in the process of assessing the remedial options. These tasks are at various stages of progress with decisions on the exact course of remedial work and completion dates for the work being established.

All buildings have a current Fire Risk Assessment in place and remain legally compliant for continued occupation.

■ Defence Equipment & Support: Food**John Healey:**[\[16849\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 24 May 2022 to Question 2352, on Defence Equipment & Support: Clothing and Food, how much Defence Equipment and Support has spent on food in each year since 2010.

Jeremy Quin:

The information needed to answer the Rt Hon. Member's question is taking time to collate. I will write to him with an answer shortly, and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Defence: Finance**John Healey:**[\[16853\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will set out the NATO definition of UK's defence spending estimates as a percentage of GDP in each year until 2032.

Jeremy Quin:

The UK is currently the largest European Defence spender in NATO and the second largest in the Alliance overall.

The UK remains committed to spending at least 2% of its GDP on Defence for every year of this parliament and meets both NATO spending guidelines.

Spending beyond the current Parliament will be subject to a further Spending Review.

Future Combat Air System**Mr Kevan Jones:**[\[14445\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what discussions he has had with his international counterparts on the potential merits of expanding the membership of the Future Combat Air System programme since January 2022.

Jeremy Quin:

International partnerships are at the core of the UK's strategic approach to FCAS. We are building a truly international programme to strengthen global relationships, share expertise and cost, and ultimately operate better together. We continue to explore partnering opportunities with Japan, Italy and Sweden and remain open to potential additional partners in the future.

Libya: Armed Conflict**Kenny MacAskill:**[\[17135\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what contact the UK armed forces had with the February 17th Martyrs Brigade during the conflict in Libya in 2011.

James Heapey:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 15 June 2022 to Questions 15767, 15768, 15769 and 15770.

Attachments:

1. Libya; Armed Conflict [15767 Libya Armed Conflict.docx]

■ Portsmouth Dockyard: Insulation**John Healey:** [\[14425\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the remediation work to remove the flammable cladding from the Vanguard Building at HMS Nelson was completed by its original scheduled end date.

Jeremy Quin:

The remediation work to remove flammable cladding from Vanguard Building at HMS Nelson was completed by its original scheduled date of the end of March 2022.

■ Ukraine: Armed Forces**John Healey:** [\[16850\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many serving British personnel have travelled to Ukraine to fight for the Ukrainian Armed Forces since February 2022.

James Heapey:

Members of the British Armed Forces are not authorised to travel to Ukraine to support the ongoing conflict against Russia in any form, whether on leave or not. We are aware that a small number of serving British personnel have disobeyed orders and may have travelled to Ukraine to fight. We have actively and strongly encouraged them to return to the UK.

■ Ukraine: Military Aid**Dan Jarvis:** [\[16960\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many individual first aid kits the Government has sent to Ukraine as of 13 June 2022.

James Heapey:

The UK has not provided individual first aid kits. We have provided a significant quantity of medical equipment, including field dressings, bandages, tourniquets, splints and chest seals and we will provide more.

Munira Wilson: [\[17140\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the Government is providing support for the training of civilians fighting on the frontline in Ukraine.

James Heapey:

The UK does not train civilians fighting in Ukraine. Any training provided by the UK is directed at serving members of the Ukrainian armed forces.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ 3G: Rural Areas****Derek Thomas:****[18003]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment her Department has made of potential effect of the switch off of the Three 3G network in 2024 on rural communities; and what steps the Government plans to take to support businesses and individuals in rural communities as 3G networks are phased out.

Julia Lopez:

There is no explicit regulatory requirement for mobile network operators to maintain a 3G network and it is for operators to take final decisions on the provision of network services. The Government welcomes 3G networks being switched off in a responsible way and will continue to work with Ofcom and mobile network operators to ensure a smooth transition that meets the needs of business users and consumers, including rural communities.

We are committed to extending good quality mobile coverage across the UK. In March 2020, the government announced a deal with the mobile network operators to increase 4G coverage to 95% of the UK landmass. And the majority of the population can now access basic 5G. The Wireless Infrastructure Strategy will set a new ambition for 5G to make sure communities across the country benefit from secure, reliable and resilient connections.

■ Arts: Finance**Dame Caroline Dinéage:****[15722]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of introducing a Smart Fund to help ensure creators and performers are remunerated for their work by using funds from sales of electronic devices which copy, store and share creative content.

Julia Lopez:

The Government agrees that creators should be fairly remunerated. The Government is taking forward work to achieve this, including a programme considering the remuneration issues related to music streaming.

DCMS Ministers and officials have been engaging with the Design and Artists Copyright Society (DACS) on their proposals for a Smart Fund. It is encouraging to see proposals from the sector to support creators and fair remuneration. However introducing statutory levies of this nature can present significant challenges, including the risk that costs would be passed to consumers. This is of particular concern in the context of wider cost of living challenges. We encourage DACS to work with the tech industry to explore options for industry-led solutions.

■ Arts: Ukraine**Rachael Maskell:** [\[15296\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether the Government is taking steps to support artists and performers from Ukraine.

Nigel Huddleston:

The sectors which DCMS supports have been a key player in the UK's response to the war in Ukraine. This has included severely restricting Russian and Belarussian state organisations' participation in cultural events, public shows of solidarity with Ukraine from cultural organisations, and the cancellation of high-profile exhibitions and tours to the UK. DCMS is continuing to work with the cultural sector to understand the impacts of the situation and, where appropriate, is engaging with other government departments. Ministers and officials have held meetings with sector representatives to discuss this directly. The Secretary of State and Minister for Arts have met members of the Ukrainian Government, Oleksandr Tkachenko and Kateryna Chuyeva, either virtually or in person, and regular communication is ongoing.

The British Council's planned UK-Ukraine Season of Culture is going ahead from June-November 2022 and will involve British and Ukrainian artists, creative sectors, and educators. It will celebrate 30 years of formal diplomatic dialogue between the UK and Ukraine. The programme will advance knowledge of Ukraine in the UK, position the country's cultural achievements, and create opportunities for Ukrainian creatives to develop lasting partnerships with their UK counterparts. Partnerships include Screen Ukraine at Sheffield Doc Fest, a Ukrainian programme at Edinburgh International Festival, and Ukrainian writers at Cheltenham Literature Festival, as well as grant opportunities for artists and organisations.

Rachael Maskell: [\[15297\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether she is taking steps to support arts projects for people from Ukraine who are residing in the UK.

Nigel Huddleston:

Arts Council England (ACE), as the Government's principal arm's-length body responsible for promoting and supporting the arts, has a number of grants available and is accepting funding applications made by people from Ukraine who are living in England. ACE is also working with local authority services and community and voluntary organisations to provide newly arrived Ukrainian families with cultural materials for their children. The British Council's planned UK-Ukraine Season of Culture will also go ahead between June and November 2022, and will involve Ukrainian artists, creative organisations, and educators.

DCMS officials will continue to engage closely across the cultural sector to support in future ways where possible and appropriate.

■ BetIndex: Insolvency

Sarah Owen: [\[15389\]](#)

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

Chris Philp:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 3 February to [Question UIN 112706](#).

■ Football: Paris

Julian Sturdy: [\[13109\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department is taking to investigate the treatment of Liverpool fans at the Champions League final in Paris on 28 May 2022.

Nigel Huddleston:

I welcome the fact that, as the Secretary of State and I, and many members of the House of Commons, called for, UEFA have commissioned an independent investigation, and issued an apology to fans who attended the final. I have met with the French Minister for Sport, who has also apologised and has commissioned a review of the delivery of the event.

Liverpool Football Club are collating fan experiences, via their website, to contribute to the investigations, and I urge fans to send accounts of their experiences to the club. DCMS will continue to work closely with the relevant authorities and Liverpool FC on this.

Julie Elliott: [\[16934\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will make a statement on discussions she has had with her French counterparts on the events that took place in connection with the UEFA Champions League final in Paris on 28 May 2022.

Julie Elliott: [\[16935\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will publish full minutes of discussions she has had with her French counterpart on the events that took place in connection with the UEFA Champions League final in Paris on 28 May 2022.

Julie Elliott: [\[16936\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions she has had with her French counterpart on the events that took place in connection with the UEFA Champions League final at the Stade de France in Paris on 28 May 2022.

Julie Elliott: [\[16937\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the independence of the inquiry commissioned by UEFA into the events of the 28 May 2022 at the Stade de France in Paris.

Julie Elliott: [\[16938\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the events of 28 May 2022 at the UEFA Champions League final in Paris, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of claims made by (a) the French Government about the supposed prevalence of fake tickets held by Liverpool fans and (b) representatives of UEFA about the alleged late arrival of fans; and whether she has had discussions with the French Minister for the Interior on that matter; and whether she has been provided any evidence on that matter from the French Minister for the Interior.

Nigel Huddleston:

We were appalled by the terrifying and potentially dangerous conditions experienced by many Liverpool fans at the Champions League and I am shocked and concerned by what has come to light. I met with the French Minister for Sport last week, and raised these concerns directly, and we will continue to work closely with the relevant authorities and with Liverpool FC.

We welcome the fact that UEFA have commissioned an independent investigation, and issued an apology to fans who attended the final; and that the French Government has commissioned a review of the delivery of the event and will also be supporting the UEFA investigation.

UEFA has in place a complaints procedure for fans to present evidence, and Liverpool FC are collating fan experiences, via their website, to contribute to the UEFA investigation. We urge fans to send accounts of their experiences to the club.

Fans deserve to know what happened. So it is absolutely right that the relevant authorities are now fully investigating these events. These investigations must establish the facts so that the authorities can learn lessons from the event and ensure we do not see scenes like this again.

■ Football: Spain

John McNally: [\[14515\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether she has had discussions with (a) her Spanish counterpart and (b) UEFA on the public drinking water shortage at the UEFA Europa League final in Seville in May 2022; and if she will make a statement.

Nigel Huddleston:

My officials have met with representatives of Rangers Football Club and discussed their submission to UEFA on their experiences at the Europa League Final. Fans deserve better than experienced in Seville, and subsequently in Paris. I look forward to UEFA's consideration of both these events.

■ Gambling

Sarah Owen: [\[15390\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what progress her Department has made on the Gambling Act Review; and when she plans to publish the Gambling Review White Paper.

Chris Philp:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 13 June to [Question UIN 13827](#).

■ Gambling: Taxation

Dr Rupa Huq: [\[17048\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of introducing a mandatory levy on gambling companies to fund support for people with gambling addictions.

Chris Philp:

The Government's Review of the Gambling Act called for evidence on how best to recoup the regulatory and societal costs of problem gambling. We will publish a white paper outlining our proposals for reform and vision for the sector in the coming weeks.

■ Radio: Smart Devices

Chris Elmore: [\[18004\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, for what reason the Government did not commit to the recommendation set out in the Digital Radio and Audio Review on introducing a set of rules to guarantee access to UK radio on smart speakers in the future.

Julia Lopez:

As set out in the government's [response](#) to the Digital Radio and Audio Review, published alongside the broadcasting [white paper](#) on 28 April 2022, we agree that the case has been made for taking action to protect radio's long term position in the context of the rapid growth in usage of smart speakers. We are looking at appropriate legislative vehicles through which to take this forward.

■ Tourism: India

Navendu Mishra: [\[13263\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment her Department has made of the impact of tourism from India on the economy of (a) Greater Manchester and (b) United Kingdom in each of the last five years.

Nigel Huddleston:

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the expenditure of visitors to the UK from India was steadily increasing. In 2019, the total expenditure of visitors from India was £752.46 million and the average spend per visit was £1,088 - in Greater Manchester the total

expenditure was £51.96 million and the average spend was £1,299 per visit. In 2019, there were 692,660 visits from India to the UK; 39,990 of these were to Greater Manchester.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic led to a 53% reduction in seat capacity from India to the UK in 2020 and in 2021 was 54% behind pre-COVID levels.

The Government is committed to assisting and accelerating the tourism sector's recovery from COVID-19 which is why we published the Tourism Recovery Plan (TRP) in June 2021.

The TRP sets out ambitious and stretching targets to recover inbound visitor numbers and spend to 2019 levels by the end of 2023 and recover domestic overnight trip volume and spend by the end of 2022 - at least a year faster than independent forecasts predict.

We are now showing the rest of the world that the UK is open, and ready to welcome visitors from around the world for a blockbuster year of events which began with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee last weekend. India has been one of VisitBritain's key campaign markets for the upcoming Birmingham Commonwealth Games taking place this summer. As well as the Commonwealth Games, we will also be showcasing the breadth of the UK's culture, creativity and innovation through Unboxed, 'Creativity in the UK'.

■ **Unboxed: Contracts**

Emily Thornberry:

[13080]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the procurement reference BIP662297110 published on the Contract Finder website on 28 January, if she will publish the (a) key objectives, (b) agreed baselines, (c) key performance indicators and (d) key data sources that will be used to monitor and evaluate the qualitative and quantitative success of the Unboxed festival up to the end of March 2023; and whether those evaluation criteria have been approved by her Department.

Nigel Huddleston:

The campaign objectives are to increase awareness and to drive physical attendance and online engagement for each of the 10 commissions, commensurate to the scale and nature of the specific commission being promoted. The baseline for awareness was 4% at the beginning of the programme (YouGov). Attendance, online engagement and awareness will be the key indicators and UNBOXED, an arm's length body, will be working with KPMG, who are leading the evaluation, alongside BMG who are measuring awareness levels. Formal evaluation delivered by KPMG is due to be published in early 2023.

■ **Unboxed: Marketing**

Emily Thornberry:

[13079]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the procurement reference BIP668138573 published on the Contract Finder website on 16

February, which company has been contracted to provide educational marketing and communication services; and what progress that company has made in ensuring the (a) distribution and (b) use of the suite of digital resources developed to engage students in the nationwide learning and participation programme accompanying the Unboxed festival.

Nigel Huddleston:

UNBOXED has contracted Everfi to promote events activity, schools engagement and digital participation opportunities across the UK as part of the UNBOXED programme. This includes supporting UNBOXED's learning and participation programme which aims to reach school children across the UK, through lesson packs, workshops and other creative material. The outputs and outcomes of this work will be included in the formal evaluation of UNBOXED, due to be published in early 2023.

■ **Unboxed: Overseas Visitors**

Emily Thornberry:

[\[13078\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the procurement reference BIP689900898 published on the Contract Finder website on 12 May, how many international delegates are expected to (a) visit the Unboxed festival between 13 June and 30 September and (b) have their (i) accommodation, (ii) meals and (iii) activities organised under the terms of that contract.

Nigel Huddleston:

The contract that has been advertised is for a single supplier to support the delivery and management of two international delegation visits. Each delegation will include 12 people per delegation from across the world (24 in total) to drive international engagement. The first will take place during August in Scotland and will explore the future of UNBOXED projects including the potential for them to tour overseas. The second delegation is themed on art in the public realm and will be in England during September. Each delegation is a 5 day programme with a travel day either side. This has been co-funded between UNBOXED and the British Council.

■ **Voice over Internet Protocol**

Alberto Costa:

[\[17002\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions she has had with representatives of BT on ensuring that vulnerable users will not be disadvantaged by the move to Digital Voice.

Julia Lopez:

Whilst the move to digital voice is industry led, DCMS and Ofcom regularly engage with BT to ensure vulnerable groups are supported throughout the upgrade process. Ofcom's guidance on providing access to emergency services during a power outage includes requirements that providers engage in effective communications to ensure all customers understand the risk associated with the migration. Additionally, Ofcom

has also published more general guidance on how providers can treat vulnerable customers fairly.

BT recently announced it would pause its provider-led migration of customers until new resilient technologies, such as longer-lasting battery back-up units and 4G-capable handsets, become available. Whilst this announcement does not affect the 2025 date by which Openreach intends to close the PSTN, BT has said the delay will allow it more time to proactively engage related industries - such as telecare and burglar alarm providers - to ensure their most vulnerable customers continue to get the services they need.

■ Youth Services

Rachael Maskell: [\[13172\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 23 May 2022 to Question 4612 on Youth Services, when she plans to complete the review into the Local Authority Statutory Duty for Youth Services.

Nigel Huddleston:

DCMS is committed to completing the review of the Local Authority Statutory Duty for Youth Services, previously paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This work is ongoing and we are assessing responses to the consultation. We will publish the outcomes of the review in due course.

EDUCATION

■ Civil Engineering: Apprentices

Mr Toby Perkins: [\[16912\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he plans to undertake a review of the decision to change the arrangements for End Point Assessments for civil engineering degree apprenticeship by introducing regulation by Ofqual of End-Point Assessment Organisations.

Alex Burghart:

This is a matter for the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education. I have asked its Chief Executive, Jennifer Coupland, to write to you and a copy of her reply will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

■ GCSE: Assessments

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[15721\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what comparative assessment his Department has made of the equity of the number of examinations mandated for individual GCSE syllabuses.

Mr Robin Walker:

This is a matter for the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) and I have asked its Chief Regulator, Jo Saxton, to write directly to the Honourable Member. A copy of her reply will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Higher Education: Finance**Kim Leadbeater:**[\[17172\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to provide financial support to higher education establishments; what assessment he has made of the potential merits of (a) reviewing the Adult Education Budget (AEB) business case processes, (b) offering an income guarantee for colleges, (c) implementing a rate premium on priority courses and qualifications and (d) introducing a cost-increase sharing mechanism for his Department's approved capital projects.

Alex Burghart:

Across the next three years, the department is investing almost £900 million of further funding into the higher education sector. This includes the largest increase in government funding in over a decade, to support students and teaching.

The department recognises the challenges providers have faced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. We also know that many providers have been able to continue to deliver provision successfully throughout the pandemic and now expect them to have had the time and opportunity to adjust their learning offers to accommodate online/flexible learning in response to further COVID-19 waves. That is why for the current academic year (2021/22) we plan to maintain the Education and Skills Funding Agency's Adult Education Budget reconciliation threshold at 97%.

The department is committed to investing in 16-19 education, ensuring that further education (FE) is financially sustainable and we have taken several steps to increase funding and bolster the FE sector.

The 2021 Spending Review 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. This includes an up-front cash boost which will see the rate of funding per student increase by over 8% in the 2022/23 academic year.

The significant increase to the national funding rate and the other funding increases alongside this, demonstrates our commitment to 16-19 education and will help with college income.

The department has set out details of how the additional funding will be allocated in the 2022/23 academic year. Along with increasing the national rate of funding for a Band 5 student to £4,542, we are also increasing:

- o the High Value Courses Premium from £400 to £600

- o disadvantage Block 2 and the Block 1 for looked after children and care leaver rates from £480 to £504

o the programme cost weightings for five subject areas (medicine and dentistry, nursing and subjects and vocations allied to medicine transportation operations and maintenance, building and construction and urban, rural, and regional planning), to better match the cost of delivery

The department also announced on 4 April 2022, the colleges that were successful in the FE Capital Transformation Fund bidding process. Each college has received a grant offer from the department. Most colleges will also be contributing match funding. It is for colleges to manage their condition improvement project within the budget available. We will monitor progress across all college projects.

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

Ms Lyn Brown:

[16901]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when he plans to announce future funding for the primary PE and sport premium; and what assessment he has made of the impact on (a) the efficacy of programmes for pupil health and wellbeing, (b) additional costs for participant schools and (c) staff job security of announcing the level of PE and sport premium funding less than three months before the start of the next school year.

Will Quince:

The department is aware of the importance of giving primary schools as much notice as possible of the funding for PE and sport premium in order to support its effective use. We will confirm the level of funding for the PE and sport premium for the 2022/23 academic year in due course.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ **[Subject Heading to be Assigned]**

Jim Shannon:

[13717]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, for what reason the Government plans to regulate only two commodities through the Environment Act 2021 in 2023 in the context of the implementation by the EU of a forest regulation to block six forest risk commodities in EU markets.

Rebecca Pow:

The UK Government has introduced world-leading due diligence legislation through the Environment Act to help tackle illegal deforestation in UK supply chains. We plan to adopt a phased approach so that we can move more swiftly with regulation to capture the most significant drivers of deforestation first. We recently ran a consultation to seek views on how we should implement the Environment Act provisions, including how many commodities we should regulate through the first round of secondary legislation, and have since published a summary of responses, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/tackling-illegal-deforestation-in-uk-supply-chains>

We will take into account consultation responses in decisions around how many commodities to regulate and will publish the UK Government's approach to secondary legislation in due course.

■ Biodiversity and Nature Conservation

Rachael Maskell:

[\[13179\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of what the most significant challenges are to protecting (a) biodiversity and (b) endangered environments; and what steps he is taking to mitigate those challenges.

Rebecca Pow:

This Government has significant commitments on the natural environment and reports regularly regarding the state of nature, and the steps we are taking to recover nature. These include:

- The 25 Year Environment Plan (25YEP), which we are currently reviewing for publication in January 2023
- Annual progress reports of the delivery of the 25YEP
- The UK Marine Strategy
- The UK's Sixth National Report to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity of 2019
- The UK Biodiversity Indicators 2021

Our actions to address challenges and restore nature are significant and span across water and air quality, habitat creation, protected sites, international negotiations and more. In particular, our world-leading Environment Act introduces ambitious measures and policies that will help deliver our ambitions for biodiversity.

Implementing the ambitious steps in the Act and wider measures across Government will enable us to meet our legally binding target to halt the decline in nature by 2030. We set out further details regarding our approach to this work in publications such as the England Tree Action Plan, England Peat Action Plan, Pollinator Action Plan and Nature Recovery Green Paper. This is alongside substantial funding such as the Nature for Climate Fund, Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund and Environmental Land Management schemes.

■ Birds: Dogs

Crispin Blunt:

[\[14404\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he has made an assessment of the implications for his policies of the study entitled Evaluation of an aversion-based program designed to reduce predation of native birds by dogs: An analysis of training records for 1156 dogs, published in the journal Applied Animal Behaviour Science in June 2017.

Victoria Prentis:

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

It is important that dogs are trained to behave well and introduced gradually and positively to different environments, people and animals.

The statutory Code of Practice for the Welfare of Dogs includes guidance and reminders for owners about their responsibilities to provide for the welfare needs of their animal, but also to keep their dogs safe and under control. It also recommends reward-based training as the widely preferred form of training dogs.

Natural England have also published a refreshed version of the Countryside Code, which makes specific reference to keeping dogs in sight and under control to make sure they stay away from livestock, wildlife, horses and other people unless invited.

All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which provides a powerful framework for the conservation of wild birds, their eggs, nests and habitats.

■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: MG OMD**Emily Thornberry:**[\[13677\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 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.

Victoria Prentis:

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.

Details of the Core Defra call-off contract has agreed with Manning Gottlieb OMD can be found below:

(a) Procurement reference: ECM_64663

(b) Start date: 23 June 2022

(c) End date: 12 May 2025

(d) Maximum value inclusive of VAT: up to £8,000,000

■ Dogs: Electronic Training Aids

Crispin Blunt:

[\[14403\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to letter TO2018/02940/MO sent by his Department in February 2018, on electronic training aids for dogs under the Animal Welfare Act 2006, if he will make an assessment of scientific evidence published since 2018 on the potential merits of banning on e-collars for dogs.

Victoria Prentis:

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

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

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

Defra-commissioned research (AW1402 and AW1402a) revealed that many e-collar users were not using them properly and in compliance with the manufacturers' instructions. As well as being misused to inflict unnecessary harm, there is also concern that e-collars can redirect aggression or generate anxiety-based behaviour in pets, making underlying behavioural and health problems worse.

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

■ Environmental Land Management Schemes

Kerry McCarthy:

[\[16864\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the objectives of the Environmental Land Management scheme (ELMS) are; and what steps he plans to take to enable (a) hon. Members and (b) the public to scrutinise how the three tiers of ELMS are meeting those objectives.

Victoria Prentis:

We published the [high-level outcomes](#) expected from the schemes in January 2022. We will keep our aims under review as we develop long-term legally binding targets under the Environment Act and set out the policy pathways to meet them under our update of the Environmental Improvement Plan - due in 2023. As well as updates via the Environmental Improvement Plan, routine monitor and evaluation we have a legal Duty in the Agriculture Act 2020 to publish a backward looking report every years. We intend to use that to provide route updates for parliamentarians, farmers and the wider public on how we are performing. We have a further legal duty to publish evaluations of the effectiveness of our financial assistance schemes.

■ Fisheries: Quotas

Dr Alan Whitehead: [\[13027\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will commit to not setting future fishing quotas in excess of scientific advice.

Luke Pollard: [\[13238\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will mark World Oceans Day by committing that the Government will not set future fishing quotas in excess of scientific advice.

Victoria Prentis:

The UK's approach is that Total Allowable Catches for all species should be based on the best available scientific advice. The goal is to seek to maintain fish stocks and fisheries at sustainable levels in the long term or to rebuild them to such levels, where necessary.

The objectives in the Fisheries Act 2020, the draft Joint Fisheries Statement and proposed Fisheries Management Plans collectively reaffirm our commitment to achieving sustainable fishing and protecting the marine environment. The Act enshrines in law the Government's commitments for sustainable fishing, restating our commitment to fishing at maximum sustainable yield through the 'sustainability objective' and 'precautionary objective'.

■ Food: Production

Alex Sobel: [\[1322\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department has taken steps to (a) provide financial assistance to farmers to enable higher quantities of food to be produced in the UK and (b) support increased food production in the UK by other means.

Victoria Prentis:

Food is the primary purpose of farming, and always will be. Farming in England is now going through the biggest change in a generation. As Government, our approach to working with the farming sector is changing too. The Common Agricultural Policy paid farmers based on land ownership. Our schemes are incentivising farmers to take

care of natural assets, like soil, which in turn is good for food production and the bottom line. They are about supporting the choices that individual farmers take for their farms, and we are ensuring that all farmers, including tenants, can access funding.

In England, we are providing farmers with two ways of receiving payments: one-off grants and ongoing schemes. Farmers can pick and choose from the offer to find a package that works for them. Everything we are offering contributes to our three goals: supporting viable businesses, maintaining food production at its current level, and achieving animal health, welfare and climate outcomes.

In terms of grants, we have made available and increased the budgets of our farming innovation and farming investment programmes. For ongoing payments, we have over 900 farmers in the pilot for our sustainable farming incentive and will shortly start the roll out of that scheme paying farmers to improve their soil health.

On 13 June, we published the Government Food Strategy, setting out that we will maintain domestic production and increase it in sectors where there is the most opportunity – including horticulture. The strategy sets out further details of how farmers will be able to use grant funding to boost profitability and maintain food production, and also sets out measures to boost local food consumption.

■ Horticulture: Peat

Anthony Browne:

[\[13830\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when his Department plans to respond to the consultation entitled Ending the retail sale of peat in horticulture in England and Wales, which closed on 18 March 2022.

Rebecca Pow:

The Government has always been clear about the need to end the use of peat and peat-containing products in horticulture in England. The Government therefore published a full consultation on banning the sale of peat and peat-containing products in the amateur sector by the end of this Parliament in England and Wales.

The Government also asked for any evidence stakeholders can provide on the impacts of ending the use of peat and peat-containing products. We received over 5000 individual responses to the consultation, many of which contained detailed data and supporting evidence. We are aiming to publish our formal response to the consultation as soon as possible.

■ Landscape Recovery Scheme: Finance

Kerry McCarthy:

[\[16863\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether Landscape Recovery will receive approximately £800 million of the overall Environmental Land Management scheme budget after 2024-2028, as set out in his Department's June 2021 agricultural transition update.

Victoria Prentis:

Our plans for the Landscape Recovery pilot have not changed. We have received 51 applications from across England from round one which closed on 24 May.

We will take forward up to 15 pilot projects in this round and we aim to announce the outcome of the selection process later this summer, following assessment of the applications.

We confirmed last week that we will spend up to £50 million from the farming budget on Landscape Recovery projects over the next three years. This intent has not changed. As we transition to our new schemes, we plan to learn as we go and find the best ways to manage the overall farming budget to respond to demand in a way that helps us achieve our intended outcomes. Rather than adopting a fixed and inflexible allocation for funding across our environmental land management schemes, we make sure that we can respond to farmer demand for our schemes while ensuring we remain on track to deliver our policies on food production and protecting nature.

The Government has committed to maintain the farming budget for England at £2.4 billion per year throughout this parliament and this was confirmed again in the recent Spending Review. Future spending allocations beyond the length of this spending review period will be determined at future fiscal events in the usual way.

■ Peat Bogs: Controlled Burning**Rachael Maskell:**[\[17014\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many licence applications his Department has received for burning on deep peat within (a) Special Protection Areas and (b) Special Areas of Conservation in (i) 2021 and (ii) 2022 to date; and how many of those licence applications have been granted.

Rebecca Pow:

The Secretary of State received and refused one application for a licence pursuant to The Heather and Grass etc Burning (England) Regulations 2021 during the 2021/22 burning season (October 2021 - April 2022).

Details on the number of applications received and granted for the 2022/23 burning season will be published at its conclusion.

■ Sustainable Farming Incentive: Organic Farming**Daniel Zeichner:**[\[11703\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, for what reason the Sustainable Farming Incentive's Organic Farming Standard has been delayed until 2025.

Victoria Prentis:

There has been no delay. We recognise the benefits that organic farming can offer to the wider environment and in December 2021 confirmed that an Organic Standard is currently being considered as part of the development of the Sustainable Farming

Incentive, with an indicative roll out date of 2025. We will only release standards into the live service when we are confident in their design and our ability to successfully deliver the service. We are currently working to develop and refine this new standard.

Until then, organic farmers will be able to take part in the early rollout of the Sustainable Farming Incentive and are likely to be well placed to adopt the higher levels of ambition in the soils standards as well as other standards in development such as Integrated Pest Management, due to the specific farming practices they undertake. Organic producers can also join the Countryside Stewardship (CS) scheme in addition to a Sustainable Farming Incentive agreement. This is subject to the normal rules around not being paid for the same action twice, and not being paid to undertake incompatible actions on the same parcel of land. The organic offer in CS was designed in consultation with organic stakeholders and is open to farmers and land managers with fully organic or in-conversion land.

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

■ **Coronavirus: Vaccination**

Tommy Sheppard:

[\[17005\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many doses of covid-19 vaccine has the Government provided to other countries as international aid as of 13 June 2022.

Amanda Milling:

As of 13 June 2022, the UK has donated 84.1 million COVID-19 vaccines. Of these, approximately 76.5 million have been donated to COVAX, and 7.6 million donated bilaterally to countries in need.

■ **Developing Countries: Money Laundering**

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[16897\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the UK government's strategy for international development published on 16 May 2022, what assessment she has made of the implications of her strategy for her Department's work on reducing illicit financial flows from developing countries, including (a) work with the National Crime Agency International Corruption Unit, (b) work with the International Anti-Corruption Coordination Centre, (c) development of a U.K. International Centre of Excellence on illicit finance and (d) the number of Departmental staff providing a central illicit finance capability in her Department.

Vicky Ford:

The UK Government is committed to tackling the devastating effects of illicit finance on developing countries through a patient, long-term approach. The International Development Strategy commits to helping partner countries fight financial crime and illicit flows, and tackle threats from malign actors.

The International Corruption Unit and the International Anti-Corruption Coordination Centre at the National Crime Agency are critical to these efforts. They remain a top priority for FCDO. The proposed International Centre of Excellence on Illicit Finance is currently in design phase. The team developing the concept have bid for internal resources and are developing a business case to deliver the intended vision. Between 18-20 staff in FCDO's Illicit Finance and Anti-Corruption Department work on illicit finance. (16 June 2022).

■ Israel: Palestinians

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[17081\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions has she had with her Israeli counterparts on the eviction of Palestinians from the settlement of Masafer Yatta.

Amanda Milling:

The UK is clear that, in all but the most exceptional of circumstances, demolitions and evictions are contrary to International Humanitarian Law. Our opposition to the demolition of Palestinian property and the evictions of Palestinians from their homes is long-standing. The practice causes unnecessary suffering to Palestinians and is harmful to efforts to promote peace. We repeatedly call on Israel to abide by its obligations under international law and have a regular dialogue with Israel on legal issues relating to the occupation.

■ Kenya: General Elections

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[16891\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent steps she has taken to offer technical support to the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission of Kenya to help resolve recent disputes over voter rolls.

Vicky Ford:

The funding and organising of Kenya's elections in August is the responsibility of the Government of Kenya. The UK commends Kenya's ongoing preparations for the elections, recognising, however, that challenges remain. In line with requests from Kenya's independent institutions, the UK is providing technical support with the aim of building on lessons learned and improving standards to help strengthen the democratic process. We are supporting the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) to strengthen its monitoring and evaluation systems as well as its risk management and election logistics framework. We have also funded the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) to deploy an expert mission to Kenya to monitor closely IEBC performance and the credibility of the electoral process overall. With WFD, we will continue engaging with the IEBC about the measures they institute to correct any gaps identified, including through a recent simulation exercise they carried out on electronic result transmissions. This is supporting Kenya's ability and capacity to deliver free, fair, credible, and peaceful elections.

■ Members: Correspondence**Chris Bryant:**[\[16862\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, when she plans to reply to the letter of 7 April 2022 from the hon. Member for Rhondda on the UK Sanctions regime.

Vicky Ford:

The FCDO does not have a record of receiving this correspondence. We have asked the Honourable Member's office to resend the letter.

■ Myanmar: Homicide**Catherine West:**[\[15326\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions she has had with her counterparts in Myanmar following the killing of six civilians in Sagaing Region's Myinmu Township by the military in Myanmar on 8 June 2022.

Amanda Milling:

Since the coup, the UK has had no senior bilateral engagement with the military regime but we continue to call out their actions publicly, most recently in a statement to the UN General Assembly on 13 June 2022. We also secured strong language on the protection of civilians at the UN Security Council (UNSC) on 2 February. On 26 November, the UK coordinated a joint statement which raised concern at the risk of mass atrocities in Sagaing Region and elsewhere in Myanmar, and which urged the military to end the violence. We will continue to use all available multilateral fora, including the UNSC, to raise our concerns at the targeting of civilians by the military.

Catherine West:[\[15327\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the killing of six civilians in Sagaing Region's Myinmu Township by the military in Myanmar.

Amanda Milling:

The UK is deeply concerned about the continuing conflict in Sagaing Region, where thousands have been displaced and many killed. The UK Government strongly condemns reported incidences, based on credible reports of torture, sexual violence and village burnings. The UK is supporting human rights monitoring and verification on the ground.

Since the coup, the UK has had no senior bilateral engagement with the military regime but we continue to call out their actions publicly, most recently in a statement to the UN General Assembly on 13 June 2022. We also secured strong language on the protection of civilians at the UN Security Council (UNSC) on 2 February. On 26 November, the UK coordinated a joint statement which raised concern at the risk of mass atrocities in Sagaing Region and elsewhere in Myanmar, and which urged the

military to end the violence. We will continue to use all available multilateral fora, including the UNSC, to raise our concerns at the targeting of civilians by the military.

■ Myanmar: Journalism

Catherine West: [\[15325\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will take steps to work with representatives of trade unions in Myanmar to promote the rights of journalists.

Amanda Milling:

We condemn the targeting, detention and killing of journalists and media workers. We call on the military regime to immediately stop all violence, release those unjustly detained and end its obstruction of the Myanmar people's right to information and freedom of expression. We are engaging with a range of voices in Myanmar, including the National Unity Consultative Council, an important body which includes trade unions and civil society. We are also providing emergency funding to help journalists and media organisations continue reporting what is happening in Myanmar.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ Accident and Emergency Departments: Standards

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[9986\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps he taken to ensure patient safety in the context of recent pressures on the urgent and emergency care system.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[9987\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps he has taken to help ensure emergency and urgent care capacity demands are met in (a) Slough and (b) South East.

Edward Argar:

[Holding answer 6 June 2022]: NHS England and NHS Improvement monitor patient safety and work with systems to manage any potential risks. In 2022/23, an additional £50 million has been invested in NHS 111 to support increased call taking capacity and ensure that patients can access urgent care when necessary. NHS England and NHS Improvement are working with integrated care boards to improve patient flow and reduce ambulance handover delays, maximising Same Day Emergency Care services and access to Urgent Treatment Centres as an alternative to accident and emergency where appropriate.

In Slough, funding for 17 intermediate adult social care beds has been extended to June 2022 and an additional 20 bed community ward at Heathlands Heathwood Hospital has been created. An immediate ambulance handover policy is also in place

at hospitals in Slough and capacity to accept paramedic handovers increased by 30%.

In the South East, Urgent Treatment Centres and Same Day Emergency Care provision is being developed to ensure alternatives to emergency departments are available at acute sites. This is addition to engaging system partners to alleviate pressures through urgent community response, developing virtual wards, enhanced health care in care homes and bringing together local health systems to reduce length of stay and increase discharges.

■ **Air Ambulance Services**

Stuart Anderson: [\[13818\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to help expand the capacity of air ambulance services.

Edward Argar:

In 2019, the Department launched a three-year capital grant programme which allocated £10 million to nine air ambulance charities across England. A further £6 million of COVID-19 emergency funding was provided to Air Ambulances UK in 2020 to distribute to the 21 air ambulance charities in the United Kingdom.

The Government continues to support a charitable model for the funding of air ambulance services as this allows charities the independence to deliver specialised services tailored to the needs of patients in each locality.

■ **Ambulance Services: Greater London**

Andrew Rosindell: [\[3496\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to improve ambulance response times in the North East London Clinical Commissioning Group area.

Edward Argar:

London Ambulance Service is working with Ambulance Receiving Centres (ARCs) in the North East London Clinical Commissioning Group (NELCCG) area to improve capacity and reduce ambulance handover times, to allow ambulances to respond to incoming calls. The ARCs provide additional space within the emergency departments for patients to be assessed for the appropriate treatment or potential admission. In addition, NELCCG operates an Emergency Care Hub with London Ambulance Service to facilitate support between sites through the redirection of ambulances during surges in demand.

■ **Ambulance Services: Shrewsbury**

Daniel Kawczynski: [\[11617\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many avoidable deaths have occurred in Shropshire as a result of ambulance delays since 1 January 2022.

Edward Argar:

[Holding answer 8 June 2022]: The information requested is not held centrally.

■ **Brain Cancer: Diagnosis****Dr Dan Poulter:**[\[15235\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to ensure that the 10-Year Cancer Plan includes proxy measures for staging data of brain cancer so that it can be (a) included and (b) measured in the early diagnosis (i) target and (ii) ambition.

Maria Caulfield:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Solihull (Julian Knight MP) on 10 June 2022 to Question [13750](#).

■ **Brain Cancer: Nurses****Dr Dan Poulter:**[\[15236\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make it his policy to commit to providing all brain tumour patients with access to a Clinical Nurse Specialist as part of his 10-Year Cancer Plan.

Maria Caulfield:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Solihull (Julian Knight MP) on 10 June 2022 to Question [13751](#).

■ **Cancer: Health Services****Dr Dan Poulter:**[\[15234\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to ensure that the 10-Year Cancer Plan includes specific targets on (a) less survivable cancers and (b) brain cancer to ensure that progress is made on survival rates for these cancers.

Maria Caulfield:

Officials are currently analysing the responses received to the call for evidence to develop the 10 Year Cancer Plan. The Plan will address all cancer types, including rarer and less survivable cancers such as brain cancer.

■ **Cancer: Radiotherapy****Daisy Cooper:**[\[14620\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will ensure the 10-Year Cancer Plan increases access to radiotherapy cancer treatments in the UK.

Daisy Cooper:[\[14622\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions he has had with radiotherapy cancer professionals as part of the 10-Year Cancer Plan development.

Daisy Cooper:[\[14623\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to outline steps to increase radiotherapy cancer treatment (a) capacity and (b) access to technology in the 10-Year Cancer Plan.

Maria Caulfield:

The 10 Year Cancer Plan will set out improvements to cancer services and is expected to address radiotherapy treatments. Further details will be available in due course. Engagement was primarily conducted through the call for evidence which sought the views of individuals, professionals and organisations on the future of cancer care, including radiotherapy. Officials also held discussions with relevant parties, including the Royal College of Radiologists.

The NHS Long Term Plan committed to review the payment arrangements for radiotherapy, to ensure that appropriate incentives are in place to encourage providers to increase access to new treatments and techniques and upgrade and replace equipment. While this has been delayed due to the pandemic, it is expected to be in place from April 2023.

Daisy Cooper:[\[14621\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to increase radiotherapy cancer treatment (a) capacity and (b) access in England.

Maria Caulfield:

In 2022/23, NHS England intends to undertake a capacity and demand review of external beam radiotherapy capacity to support local systems to plan radiotherapy provision, including the replacement of equipment.

The NHS Long Term Plan commits to review the payment arrangements for radiotherapy to ensure that appropriate incentives are in place to encourage providers to increase access to new treatments and techniques and upgrade and replace equipment. While this has been delayed due to the pandemic, it is expected to be in place from April 2023.

■ Dental Services: Kingston upon Hull**Dame Diana Johnson:**[\[15206\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what is the current length of waiting lists for dentistry services in Hull.

Maria Caulfield:

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

■ Department of Health and Social Care: Media**Emily Thornberry:** [\[13670\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, 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.

Edward Argar:

The total cost was £37,433,789.00.

■ Department of Health and Social Care: Pinsent Masons**Emily Thornberry:** [\[11603\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to contract reference CF-0777900D0O000000rwimUAA2, published on 27 May 2022, how many staff in his Department attended the online training session provided by Pinsent Masons LLP, to which teams those staff belonged; and what the grades of those staff who participated in that training were.

Emily Thornberry: [\[11604\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to contract reference CF-0777900D0O000000rwimUAA2, published on 27 May 2022, if the online training session provided by Pinsent Masons LLP covered the UK's international agreements governing the provision and charging of healthcare in the UK to visitors from overseas.

Emily Thornberry: [\[11605\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions (a) he and (b) his officials have had with the (i) Attorney General's Office and (ii) the Government Legal Department on the funding of (A) overseas healthcare and (B) the provision and charging of healthcare in the UK to visitors from overseas since January 2021.

Edward Argar:

[Holding answer 8 June 2022]: The training session was not provided under the original contract. The Department has not been charged for any training delivered by Pinsent Masons LLP. It is intended that this training will be delivered at a future date and will address the United Kingdom's powers to fund healthcare abroad, in the context of reciprocal healthcare policy. The training will not include charges to overseas visitors for National Health Service healthcare. As the original contract period has expired, the provision of the training will be the subject of a new contract.

Whether the Law Officers have been asked to provide advice and the contents of any such advice is not disclosed outside Government. This is to protect the Law Officers' ability as chief legal adviser to the Government to give full and frank legal advice and provides the fullest guarantee that government business will be conducted at all times in light of thorough and candid legal advice.

However, the Department has regular engagement with the Government Legal Department on overseas healthcare and the provision and charging of healthcare in the UK to visitors in the ongoing development of policy.

■ Department of Health and Social Care: Public Opinion

Angela Rayner: [\[16969\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Answer of 28 April 2022 to Question 156486 on Department of Health and Social Care: Public Opinion, what services are included under research.

Edward Argar:

While research approaches are tailored to the specific requirements of each project, these services generally include qualitative research and analysis, such as focus groups and in-depth interviews; and quantitative research and analysis, such as online surveys and data modelling.

■ Diabetes: Medical Treatments

Navendu Mishra: [\[13841\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the potential impact of Tirzepatide as a treatment for type two diabetes.

Edward Argar:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is the independent body responsible for developing evidence-based recommendations for the National Health Service on whether licenced medicines represent a clinically and cost-effective use of resources. NICE is currently appraising Tirzepatide for the treatment of type 2 diabetes through its technology appraisal programme and expects to publish final guidance in April 2023.

■ General Practitioners: Brighton and Hove

Caroline Lucas: [\[15225\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate he has made of the number of GPs per 100,000 patients in the Brighton and Hove area; what assessment he has made of the (a) adequacy of that number and (b) impact of the GP-to-patient ratio on (i) patients and (ii) GPs and staff; what steps he is taking to increase the number of GPs in the Brighton and Hove area; and if he will make a statement.

Maria Caulfield:

This information is not held in the format requested. NHS Digital collect data on the ratio of full-time equivalent general practitioners (GPs) to the weighted population. This data shows that in April 2022, the ratio in Brighton and Hove was 1:2161, compared to 1:2268 in the South East and 1:2223 in England.

There is no recommendation for the number of patients per GP as the demands can be affected by various factors, including rurality and patient demographics. GPs also form part of a wider multidisciplinary team and ensuring appropriate skills in general practice can address workload pressures and deliver high quality patient care. The 2021 GP Survey shows that 85% of patients in Brighton and Hove reported a good experience using their GP practice and 86% were satisfied with the appointment they were offered. Any potential increase in practice list sizes is monitored through a range of national and local indicators such as the National Patient Survey, complaints and the Quality Outcome Framework.

In September 2021, Brighton and Hove Clinical Commissioning Group's Primary Care Commissioning Committee approved an additional £750,000 per year to support practices in Brighton and Hove. This is in addition to measures to support general practices to retain existing staff and increase recruitment.

■ **Global Health Insurance Card: Applications**

Mr Laurence Robertson:

[\[16829\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to help speed up the process of applying for GHIC cards; and if he will make a statement.

Edward Argar:

The Department monitors the process for applying for the UK Global Health Insurance Card (GHICs) and works with the NHS Business Services Authority to plan and manage high levels of demand. Under its service level agreement, once approved, the NHS Business Services Authority aims to issue GHIC applications within 10 working days. From 1 to 26 May 2022, 99.9% of cards were fully processed within 10 working days of the decision and 95.8% of cards were processed on the same day.

As of 14 June 2022, the NHS Business Services Authority received 3,572 GHIC and European Health Insurance Cards (EHIC) applications where the automatic residency check had not been met and a manual process was required. Once satisfactory evidence is provided to the NHS Business Services Authority, all cards are issued within five days. For those on a temporary visit to the European Union or Switzerland who require necessary healthcare treatment and do not have a GHIC, these travellers can apply to the NHS Business Services Authority for a Provisional Replacement Certificate. This Certificate provides the same coverage as a GHIC.

■ **Heart Diseases: Medical Treatments**

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[14431\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to improve treatment for people with arrhythmia and related conditions.

Maria Caulfield:

For patients with arrhythmia and related conditions, NHS England commissions electrophysiology and ablation services from 43 specialised centres across England.

As atrial fibrillation (AF) is the most common type of arrhythmia, individuals with AF can be offered a range of medicines known as anti-arrhythmic drugs which aim to restore and maintain a normal heart rhythm or reduce the heart rate.

NHS England recently approved a new clinical commissioning policy for the routine commissioning of catheter ablation for paroxysmal and persistent atrial fibrillation and is developing patient reported outcome measure tools to measure the effectiveness and impact of these interventions.

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[14432\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to increase research on treatments for arrhythmia and related conditions.

Maria Caulfield:

The Department funds research through the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR). The NIHR welcomes funding applications for research into any aspect of human health, including arrhythmia and related conditions. However, it is not usual practice to ring-fence funds for particular topics or conditions. Applications are subject to peer review and judged in open competition, with awards being made on the basis of the importance of the topic to patients and health and care services, value for money and scientific quality.

■ Long Covid

Jim Shannon: [\[14490\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people in the UK are currently suffering with long covid.

Maria Caulfield:

The Department uses estimates provided by the Office for National Statistics on the prevalence of ongoing symptoms following COVID-19 infection in the United Kingdom. Estimates are based on the self-reporting of ongoing symptoms by study participants rather than a clinical diagnosis. The Office for National Statistics estimates that as of 1 June 2022, 1,988,000 people living in private households in the UK were experiencing self-reported symptoms for more than four weeks and 1,437,000 people for at least 12 weeks.

■ Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency: Small Businesses

Chris Green: [\[6796\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that the MHRA's Innovative Licensing and Access Pathway (ILAP) procedure meets the needs of small and medium sized companies.

Edward Argar:

The Innovation Passport application is the initial stage of the Innovative Licensing and Access Pathway (ILAP), which open to developers at an early stages. This aims to be attractive to small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) where the clinical trial

stage has not yet been reached. Since 2021, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has engaged with SMEs with expertise and platform discussions from the ILAP partners at the Target Development Profile. The MHRA continues to monitor the proportion of applications received from SMEs to ensure that ILAP remains attractive and relevant to all developers of innovative medicines.

■ **Mental Health Act 1983**

Ben Lake: [\[17078\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to include provisions in the draft Mental Health Act Reform Bill in response to feedback provided by respondents to the Reforming the Mental Health Act white paper on how the reforms plan to meet the needs of children and young people.

Gillian Keegan:

I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to the hon. Member for Ealing, Southall (Mr Virendra Sharma MP) on 13 June 2022 to Question [14460](#).

■ **NHS: Allowances**

Kim Leadbeater: [\[13859\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if his Department will make an assessment of the adequacy of the mileage allowance paid to NHS staff who are required to travel to patients, in the context of increases in the cost of living.

Edward Argar:

The reimbursement of travel costs is included in the NHS Terms and Conditions, jointly agreed by employers and the National Health Service trades unions. The current rate for staff who use their vehicles to make journeys in the performance of their duties is 56 pence per mile, above the HM Revenue and Customs' approved mileage rate of 45 pence per mile. This rate reduces after 3,500 miles to 20 pence per mile. The NHS Terms and Conditions sets out the process for reviewing the rate of reimbursement every six months. This includes reviewing fluctuations in fuel prices.

The NHS Staff Council released a statement to facilitate local discussions on temporary options and will also write to the Department on the scope for a possible review of the reimbursement mechanism. The statement is available at the following link:

<https://www.nhsemployers.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/009%20NHS%20SC%20-%20Joint%20statement%20on%20reimbursement%20of%20travel%20costs%20in%20England%20MAY%202022.pdf>

■ NHS: Pensions**Sir Peter Bottomley:** [\[15162\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the impact of rules relating to pensions abatement for NHS staff after October 2022 on those staff affected.

Sir Peter Bottomley: [\[15163\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential impact of ending current pensions abatement for NHS staff in October 2022 on levels of (a) workforce retention and (b) patient care.

Edward Argar:

Pension abatement was temporarily suspended as part of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and is set to resume in October 2022. The Department is keeping the position under review.

Abatement normally applies to staff who return to NHS service before the age of 60 years old having used a special reserved right to retire early from the age of 55 years old without a reduction in their pension. Staff with these 'special class' pension rights have not paid extra contributions for this benefit, which is unavailable to other staff in the National Health Service. Abatement therefore ensures there is fairness to all scheme members. Staff without these special retirement rights are not subject to abatement after taking their pension. However, where abatement applies, staff with long careers can perform substantial amounts of work. Typically they can work at least half-time before reaching their abatement ceiling and the Department will ensure that staff potentially affected by abatement are aware of the amount of work which can be undertaken.

■ NHS: Staff**Lee Anderson:** [\[15376\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that NHS staff receive mental health support when required.

Edward Argar:

In 2022/23, we are investing £45 million to support the continuation of 40 mental health hubs to provide outreach and assessment services for frontline staff to receive rapid access to evidence based mental health services. The Professional Nurse Advocacy programme is delivering staff training and restorative supervision in England and we are expanding the NHS Practitioner Health service which provides a national support service for staff with more complex needs, such as trauma or addictions. The national health and wellbeing offer also includes a role for Wellbeing Guardians at board level to focus on the wellbeing of staff.

■ Numed Healthcare: Medical Equipment

Hilary Benn:

[\[11557\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to help ensure that NuMed Healthcare will not cease to import equipment made for the treatment of children with heart disease from the US after January 2023.

Edward Argar:

[Holding answer 8 June 2022]: NHS Supply Chain has not received communication from NuMed Inc Products' United Kingdom distributor on potential disruptions to the supply of paediatric cardiology devices, once new regulatory requirements come into effect on 1 July 2023. Due to the large volume of suppliers and the array of specialised products available under NHS Supply Chain's framework, the incoming regulation changes are not expected to cause supply or resilience issues within the National Health Service as there are suitable alternatives available.

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency is currently finalising the response to the public consultation on future medical device regulation, which will outline the new regulatory requirements from 1 July 2023 and appropriate transitional arrangements. The consultation considered routes to market for medical devices once regulatory changes take place and any proposals will be outlined in the response. Officials are engaging with industry stakeholders on the future approach to regulating medical devices.

■ Nurses: Conditions of Employment

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[\[13224\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to improve working conditions for nurses.

Edward Argar:

[Holding answer 9 June 2022]: We are currently on target to recruit an additional 50,000 nurses to reduce pressure on existing staff and to ensure that the National Health Service is an attractive place to work for all staff. As of March 2022, the number of nurses has increased by more than 30,000, compared to September 2019. The NHS People Plan also sets out the aim to retain skilled and experienced staff through investment in health and wellbeing initiatives, increasing opportunities for flexible working and strengthening leadership and organisational culture in the NHS.

■ Nurses: Recruitment

Navendu Mishra:

[\[13835\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to a Royal College of Nurses survey that found a quarter of nursing shifts have the planned number of registered nurses on duty, what steps his Department is taking to help increase the numbers of nurses on shift.

Edward Argar:

We are on schedule to deliver an additional 50,000 nurses and ensure the National Health Service has access to a sustainable long-term supply in future. In March 2022, the number of nurses had increased by 30,000 compared to September 2019.

■ Paramedical Staff: Training**Rosie Duffield:**[\[17073\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, for what reason students studying for a Paramedic Science degree course as their second degree are not eligible for grants from the NHS Learning Support Fund.

Edward Argar:

Second Degree Paramedicine students are not eligible for support from the Student Loans Company and therefore, are not eligible for the NHS Learning Support Fund.

The Department of Health and Social Care is in discussions with the Department for Education about providing an Equivalent or Lower Qualification exemption to the student finance rules for paramedicine. Subject to the outcome of these discussions and availability of the necessary funding, those studying paramedicine as a second degree could access tuition fee and maintenance loan support if eligible and if so, would have access to the NHS Learning Support Fund.

The Government keeps the funding arrangements for all pre-registration National Health Service health professionals' education under review, to ensure that students are appropriately supported. In doing so, it must make use of finite financial resources to balance the level of support students receive with the need to make best use of public funds to deliver value for money.

HOME OFFICE**■ Agriculture: Seasonal Workers****Dr Dan Poulter:**[\[15228\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to expand the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme.

Dr Dan Poulter:[\[15229\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has plans to provide visas for workers in food production.

Kevin Foster:

On Monday 13th June, the government launched a new Food Strategy, which will seek to address challenges faced by the sector. Recognising the sector cannot sustainably rely on migrant labour, especially in light of global pressures elsewhere, the strategy sets out that Government will commission an independent review to tackle labour shortages in the food supply chain, considering the roles of automation, domestic labour and migration routes.

To support the sector, the Government will release 10,000 additional visas for the seasonal worker visa route, with 2,000 of these going to the poultry sector for the eight-week period prior to Christmas. This is to cover the surge in demand for chicken, turkey and goose during the festive season and to ensure the smooth running of the food supply chain.

The Government introduced the Points Based System in 2020 which is designed to attract the skills and expertise which the UK requires. Acting upon advice from the independent Migration Advisory Committee (MAC), the Government broadened the skills threshold of the Skilled Worker route and introduced a lower salary threshold which, as modelling by the MAC suggests, **strikes a reasonable balance between access to labour and controlling immigration**. The independent review's consideration of the role of migration will therefore need to be with reference to the MAC's advice. A number of roles in the food production sector are already eligible for a Skilled Worker visa.

For those roles in the sector which do not meet the threshold for the Skilled Worker route, there is the domestic labour market which includes UK workers and migrants with general work rights. The Government does not intend to introduce a route for those who do not meet the skills and salary threshold allowing recruitment at or near minimum wage.

■ **Animal Experiments: Licensing**

Alex Sobel: [\[17097\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications for project licences to conduct experiments on animals under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 were refused permission between January and December 2021.

Tom Pursglove:

I refer the Honourable Member to the answer to his previous question 13235 given on 14 June 2022.

■ **Asylum: Applications**

Wendy Chamberlain: [\[13820\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential impact of applications to her Department under the Homes for Ukraine scheme on processing time for asylum applications; and what steps her Department is taking to mitigate any such impact.

Wendy Chamberlain: [\[13821\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential impact of applications to her Department under the Homes for Ukraine scheme on the number of asylum applications awaiting decision; and what steps her Department is taking to mitigate any such impact.

Wendy Chamberlain:**[13822]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum applications were waiting to be processed on 7 June 2022; and if she will make an estimate of the average time it took to process an asylum application in (a) the 12 months prior to and (b) since the introduction of the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 15 June 2022]: The Home Office publishes data on how many asylum applications were waiting to be processed, but only up to and including March 2022. This data can be further broken down by nationality and is found in table Asy_D03 of the published immigration statistics:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/asylum-and-resettlement-datasets#asylum-applications-decisions-and-resettlement>. Data for June 2022 will be published on 25 August 2022.

The Home Office publishes data on the number of asylum applications awaiting an initial decision by duration, for main applicants only, up to and including March 2022. This data can be found at Asy_04 of the published Immigration Statistics:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2022/list-of-tables#asylum-and-resettlement>

The Homes for Ukraine Scheme is separate to the asylum process. All asylum claims, including those from nationals of Ukraine, are considered on a case-by-case basis, based on the facts presented by the claimant, regardless of the claimant's country of origin and the prevailing situation.

Latest published immigration statistics show there has been an increase in the number of Ukrainian asylum claims. This data can be found in table Asy_D01:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/asylum-and-resettlement-datasets#asylum-applications-decisions-and-resettlement>

The Home Office are also continuing to invest in a programme of transformation and business improvement initiatives that will speed up and simplify decision making, reduce the time people spend in the asylum system and decrease the number of people who are awaiting an interview or decision.

The department also have extensive recruitment and training plans in place, including career progression options to aid the retention of staff.

Vicky Foxcroft:**[14550]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what records her Department holds of asylum claims received in (a) 2019, (b) 2020 and (c) 2021 that were processed within six months.

Vicky Foxcroft:**[14551]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what is the current average processing time for an asylum application.

Kevin Foster:

The Home Office publishes data on the number of asylum applications awaiting an initial decision by duration, for main applicants only. This data can be found at This data can be found at Asy_04 of the published Immigration Statistics: [List of tables - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

The Home Office also publishes data on the percentage of asylum applications processed within 6 months of the date of claim. Data showing the number of asylum claims received in 2019, 2020 and 2021 that were processed within 6 months can be found at Asy_01 of the Asylum Transparency Data dated May 2022:

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

■ Asylum: Rwanda**Mohammad Yasin:****[15745]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the nationalities are of asylum seekers identified for deportation to Rwanda.

Tom Pursglove:

Everyone who arrives illegally will be considered for relocation on a case by case basis.

Stephen Kinnock:**[16973]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the cost is of the flight for asylum seekers being sent to Rwanda on 14 June 2022; and whether her Department has an obligation to pay that cost in the event that the flight does not take place.

Kevin Foster:

Our priority will always be to keep our communities safe, and we make no apology for seeking to remove those with no right to remain in the UK.

Charter flight operations are an important means to remove individuals with no right to remain in the UK where there are limited scheduled routes. We manage the charter programme flexibly, balancing it with use of scheduled flights to best respond to operational needs. Costs for individual flights will vary based on a number of different factors and are regularly reviewed to ensure that best value for money is balanced against the need to remove those individuals with no right to remain in the UK.

The endless merry go round of late legal claims – which are often unfounded or without merit – can result in people being removed from flights at the last minute. However, our New Plan for Immigration will stop the abuse of the system and expedite the removal of those who have no right to be here.

Rosie Duffield:**[17074]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an estimate of the cost to the taxpayer of the deportation flight from the UK to Rwanda scheduled for 14 June 2022.

Rosie Duffield:[\[17075\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether scheduled deportation flights from the UK to Rwanda are planned to take place without passengers onboard; and what the cost to the public purse is of those flights.

Tom Pursglove:

Our priority will always be to keep our communities safe, and we make no apology for seeking to remove those with no right to remain in the UK.

Charter flight operations are an important means to remove individuals with no right to remain in the UK where there are limited scheduled routes. We manage the charter programme flexibly, balancing it with use of scheduled flights to best respond to operational needs. Costs for individual flights will vary based on a number of different factors and are regularly reviewed to ensure that best value for money is balanced against the need to remove those individuals with no right to remain in the UK.

The endless merry go round of late legal claims – which are often unfounded or without merit – can result in people being removed from flights at the last minute. However, our New Plan for Immigration will stop the abuse of the system and expedite the removal of those who have no right to be here.

■ Body Searches: Children**Marsha De Cordova:**[\[15370\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 8 June to Question 8160 on Body searches: Children, for what reason police forces will be providing data on strip searches for 2021-22 on a voluntary basis.

Kit Malthouse:

New data collections, such as the one proposed on strip searches, are often introduced on a voluntary basis when forces need time to make changes to their IT systems or recording processes to enable them to provide the requested data on a consistent basis.

■ Children: Protection**Sir Stephen Timms:**[\[16816\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what protections for children are included in the Nationality and Borders Act 2022; and if she will make a statement.

Sir Stephen Timms:[\[16817\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to issue guidance on the protection of children under the Nationality and Borders Act 2022.

Sir Stephen Timms:

[16818]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions officials in her Department have had with organisations representing the interests of children in preparing the Nationality and Borders Act 2022; and if she will make a statement.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 16 June 2022]: The Nationality and Borders Act is part of our New Plan for Immigration, delivering the most comprehensive reform of the asylum system in decades.

An Equality Impact Assessment was published on 16 September, as part of the then Nationality and Borders Bill, and this includes consideration of possible impacts on children. The Equality Impact Assessment can be found on the GOV.UK website; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-nationality-and-borders-bill-equality-impact-assessment>.

This was informed by a public consultation, the Government's response for which is also published: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/new-plan-for-immigration>.

Home Office guidance is regularly reviewed by respective policy teams and any such changes are made when appropriate.

■ **Drugs: Nightclubs**

Jim Shannon:

[14491]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the trends in the levels of illegal drugs in nightclubs across the UK.

Kit Malthouse:

Our 10-year Drugs Strategy, published in December 2021 and backed by record investment, set out a whole system approach to reduce crime, save lives and reduce drug use in society.

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) has shown a correlation between levels of drug use and frequency of visits to nightclubs consistently over the last 25 years. In the year ending March 2020, 42.5% of people who had visited a nightclub at least four times in the last month reported using any drug in the last year, compared with 7.2% of users who had not visited a nightclub in the last month. However, it is important to note that attendance at a nightclub is not necessarily independently related to higher drug use. For example this correlation could be driven by age, as younger people are more likely to frequent nightclubs.

Drug use is clearly complex and multi-faceted but we are determined to see a generational reduction in the demand for drugs over the course of our 10 year Strategy. We have commissioned research projects from the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs and others on preventing drug use – including amongst young people – to give us a better understanding of what works to reduce demand.

We will also be publishing a White Paper later this year which will look at new measures to reduce demand through a set of tougher sanctions. This will be particularly targeted at so called recreational drug users.

■ HM Passport Office: Staff

Alan Brown: [\[13764\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people have been employed in passport services in each year since 2010.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 15 June 2022]: The table below shows the total number of staff by year employed in Her Majesty's Passport Office.

HM PASSPORT OFFICE	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Total Staff	4,376	4,059	3,879	3,680	3,620	3,947	3,704	4,466

Figures for the years 2010 to 2014 are published on GOV.UK please see attached link.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ho-annual-reports-and-accounts>

■ Immigration

Caroline Lucas: [\[15224\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her policy to allow Home Office officials discretion in immigration cases to re-define memorial services as memorial services in lieu of a funeral in cases where it can be shown that a death took place at a time when covid-19 restrictions prevented one of the (a) holding of and (b) travel to a funeral for a deceased immediate family member abroad and for such cases to be considered as having the status of a funeral for the purpose of the decision on whether a case should be fairly expedited; and if she will make a statement.

Kevin Foster:

Those who qualify to visit the UK may undertake a range of activities, which include attending a funeral or a memorial service.

We continue to prioritise any urgent compelling or compassionate cases across all workstreams.

Where there are extremely compassionate or compelling circumstances (for example, a medical emergency or travelling to a funeral for a deceased immediate family member including memorial services), we may consider expediting specific cases. However, the bar for this is high and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

UKVI encourages all customers to apply in good time ahead of intended travel dates, and customers can also make use of UKVI's optional priority visa services for visit visas in certain locations.

■ Immigration: Northern Ireland

Stephen Farry: [\[13846\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Ukrainian nationals who entered Northern Ireland without a visa having lawfully entered the Republic of Ireland have been found to fall within the scope of paragraphs 345A to 345D of the Immigration Rules on third country inadmissibility.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 15 June 2022]: The Home Office has moved as quickly as possible to ensure those fleeing Russia's invasion of Ukraine can find safety in the UK.

On 25 February the Republic of Ireland lifted its visa requirements for Ukrainians travelling from within the European Union. Ukrainian nationals arriving in Ireland from that date and subsequently entering the UK are eligible for six-months Leave Outside the Immigration Rules in the UK.

Stephen Farry: [\[13847\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has issued guidance to immigration decision-makers in respect of Ukrainian nationals who have entered Northern Ireland without a visa having lawfully entered the Republic of Ireland.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 15 June 2022]: On 25 February the Republic of Ireland lifted its visa requirements for Ukrainians travelling from within the European Union. Ukrainian nationals arriving in Ireland from that date and subsequently entering the UK are eligible for six-months Leave Outside the Immigration Rules in the UK.

At the time the policy was agreed, guidance was prepared and circulated to the Home Office advising them on the approach they need to take when they encounter someone who has arrived via Ireland.

Moreover, on 16 May, the Minister for Safe and Legal Migration sent a letter to the Home Affairs Select Committee to inform them of a Ministerial Authorisation relating to this policy.

A copy of the Ministerial Authorisation was also sent to the libraries of both Houses of Parliament and can be found at:

<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/22346/documents/165211/default/>

■ London Policing College: China

Mr Alistair Carmichael: [\[13063\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will take steps to ensure that Government funding is not used to support the partnership between the London Policing College and Chinese universities with links to policing in Xinjiang, in the context of reports of torture of ethnic minorities in that region.

Kit Malthouse:

[Holding answer 14 June 2022]: In 2019 the British Council awarded funding to LPC as part of a regional programme to improve international teaching standards in police education in the target countries.

This included efforts to reduce human rights violations. The British Council have confirmed that they have never funded any activities involving Xinjiang security bodies.

LPC have also confirmed that no Xinjiang security bodies were involved in the programme and that they have now ceased all programme partnerships with China.

Mr Alistair Carmichael: [\[13064\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the appropriateness of links between the London Policing College (LPC) and British police forces, in the context of reports that the LPC and four British police forces hosted Chinese delegates, including delegates from regions linked to alleged cases of torture of ethnic minorities.

Kit Malthouse:

[Holding answer 14 June 2022]: The London College of Policing is an independent company engaging retired officers.

Any previous engagement by the London College of Policing with Chinese delegates (a conference in 2019) included the completion of the OSJA process.

■ Members: Correspondence

Louise Haigh: [\[14544\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the correspondence of 14 of April 2022 from the hon. Member for Sheffield Heeley, reference LH20005.

Kevin Foster:

The Home Office responded to the Hon. Member's correspondence on 9 June 2022.

Louise Haigh: [\[14545\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the correspondence of 11 of May 2022 from the hon. Member for Sheffield Heeley, reference LH20846.

Kevin Foster:

The Home Office responded to the Hon. Member's correspondence on 9 June 2022.

Louise Haigh: [\[15308\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the email correspondence of 22 March 2022 from the hon. Member for Sheffield Heeley, reference LH20045.

Kevin Foster:

The Home Office responded to the Hon. Member's correspondence on 10 June 2022.

Louise Haigh: [\[15309\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the correspondence of 11 May 2022 from the hon. Member for Sheffield Heeley, reference LH16318.

Kevin Foster:

The Home Office responded to the Hon. Member's correspondence on 13 June 2022.

■ Passports**Ian Byrne:** [\[15396\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to Answers of 8 June 2022 to Questions 10035 to 10038, whether her Department holds weekly data on the processing times of UK passport (a) applications and (b) renewals.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 15 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.

Between March and May 2022, over 90% of applications processed were completed within six weeks, with approximately 98.5% completed within ten weeks.

■ Passports: Applications**Sarah Olney:** [\[13804\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what information his Department uses to estimate processing times for passport applications; and whether that estimate begins from the date on which the Passport Office receives (a) confirmation of the applicant's identity or (b) the application.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 15 June 2022]: Passport applicants using the standard service should allow up to ten weeks from the date that the initial documents requested are physically delivered to Her Majesty's Passport Office.

Vicky Foxcroft: [14552]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what record her Department holds of applications for British passports received in (a) 2019, (b) 2020 and (c) 2021 that were processed within the service standard time.

Kevin Foster:

The volume of passport applications received is published quarterly in HM Passport Office's transparency data.

The most recent published data can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hm-passport-office-data-q1-2022>

Vicky Foxcroft: [14553]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average processing time is for (a) a British passport and (b) renewal of a British passport as of 8 June 2022.

Kevin Foster:

Since April 2021, people have been advised to allow up to ten weeks when applying for their British passport as more than 5 million people delayed applying due to the pandemic. The vast majority of all passport applications continue to be dealt with well within 10 weeks.

Louise Haigh: [15305]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 9 June 2022 to Question 13191 on Passports: Applications, what proportion of passport applications are processed within six weeks.

Kevin Foster:

Since April 2021, Her Majesty's Passport Office has been advising its customers to allow up to 10 weeks to receive their passport. Between March and May 2022, over 90% of applications processed were completed within six weeks.

Owen Thompson: [15311]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, further to the Answer of 24 May to Question 1238, in what format the passport office gathers data to measure if service standard times for processing passports are being met, and how they compare performance over time.

Kevin Foster:

While average processing times before 6 April 2021 are held, prior to this date the published processing time for standard applications from the UK differed by application type. The data is not held in a reportable format to demonstrate performance by application type against these differing processing times.

Stephanie Peacock: [15341]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what support her Department provides for constituents who have missed their holidays due to passport delays.

Kevin Foster:

Since April 2021, people have been advised to allow up to ten weeks when applying for their British passport as more than 5 million people delayed applying due to the pandemic. 98.6% of all passport applications continue to be dealt with well within 10 weeks.

The standard service does not have a guaranteed timeframe as a passport cannot be issued until all checks have been satisfactorily completed, and HM Passport Office cannot take responsibility for missed travel. But where a UK-based customer submitted their application more than 10 weeks previously and can evidence that they are due to travel within the next fortnight, Her Majesty's Passport Office will prioritise their case.

Darren Jones:[\[15350\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, at what point of the application process her Department informs applicants who are paying for super priority and priority applications of the level of service provision they can expect.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 15 June 2022]: The timescales for priority (PV) and super priority (SPV) applications are set out on GOV.UK so the information is available to the customer before starting the application process.

PV information is also covered on the waiting times page and includes a message that PV/SPV is temporarily unavailable for some routes.

Louise Haigh:[\[15737\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many passport applications were received in (a) April and (b) May 2022.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 15 June 2022]: The volume of passport applications received is published quarterly in HM Passport Office's transparency data.

The most recent published data can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hm-passport-office-data-q1-2022>

■ Refugees: Afghanistan**Sir Robert Buckland:**[\[13702\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how vulnerable Afghan nationals who remain in Afghanistan are able to apply for the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 15 June 2022]: The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) will provide up to 20,000 women, children and others at risk with a safe and legal route to resettle in the UK.

There is no application process for the ACRS. Instead, eligible people will be prioritised and referred for resettlement to the UK under one of three 'pathways', as set out in the policy statement of 13 September 2021:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghanistan-resettlement-and-immigration-policy-statement>

o For Pathway One, individuals to be resettled under the ACRS will be some of those already evacuated and in the UK. They include women's rights activists, journalists, and prosecutors, and Afghan family members of British Nationals. Those eligible who were called forward during the evacuation but were not able to board flights will also be resettled through Pathway One if they subsequently come to the UK.

o For Pathway Two, we are working at pace to start to receive referrals of vulnerable refugees in need of protection from UNHCR. Those referred will be assessed for resettlement by UNHCR using their established processes.

o In the first year of Pathway Three, the government will offer ACRS places to eligible at-risk British Council and GardaWorld contractors and Chevening alumni. The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office will be in touch with those eligible to support them through the next steps.

Beyond the first year, to respond to the challenging and complex situation in Afghanistan, the government will work with international partners and NGOs to design and deliver Pathway Three and allow us to welcome others at risk, as well as continuing to resettle refugees referred by UNHCR. Further information on future years will be made available in due course.

Dan Jarvis:

[16956]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether Afghan nationals with an outstanding Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy application can be relocated to Rwanda under the UK-Rwanda Migration and Economic Development Partnership.

Kevin Foster:

All those who have an outstanding decision for indefinite leave to remain under ARAP will continue to have valid immigration status in the interim. Those who have valid immigration status are not eligible to be considered for relocation to Rwanda

The Migration and Economic Development Partnership between the UK and Rwanda is intended to address the shared international challenge of illegal migration and break the business model of evil people smuggling gangs. Those making illegal, dangerous and unnecessary journeys to the UK since 1 January 2022 - including those arriving by small boats or hidden in the backs of lorries - may now be relocated to Rwanda, who will take responsibility for processing their claims and supporting them.

■ Refugees: Ukraine**Fleur Anderson:** [\[14643\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what financial support is available to Ukrainians who have arrived in the UK through the Ukraine Family Scheme, and if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of providing financial support to those people at a similar level to that provided to those people who have arrived under the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

Kevin Foster:

Ukrainian nationals coming to the UK under the Ukraine Family Scheme are given access to work, benefits and public services as laid down in Appendix Ukraine to the Immigration Rules, details of which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules/immigration-rules-appendix-ukraine-scheme?msclkid=e6adf1dbcf7b11ec86b0be860d4b164a>

There is no specific financial support available to those who choose to sponsor family members to join them in the UK. This includes those sponsoring under the Ukraine Family Scheme where there is no requirement to provide accommodation.

Therefore, the Government has not extended the £350 per month 'thank you' payment offered to those who are willing to offer a home to refugees arriving in the UK under the Homes for Ukraine and Super Sponsor Schemes.

Those sponsoring family members able to offer appropriate accommodation can choose to bring their family members to the UK under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme or Super Sponsor Schemes in order to become eligible for the 'thank you' payment.

■ Social Security Benefits and Taxation: Fraud**Emma Hardy:** [\[15358\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what data her Department holds on the number of prosecutions for (a) benefit-related offences and (b) tax-related offences from 2010 to 2019; and what comparative assessment she has made of the criteria used by the Department for Work and Pensions and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs in their respective decisions to refer cases to the Crime Prosecution Service; and if she will make a statement.

Tom Pursglove:

Nil return. The Home Office holds no data.

■ UK Border Force: Staff**Louise Haigh:** [\[15306\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many border force (a) officers and (b) other personnel are employed as of 9 June 2022.

Louise Haigh: [\[15307\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to Home Office annual report and accounts: 2020 to 21 and the expectation that 2,000 additional operational Border Force staff will be required by January 2022, how many additional Border Force staff were recruited (a) by January 2022 and (b) as of 9 June 2022.

Kevin Foster:

The latest published staffing and finance figures for Border Force can be found in the Home Office Annual Report for 2020-2021 at:

[HO annual report and accounts 2020-21 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Border Force has continued to build staffing levels during 2021/2022 and recruitment will continue throughout 2022. The training and deployment of new staff means resources will continue to increase through to the end of the calendar year.

■ UK Visas and Immigration: Correspondence**Rosie Cooper:** [\[15715\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will take steps to help ensure that the hon. Member for West Lancashire receives a response from the Director General for UKVI dated 4 April 2022, reference ZA59379, on an asylum claim.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 15 June 2022]: The Home Office responded to the correspondence on 13 June 2022.

■ Visas**Deidre Brock:** [\[13752\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to reduce the 24-week processing time for spouse, fiancé, and unmarried partner visas to its original 12-week service standard.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 15 June 2022]: The Home Office is currently prioritising Ukraine Visa Schemes applications in response to the humanitarian crisis caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Staff from other government departments, including DWP and HMRC, are being surged into the Home Office to help with Ukraine work and enable normal visa routes to return to normal service levels in due course.

Deidre Brock: [\[13754\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how his Department estimated the new 24-week processing time for spouse, fiancé, and unmarried partner visas; and what assessment she has made of the likelihood of that timeframe being met in the context of providing reliability for applicants.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 8 June 2022]: The 24-week service standard is based on expected processing times due to the increased number of outstanding spouse, fiancé, and unmarried partner visa applications. This increase was due to the prioritisation of Ukraine Visa Schemes applications in response to the humanitarian crisis caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Processing times for the 24-week service standard have not yet been published. They will be published as part of transparency data in due course. The transparency data does, however, include a range of processing data and the latest data can be found at: [Migration transparency data - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/migration-transparency-data)

Deidre Brock:**[14513]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many (a) spouse, (b) fiancé and (c) unmarried partner visa applications remain unprocessed for more than 12 weeks as of 8 June 2022.

Kevin Foster:

Processing times for Marriage & Family visa applications as of 8 June 2022 have not yet been published. They will be published as part of transparency data in due course.

The transparency data does, however, include a range of processing data and the latest data can be found at: [Migration transparency data - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/migration-transparency-data)

Liz Saville Roberts:**[17062]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of average time it currently takes to process and issue visas for non-Ukrainian nationals.

Kevin Foster:

For applications not lodged under the Ukraine schemes, UKVI offers a range of service levels for applications which include Standard service (15 working days), Priority service (5 working days), and Super Priority service (next day) after a customer has provided their biometrics.

UKVI made a decision to prioritise the Ukraine Schemes following the invasion of Ukraine by Russia. Resources are now being returned to focus on visa routes impacted by these prioritisation decisions which should reduce the average processing times in due course. We continue to prioritise any urgent compelling or compassionate cases across all workstreams and are working to reduce the current processing times as quickly as possible.

For Standard applications lodged outside the UK, the current average processing time is as follows:

- Visitors – 6 weeks
- Students – 5 weeks
- Working/Investing – 5 weeks

- Joining Family – up to 24 weeks

Further information can be found at [Visa decision waiting times: applications outside the UK - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/visa-decision-waiting-times-applications-outside-the-uk) and this is regularly updated.

For Standard applications lodged inside the UK, the current average processing times are not published though all routes are currently within the published service standards which are:

- Switching/Extending a Student, Family, Ancestry, Work, Visitor, or Graduate Visa – 8 weeks
- Switching/Extending a Hong Kong British National (Overseas) Visa – 12 weeks
- Applying for Settlement - within 6 months

Further information is published at [Visa decision waiting times: applications inside the UK - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/visa-decision-waiting-times-applications-inside-the-uk)

■ Visas: Children

Emma Hardy:

[15356]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her Department's affordability fee waiver scheme for citizenship registration for individuals under the age of 18, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of allowing low-income families who have accrued considerable debt while applying for visas for their children to apply retrospectively for such a waiver.

Kevin Foster:

This waiver is only applicable to the fees to register a child as a British citizen and is not being applied retrospectively, which means it will only be applied to eligible applications submitted on or after 16 June. The affordability assessment is set out in guidance available on GOV.UK.

■ Visas: Married People

Deidre Brock:

[13753]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the impact of changing without notice the service standard for spouse visa applications from 12 to 24 weeks on applicants.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 15 June 2022]: The Home Office is currently prioritising Ukraine Visa Schemes applications in response to the humanitarian crisis caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Applicants were informed of the change to a 24-week service standard on 11 May 2022 and the department is currently operating within this.

Staff from other government departments, including DWP and HMRC, are being surged into the Home Office to help with Ukraine work and enable normal visa routes to return to normal service levels in due course.

■ Visas: Ukraine

Emma Hardy: [\[13808\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to tackle delays in processing visas for unaccompanied children needing to travel to the UK.

Emma Hardy: [\[13809\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to tackle delays in processing visas for unaccompanied children in Ukraine needing to travel to the UK.

Emma Hardy: [\[13810\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to minimise the time taken to process visas for teenagers in Ukraine who plan to travel with a legal guardian.

Emma Hardy: [\[13811\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans she has to minimise the time taken for Ukrainian children to travel to the UK with a legal guardian.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 15 June 2022]: We have received thousands of applications submitted to one of the fastest and largest visa programmes in UK history.

The Home Office has reallocated staff across its operations to meet demand and minimise any delays, and other government departments have loaned staff to assist.

Staff in the UK are working seven days a week to process applications as quickly as possible.

Where we have applications from family groups, we would look to group these decisions together, so families receive decisions wherever possible at the same time.

As part of the Home Office's commitment to make it easier for applicants to apply to our schemes, since 15 March, Ukrainians with valid passports no longer need to go to a Visa Application Centre to give their biometrics before they come to the UK.

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, however, the eligibility of all the Ukraine schemes is kept under review.

Caroline Lucas: [\[14463\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 18 May 2022 to Question 1156 on Visas: Ukraine, in how many cases did Visa Application Centres (VAC) operated by TLS Contact which were serving Ukrainian refugees breach the (a) advice to provide appointments within 48 hours and (b) expectation to notify refugees within 24 hours of TLS receiving the vignette at the VAC as of 8 June 2022; with reference to the correspondence of 8 June 2022 from the hon. Member for Brighton

Pavilion to the Minister for Safe and Legal Migration, what systems she has in place to (i) monitor and (ii) address (A) errors and (B) delays with services her Department has outsourced to TLS; whether she is taking steps to expedite cases raised by MPs on these (1) errors and (2) delays; and if she will make a statement.

Kevin Foster:

For part (a), we currently do not hold this data in a reportable format and would require development time with associated costs to extract this information, so this exceeds the cost threshold. For part (b), this is a contractual requirement and TLS report they have met in all cases the requirement of contacting customers via email within 24 hours of receiving the vignette at the VAC.

Regarding systems to monitor and address errors and delays, for part (a), our usual standard Service Level Agreement (SLA) within the contract is to provide appointments within 5 working days (or the next cycle for temporary locations that run less frequently). For Ukraine appointments, we reduced this SLA to 48 hours and monitored daily appointments being taken and capacity remaining, but as noted above we cannot provide this in a reportable format without exceeding the cost threshold. For part (b), we monitor this against the relevant contractual SLA and would address any breaches in line with this, but as noted above we cannot provide this information without exceeding the cost threshold.

To support with expediting cases raised by MPs on errors and delays, UKVI has also set up key escalation points including dedicated email inboxes for submitting requests and getting them reviewed and resolved by TLS. All individual cases raised are tracked to completion. There is also the telephone helpline in place for customers to request information.

■ **Windrush Compensation Scheme**

Kate Osamor: [\[14566\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what remedies are available to Windrush Compensation Scheme claimants who do not wish to accept the outcome of a Tier Two Review.

Kate Osamor: [\[14567\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what role her Department plays in initial review process of a claim to the Windrush Compensation Scheme.

Kate Osamor: [\[14568\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department has taken to ensure that the (a) Tier 1 and (b) Tier 2 review process for the Windrush Compensation Scheme is (a) impartial and (b) comprehensive.

Kate Osamor: [\[14569\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what data her Department holds on the outcomes of (a) Tier 1 and (b) Tier 2 Windrush Compensation Scheme reviews.

Kate Osamor:

[14570]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Windrush Compensation Scheme claimants have rejected the awards of their Tier 2 review in each month from January 2020.

Kevin Foster:

In response to questions UIN: 14566

Claimants can ask an MP to refer their Tier 2 review to the Parliamentary Ombudsman. If the Ombudsman decides to investigate the review, the Home Office and the Adjudicator's Office will cooperate with their investigation.

In response to questions UIN: 14567

If an individual is dissatisfied with the outcome of their compensation claim, they can ask the Home Office to review its decision. The first stage of the review is a Tier 1; this will be an internal independent review by someone who has not been involved in the individual's case.

The Tier 1 reviewer will review whether the decision was correct, which will include looking at whether:

- the rules, policy and guidance were applied correctly
- there was a mistake of fact
- the initial decision maker made the right judgement on the correct standard of proof
- all the available information and evidence was considered

Full guidance for the Tier 1 reviews process can be found here: [Windrush Compensation Scheme \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/guidance/external-consultation/open-consultation-on-windrush-compensation-scheme)

In response to questions UIN: 14568

If an individual is dissatisfied with the outcome of their compensation claim, they can ask the Home Office to review its decision. The first stage of the review is a Tier 1, this will be an internal independent review by someone who has not been involved in the individual's case.

If a claimant remains dissatisfied, they can then request a Tier 2 external independent review. Their claim will be looked at by the Adjudicator's Office.

The Adjudicator's Office is a separate organisation, independent of the Home Office, who can look at the validity and reasons for the decision, including whether the Department has followed its policies

While the Adjudicator's Office falls within the same legal entity as the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), the Adjudicator is an office holder, not an employee nor an officer of HMRC, and is external to HMRC with the independent personal authority to review complaints.

In response to questions UIN: 14569

Data on the outcomes of (a) Tier 1 and (b) Tier 2 Windrush Compensation Scheme reviews, can be found here: [Windrush Compensation Scheme data: April 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/data-and-data-sets/windrush-compensation-scheme-data-april-2022).

In response to questions UIN: 14570

The Home Office has no published data to answer these questions. The information is not readily available in a reportable format nor held centrally and could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ **[Subject Heading to be Assigned]**

Damian Collins:

[\[900504\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what recent discussions she has had with her US counterpart on reducing market barriers with the United States.

Penny Mordaunt:

During the Dialogues in Baltimore and Aberdeen, Ambassador Tai and my Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade agreed to work together to develop an ambitious roadmap for further bilateral collaboration over the coming weeks, including further collaboration on reducing market barriers.

Last month we signed our first state-level trade and economic development Memorandum of Understanding with Indiana, creating a framework to help remove barriers to trade and investment. We hope to sign more MOUs this year.

■ **Energy Charter Treaty: Dispute Resolution**

Ruth Cadbury:

[\[14504\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether her Department has made a recent assessment of the impact of Investor-State Dispute Settlements within the Energy Charter Treaty on the domestic renewable energy industry.

Penny Mordaunt:

[Holding answer 14 June 2022]: I refer the Hon. Member for Brentford and Isleworth to the answer given by my Hon. Friend, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, the Minister for International Trade, on 9 June, UIN: 13147.

■ **Trade Agreements**

Dame Diana Johnson:

[\[14453\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps she has taken to protect domestic food standards when negotiating free trade agreements.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

We have not and will not compromise on our high food safety through our trade negotiations. These decisions are made independently of free trade agreements (FTAs).

The independent Trade and Agriculture Commission considers whether our FTAs affect the United Kingdom's statutory protections in relation to animal or plant life or health, animal welfare, and the environment - and recently concluded that the United Kingdom-Australia FTA does not.

■ Trade Agreements: Conditions of Employment**Dame Diana Johnson:**[\[14451\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps she is taking to ensure that workers' rights are maintained in all UK trade agreements.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Government shares the public's high regard for workers' rights and the Prime Minister has been clear that there will be no reduction in UK protections in signing up to new Free Trade Agreements.

The agreements secured with both Australia and New Zealand demonstrate our resolve to maintain workers' rights, and our commitment to maintain high standards.

The Government has also committed to maintaining these standards in various public mandates, that set out our approach to trade negotiations.

■ Trade Barriers: USA**Matt Vickers:**[\[13274\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what recent discussions she has had with her US counterpart on reducing market barriers with the United States.

Matt Vickers:[\[13277\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps her Department is taking to lift US tariffs on imports from the UK.

Penny Mordaunt:

In the last 12 months the UK and US have worked together to deliver some major trade breakthroughs, such as resolving the long-running Large Civil Aircraft dispute and agreeing to terminate the Section 301 investigation and suspend tariffs relating to the Digital Services Tax. We have also secured the lifting of the long-standing US ban on the import of British beef and lamb.

Most recently, we successfully removed Section 232 tariffs on imports of UK steel and aluminium products. This will bring welcome relief to the UK steel and aluminium industries which support the jobs of around 80,000 people across the UK supply chain. In response the UK has suspended the rebalancing measures on imports of US products.

During the Trade Dialogues in Baltimore and Aberdeen, Ambassador Tai and Secretary of State Trevelyan agreed to work together to develop a roadmap for further UK US Trade, including further collaboration on reducing market barriers.

We have also recently signed our first state-level trade and economic development Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Indiana, which will create a framework to discuss removal of barriers to trade and investment. We hope to sign more MOUs this year.

JUSTICE

■ Family Proceedings

Esther McVey: [\[14475\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of the courts consideration of the welfare of children during private law children proceedings in the context of (a) safety measures (b) therapy services and (c) the Child Arrangements Programme.

Esther McVey: [\[14477\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what progress has been made in implementing reforms to the Child Arrangements Programme as recommended in the report of the Expert Panel on Assessing Risk of Harm to Children and Parents in Private Law Children Cases, published in June 2020.

Esther McVey: [\[14478\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the barriers to the voice of children in private law cases.

Esther McVey: [\[14480\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps the Government is taking to implement the recommendations of the report of the Expert Panel on Assessing Risk of Harm to Children and Parents in Private Law Children Cases, published in June 2020, on the safety of abuse victims (a) before, (b) during and (c) after court proceedings.

James Cartlidge:

The Implementation Plan, published in response to 'Assessing the Risk of Harm to Children and Parents in Private Law Proceedings', outlined the Government's assessment of the expert panel's report and committed to a number of actions to reform the system, including the Child Arrangements Programme and improving safety at court. Since then, measures to better protect victims of domestic abuse and their children in the family court have been introduced via Sections 63, 65 and 67 of the Domestic Abuse Act. In addition, we are testing reforms to the Child Arrangements Programme and seeking to enhance the voice of the child through the Investigative Approach pilot which has launched in Dorset and North Wales, and

through the flexible case management provisions introduced by Practice Direction 36Y.

The Government intends to publish a full update on progress against commitments made in the Implementation Plan in due course.

Esther McVey: [\[14479\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make it his policy to require the provision of independent therapeutic support for children during private proceedings.

James Cartlidge:

Family breakdown is a difficult period in any child's life and it is important that they are properly supported during this time. The court has an overriding duty to make the welfare of the child its paramount consideration when making decisions on family law applications.

Children and young people's mental health services are provided by a range of organisations including NHS mental health and community trusts, local authorities and the private and voluntary sectors, and the Government recognises the vital role these services can play in supporting children and young people. However, there are currently no plans to specifically require such provision for children during private law proceedings.

■ Family Proceedings: Domestic Abuse

Esther McVey: [\[14476\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make it his policy to establish protocols to limit the contact abuse perpetrators can have with their victims following private law proceedings.

James Cartlidge:

Protecting victims of domestic abuse remains a priority for this Government. A range of orders can already be made by the court to limit contact between perpetrators and victims following private family law proceedings. These include non-molestation and occupation orders, orders under Section 91(14) of the Children Act 1989, and orders for indirect or supervised contact under the Child Arrangements Programme.

In addition, pursuant to Part 3 of the Domestic Abuse Act, we will introduce a new domestic abuse protection order which will bring together the strongest elements of the existing protective order regime into a single comprehensive, flexible order which will afford more effective and longer-term protection to victims of domestic abuse and their children.

■ Prisoners

Philip Davies: [\[16886\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many and what proportion of (a) male and (b) female prisoners have (i) mental health issues; (ii) a physical health condition; (iii) a learning disability; (iv) a physical disability; (v) unemployment histories; (vi) housing

issues or are homeless; (vii) family or relationship difficulties; (viii) social isolation; (ix) financial issues; (x) substance misuse issues; (xi) experienced physical, psychological or social trauma and (xii) two or more of these needs or issues.

Victoria Atkins:

The answer to question (ii) is information held by the Department for Health and Social Care. We can provide information from individuals in prison as, at 30 June 2021, who have a detailed assessment (Layer 3) completed on the Offender Assessment System (OASys). Individuals have been excluded where there is missing data for any of the assessment items required to answer questions (i) and (iii) to (xii). Definitions used for specific needs areas are given below.

Numbers

ISSUE(S)	COUNT - FEMALE	COUNT - MALE
Mental health issues	628	7,555
Learning disabilities	35	889
Physical disabilities	163	3,391
Unemployment histories	783	15,590
Housing issues or homeless	1,521	34,705
Relationship difficulties	1,841	40,614
Social isolation	298	5,058
Substance misuse	1,341	31,267
Financial issues	1,299	35,680
Physical or psychological trauma	1,694	21,883
Two or more issues	1,973	47,050
Number of prisoners with full assessment	2,090	55,564

Proportions

ISSUE(S)	PROPORTION - FEMALE	PROPORTION - MALE
Mental health issues	30%	14%
Learning disabilities	2%	2%
Physical disabilities	8%	6%

ISSUE(S)	PROPORTION - FEMALE	PROPORTION - MALE
Unemployment histories	37%	28%
Housing issues or homeless	73%	62%
Relationship difficulties	88%	73%
Social isolation	14%	9%
Substance misuse	64%	56%
Financial issues	62%	64%
Physical or psychological trauma	81%	39%
Two or more issues	94%	85%

Definitions used

Item (i), mental health issues: OASys reports significant difficulties (score of 2) on question 10.2 psychological problems and/or question 10.6 psychiatric problems.

Item (iii), a learning disability: the disabilities listed on Delius include a learning disability.

Item (iv), a physical disability: the disabilities listed on Delius include hearing difficulties, a progressive condition, reduced mobility, reduced physical capacity, severe disfigurement, speech impairment or visual impairment.

Item (v), unemployment histories: OASys reports significant difficulties (score of 2) on question 4.3 employment history.

Item (vi), housing issues or are homeless: OASys reports a criminogenic need in the accommodation section.

Item (viii), social isolation: OASys reports significant difficulties (score of 2) on question 10.3 social isolation.

Item (ix), financial issues: OASys reports that the assessor judges financial issues to be linked to “risk of serious harm, risks to the individual and other risks” and/or linked to offending behaviour.

Item (x), substance misuse issues: OASys reports a criminogenic need in the drug misuse and/or alcohol misuse sections.

Item (xi), experienced physical, psychological or social trauma: OASys reports that any of the following were present – question 2.10, current offence disinhibited by a traumatic life event; significant difficulties (score of 2) on question 6.3, experience of childhood; question 6.7, victim of domestic violence, and question 10.7, history of severe head injuries, fits, periods of unconsciousness.

Item (xii) checks how many of (i) and (iii) to (xi) are present, and is counted as present if two or more of these ten items are present.

■ Prisoners: Domestic Abuse

Philip Davies: [\[16883\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will publish data his Department holds on the number and proportion of men in prison who have been victims of domestic abuse.

Philip Davies: [\[16884\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will publish the data his Department holds on the number and proportion of women in prison who have been perpetrators of domestic abuse.

Victoria Atkins:

Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service collects information on both victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse where a full risk and needs assessment is undertaken, in accordance with the Offender Assessment System (OASys). Only by means of a full assessment can a victim or perpetrator of domestic abuse be definitively identified. A full assessment is made only on certain offenders, having regard to their risk and sentence type/length. Consequently, the Department is not in a position to publish comprehensive data on victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse currently in prison.

HM Prison and Probation Service will continue to look at ways to expand and enhance data held.

■ Prisoners: Parents

Philip Davies: [\[16885\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he has made of the number and proportion of (a) male and (b) female prisoners who have children.

Victoria Atkins:

An MoJ study estimated that there were approximately 200,000 children in England & Wales who had a parent in prison at some point during the year 2009. Looking at the number of children with a parent in prison at a single point in time, approximately 90,000 children had a parent in prison at the end of June 2009. No recent annual estimate has been made of the number of children affected by the imprisonment of a parent or main caregiver.

The Prisons Strategy White Paper includes a commitment to improve the quality of the data collected and to improve the support provided. We are investigating opportunities for data sharing between Government organisations, to facilitate targeted support for offenders and their families.

Changes have been made to the Basic Custody Screening Tool to enable us to collect data on entry to prison about how many primary carers are in custody and how many children under the age of 18 are affected by their imprisonment. As this

data is self-reported, we will monitor the quality of the data over the next year and make a decision as to what format the data will be published.

LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

■ Beach Huts: Property Transfer

Sir Christopher Chope:

[\[16828\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will intervene to prevent (a) Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council selling its portfolio of beach huts without inviting open market bids and (b) a company owned and controlled by that Council from acquiring the beach huts with debt finance; and if he will make an assessment of the potential effect of that transaction on that Council's compliance with his Department's guidance on the flexible use of capital receipts.

Kemi Badenoch:

We want to support local authorities to invest in projects that increase efficiency and deliver future savings.

On 4 April, the government announced details under which it would extend the general direction that permits receipts from asset disposals to be used to fund the revenue costs of projects that reduce costs and improve service delivery. The direction issued will allow authorities to continue to use this freedom until 2024/25.

Local authorities are responsible for ensuring they comply with the direction and guidance, and will need to demonstrate - including to their auditors - that they have used the flexibility appropriately.

Further, the government expects authorities to act within the intent and spirit in which these freedoms are provided. If there are indications that authorities are not using the direction as intended, we will carefully consider what further action is needed.

■ Begging and Vagrancy

Rachael Maskell:

[\[14539\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, for what reason the Government intends to expand regulations that penalise people for begging and vagrancy.

Rachael Maskell:

[\[14540\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, for what reason he is bringing forward legislative proposals to create criminal offences for (a) vagrancy and (b) begging.

Eddie Hughes:

This Government is clear that the Vagrancy Act is antiquated and no longer fit for purpose. That is why the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 committed to repeal the Act once an appropriate and modern replacement for the Act is in place.

We launched a consultation on options to replace the out-dated Vagrancy Act which closed on 5 May. We are currently working to analyse responses and a Government response will be issued in due course.

■ Buildings: Safety

Sarah Olney:

[17071]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, pursuant to the Answer of 6 June 2022 to Question 9090, on Buildings: Safety, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential impact of (a) requirements for checks from the Building Safety Regulator and (b) other requirements contained in provisions of the Building Safety Act 2022 on the ability of developers to meet the Government's housing target of building 300,000 homes a year by the mid-2020s.

Stuart Andrew:

Through the Building Safety Act, the Government is introducing a more stringent regulatory regime, overseen by the Building Safety Regulator, in design and construction for new high-rise residential buildings, care homes and hospitals which are 18 metres or more in height, or at least seven storeys.

The Government has assessed the potential impact of the new requirements through an Impact Assessment. <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3021/publications>.

The Government is continuing to work towards its ambition of delivering 300,000 homes a year and we are making clear progress. From April 2019 to March 2020 over 242,000 homes were delivered - the highest level for over 30 years.

We have announced £10 billion investment in housing supply since the start of this Parliament, with our housing supply interventions due to ultimately unlock over 1 million new homes over the Spending Review 2021 period and beyond. This includes an additional £1.8 billion investment announced at Spending Review 2021.

We are also investing £11.5 billion in the new Affordable Homes Programme which will build up to 180,000 affordable homes, should economic conditions allow.

■ Community Infrastructure Levy

Rachael Maskell:

[14531]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the Government's proposed reform of the section 106/CIL system, under what circumstances will section 106 payments be required instead of the Infrastructure Levy.

Stuart Andrew:

The Infrastructure Levy will be a mandatory, non-negotiable charge, set and collected locally, to largely replace the complex and discretionary Section 106 regime and CIL charge. We have listened to feedback from stakeholders and will be retaining the use of Section 106 agreements in limited circumstances to support delivery of the largest sites. In these instances, infrastructure will be able to be provided in-kind and negotiated, but with the guarantee that the value of what is agreed will be no less

than will be paid through the Levy. We intend to consult on the Levy and the residual role for Section 106 agreements.

■ Council Tax: Parish and Town Councils

Charlotte Nichols: [\[14651\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how much the council tax precept for town and parish councils has increased for each of the past five years.

Kemi Badenoch:

Statistics on council tax, including increases in town and parish council precepts, are available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-council-tax#council-tax-statistics-for-town-and-parish-councils-in-england>.

■ Elections: Proof of Identity

Rachael Maskell: [\[17010\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how people on the electoral register are able to (a) register for and (b) express and interest in obtaining a voter ID card; and whether his Department plans to publish guidance on that process.

Rachael Maskell: [\[17011\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how people who receive a postal or proxy vote will be able to apply for voter ID cards.

Rachael Maskell: [\[17012\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, when the application process for voter ID cards is planned to begin.

Rachael Maskell: [\[17013\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how much funding he plans to allocate to local authorities to manage the voter card scheme.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Government is committed to ensuring our democracy is secure, fair, modern and transparent.

The Elections Act 2022 has introduced a new requirement for voters to show photographic identification before voting in person in a polling station. Further details, as well as a list of other identification which will be accepted in polling stations, can be found in the government's voter identification policy statement:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/voter-identification-at-polling-stations-and-the-new-voter-card>.

Further details on implementation and commencement will be published in due course. The Government is committed to providing funding to councils, in line with the 'new burden' principles.

■ First Time Buyers: Young People

Lee Anderson: [\[15374\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps his Department is taking to help young people buy their first property.

Lee Anderson: [\[15375\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps his Department is taking to make house prices more affordable.

Stuart Andrew:

The Government is committed to boosting home ownership and supporting first-time buyers and will do so by looking at all of the factors that influence ownership levels, including housing supply and the availability of low deposit mortgages. Since 2010, over 774,000 households have already been helped to purchase a home through Government-backed schemes including Help to Buy and Right to Buy.

On 9 June the Prime Minister announced new measures to help first time buyers into home ownership, including looking into reforming of the mortgage market to boost access to finance for first time buyers; and working to extend the Right to Buy to Housing Association tenants. We are also committed to completing our reforms to the leasehold system which will mean that homeowners should have far greater control over their homes and their lives.

We are increasing supply in tandem, working closely with communities to build more of the right homes in the right places all across England. The Government is also committed to delivering 1 million new homes by the end of this Parliament and continue working towards its ambition of delivering 300,000 new homes per year to create a more sustainable and affordable housing market.

We are also investing £11.5 billion in the 2021-26 Affordable Homes Programme which will build up to 180,000 affordable homes, should economic conditions allow.

■ Homes for Ukraine Scheme

Kevin Brennan: [\[16860\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what checks his Department undertakes into the backgrounds of sponsors in the Homes for Ukraine Scheme.

Eddie Hughes:

The most up to date information on sponsor checks can be accessed here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homes-for-ukraine-sponsor-guidance#eligibility> .

■ Housing: Disability

Rachael Maskell: [\[15284\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will take steps to require that all new homes must be adaptable for use by disabled people at each stage of their life.

Stuart Andrew:

Government consulted on options to raise the accessibility and adaptability of new homes, recognising the importance of suitable homes for older and disabled people at each stage of their life. This is a technical and important piece of work towards boosting the supply of homes with built in adaptability for different stages of life. We will set out our plans in due course.

■ Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: Housing

Rachael Maskell: [\[14535\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the potential impact of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill on housing (a) supply and (b) purchasing opportunities for first-time buyers.

Stuart Andrew:

I expect that changes to the planning system made by the Bill will enable an increased supply of homes, including for first time buyers, by fostering the types of development that are more likely to be supported by communities and speeding up the process of planning for and delivering homes. An impact assessment of the Bill will be published in due course.

On 9 June, the Prime Minister announced new measures to help first-time buyers, including exploring reform of the mortgage market and extending the Right to Buy to Housing Association tenants.

■ Overview and Scrutiny Committees

Sir Christopher Chope: [\[16827\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will take steps to require that overview and scrutiny committees established by local authorities in England are chaired by a councillor chosen by opposition councillors, or where there are no opposition councillors, chosen solely by backbenchers.

Kemi Badenoch:

On 7 May 2019, the government published statutory guidance for local and combined authorities in England that sets out the role of scrutiny committees in holding authorities to account over local decision-making.

The guidance advises on how to select committee members and chairs to encourage effective and independent scrutiny. While there are proportionality requirements that must be met, the selection of the chair and other committee members is for each

authority to decide for itself. Members of the executive cannot be members of a scrutiny committee.

The guidance states that chairs should pay special attention to the need to guard the committee's independence. Importantly, however, they should take care to avoid the committee being, and being viewed as, a de facto opposition to the executive.

The guidance recognises that authorities have democratic mandates and are ultimately accountable to their electorates.

■ Pedestrian Areas: Licensing

Rachael Maskell: [\[14532\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps he will take to ensure that pavement licensing does not hinder access for disabled people.

Stuart Andrew:

Our pavement licence measures have a mandatory national 'no-obstruction' condition which is applied to all licences granted. This requires that when local authorities are determining whether furniture put on the highway would be an unacceptable obstruction, they will also need to have specific regard to the needs of disabled people, and to any recommended distances required for access by disabled people as set out in guidance issued by the Secretary of State. We have worked closely with groups representing disabled people in developing the guidance.

■ Planning: Flood Control

Rachael Maskell: [\[14533\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, what steps he is taking to ensure flood plans are included in the planning system.

Stuart Andrew:

There are already strong protections in place and the National Planning Policy Framework is clear that areas at little to no risk of flooding from any source should always be developed in preference to areas at a higher risk of flooding. The Government maintains that the best way of delivering resilient development is to ensure a plan-led approach, since this is the best way of taking account of flood risk when determining site allocation.

The reforms represent a pragmatic package of structural and procedural changes that are designed to improve the efficiency of local plan-making. Plans are to be simpler and shorter, and underpinned by better data to ensure they are more transparent and understandable.

Local communities will have more certainty that the right homes will be built in the right places, with a greater emphasis on effective and timely community engagement.

■ Right to Buy Scheme**Rachael Maskell:** [\[15290\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether he has consulted UK housing associations on the Government's right to buy proposals announced on 9 June.

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.

Lisa Nandy: [\[16928\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment his Department has made of the impact of the extension of the Right to Buy scheme to housing associations on the total stock of social housing; and what estimate he has made of the number of new homes that will need to be built to replace homes that have been sold under that expanded scheme.

Lisa Nandy: [\[16930\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what estimate he has made of the total cost of the extension of the Right to Buy scheme to housing associations; and whether that cost will be met through new money from the Treasury, reductions to existing Government departmental budgets or another means.

Lisa Nandy: [\[16931\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether a regulatory impact assessment had been made of the Government's policy to extend the Right to Buy scheme to housing associations prior to the announcement of the policy in the Prime Minister's speech on housing of 9 June 2022.

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.

The scheme will be funded from within the overall envelope of Government spending, and we will be working closely with the housing association sector as we develop the scheme. We will also ensure that one-for-one replacement of all homes sold is central to the scheme design and will announce more details in due course.

■ Shops: Change of Use

Rachael Maskell: [\[14526\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to provisions contained in the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Bill which would allow rental auction of vacant high street units, whether the proposals will enable large unoccupied units to be broken up and converted into small business units for auction.

Rachael Maskell: [\[14527\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the rental auction of vacant high street units, if he will take steps to prioritise rentals for (a) business accelerators, (b) a social business hub and (c) any other specific purpose.

Rachael Maskell: [\[14528\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to provisions contained in the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill which would allow the rental auction of vacant high street units, whether he has held discussions with public sector organisations about potentially occupying such units.

Rachael Maskell: [\[14529\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to provisions contained in the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill on rental auction of vacant high street units, if a unit is occupied as a result of a rental auction under those provisions and the landlord finds a new commercial tenant for that unit, how much notice the landlord would be required to give for the current tenant or tenants to relocate their business.

Rachael Maskell: [\[14530\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to provisions contained in the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill on the rental auction of vacant high street units, whether rent for such units would be payable directly to the owner of the premises or to the local authority as the auctioning body.

Neil O'Brien:

On Wednesday 11 May the Department introduced the Levelling Up & Regeneration Bill (LURB) into Parliament. This new legislation will play an important role in reviving our high streets by introducing High Street Rental Auctions (HSRAs). HSRAs will empower places to tackle decline by bringing vacant units back into use and will seek to increase cooperation between landlords and local authorities, and to make town centre tenancies more accessible and affordable for tenants, including SMEs, local businesses and community groups.

The measure will focus on all commercial property in town centres and on high streets, for the purpose of incentivising commercial uses, and will exclude residential, industrial and warehousing. It is short-term measure in which landlords will be receiving rents and service charges throughout the lease period and will retain their property, including rights to forfeiture.

A standardised lease will be developed and used to ensure consistency and fairness, and the auction process will include safeguards for landlords to be able to feed into the process. There are some important processes and procedures that we need to develop in tandem with the passage of legislation, including how the auction process itself will run, how landlords can input into the terms of the standardised lease including any break clauses. We will also consider how larger unoccupied units can be rented out and more crucially how we can ensure HSRAs are accessible to start-ups, community groups and local businesses.

Throughout this process we have spoken to stakeholders (landlords, tenants, local authorities, community organisations) and reviewed available data at regular intervals. We will continue to work with the industry during bill passage to ensure that any conditions are appropriate for the parties and the market more broadly. This engagement will help inform secondary legislation.

By introducing this measure, Government is continuing to empower councils to take a proactive and ambitious approach to placemaking, supporting them to feel more confident in how they approach the challenges of vacant property on the high street. Together with the other tools available to local authorities, this will help create attractive and lively high streets, with increased footfall and activity which attracts people and businesses, increases pride in place and avoids the long-term presence of vacancies.

■ Social Rented Housing: Construction

Mike Amesbury:

[\[14606\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will make it his policy to (a) give councils the power to build 100,000 high-quality, climate-friendly social homes a year and (b) reform the Right to Buy scheme to make it easier for councils to build replacement homes at the rate at which they are sold.

Stuart Andrew:

Building more high-quality, climate-friendly social and affordable homes is an absolute priority for this Government.

To enable local authorities to deliver this social housing, including through their own housebuilding programmes, we have given local authorities a comprehensive range of tools. This includes our £11.5 billion Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) which councils can bid for, the abolition of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) borrowing cap in 2018, as well as continued access to low-cost borrowing via the Public Works Loan Board. The AHP will provide up to 180,000 new homes across the country, should economic conditions allow.

From 2025, the Future Homes Standard will ensure that all new homes, regardless of tenure, produce at least 75% less CO2 emissions than those built to the 2013 standards. Ahead of the Future Homes Standard, we have introduced an uplift in energy efficiency standards, which will come into force in June 2022, this means all

new homes will deliver around 30% fewer CO2 emissions than those built to the 2013 standards.

The Right to Buy scheme is also an important contributor to new housing supply with additional properties sold under the scheme being replaced with new affordable homes. In March 2021 we announced a package of reforms that will give councils more freedom on how they spend the money they receive from Right to Buy sales to help them build even more council homes, including homes for social rent. These reforms give local authorities greater flexibility to invest in new homes and the next generation of council housing.

NORTHERN IRELAND

■ Terrorism: Northern Ireland

Mr Alistair Carmichael:

[\[15200\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what his Department's policy is on (a) what, (b) how and (c) for how long biometric data that is relevant to (i) ongoing and (ii) concluded Northern Ireland legacy cases is stored.

Conor Burns:

The Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill contains provisions which will ensure that biometrics are available for use in future investigations by the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery (ICRIR) into Troubles-related deaths or serious injuries.

These biometrics will only be retained for a finite period to allow the investigations to be completed, and must be destroyed by no later than the end of a reasonable period after the conclusion of the work of the ICRIR.

TRANSPORT

■ Aviation

Gareth Thomas:

[\[15169\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the number of flights cancelled by each airline operating out of (a) Manchester, (b) Gatwick, (c) Stanstead and (d) Heathrow airport during the period from 26 May to 7 June 2022; and if he will make a statement.

Robert Courts:

Data on the number of cancelled commercial flight operations is collected and published by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) as part of their flight punctuality statistics. The latest data currently published is for March 2022, and is available from <https://www.caa.co.uk/data-and-analysis/uk-aviation-market/flight-punctuality/uk-flight-punctuality-statistics/>. Data for May and June 2022 will be published by the CAA in due course.

■ Bus Services: Finance

Daisy Cooper:

[\[14617\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much funding the Government has provided to each local authority in England for local bus services in each of the last five years.

Trudy Harrison:

All local authorities are required to publish details of their expenditure on buses. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities also publishes data on local authority expenditure.

The Government has committed £3 billion to transform bus services in this Parliament. This funding includes £1.1 billion new funding for bus transformation deals for local transport authorities to deliver London-style fares, infrastructure and service improvements; £525 million to deliver zero emission buses over this Parliament; and around £780 million from the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements that will directly fund bus infrastructure.

The Government has also provided nearly £2 billion in emergency funding for local authorities and bus operators to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic since March 2020. £221 million of this emergency funding was provided directly to local transport authorities.

The Government also provides £42 million per year to Local Transport Authorities under the Bus Service Operators Grant. The Department for Transport publishes data on the funding given to Local Transport Authorities for the Bus Service Operators Grant on GOV.UK. Further information can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bus-service-operators-grant-payments-to-local-authorities-from-2013-onwards>.

■ Calder Valley Line

Imran Hussain:

[\[17963\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Answer of 28 February 2022 to Question 126694 on Calder Valley line, whether travellers from Bradford to Manchester rail stations will see a reduction in journey times under the Integrated Rail Plan.

Andrew Stephenson:

I refer the Hon. Member to the Answer given on 28 February 2022.

■ Department of Transport: Information Officers

Rachel Hopkins:

[\[17166\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much his Department spent on (a) internal communications and b) employing staff to work on internal communications in (i) 2019, (ii) 2020 and (iii) 2021.

Andrew Stephenson:

The costs incurred by the central department for the DfT Internal Communications team for the years requested are as follows:

a) Non pay costs for internal communications

2019: £224,481

2020: £262,479

2021: £176,401

b) Pay costs for internal communications

Pay costs include full pay costs (including salary, employee contributions, pension), and also any posts which subsequently became vacant during the financial year.

2019: £568,098

2020: £679,780

2021: £606,689

Department of Transport: Social Media**Rachel Hopkins:**[\[17167\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much his Department spent on (a) producing digital and video content, (b) employing in-house staff to produce that content and (c) paying external companies and people to produce that content in (i) 2019, (ii) 2020 and (iii) 2021.

Andrew Stephenson:

(a) The information requested could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost.

(b) The information requested on in-house staff cost is not recorded in the level of granularity sought. However, we currently have four members of staff in the creative content team who all work on producing digital and video content as part of their roles. Please refer to the department's Annual Report and Accounts for more information on staff salaries, if required: (Page 141 onwards: [Annual Report and Accounts 2020–21 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#))

(c) The information requested could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost.

Driving Instruction**Dan Jarvis:**[\[16957\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has had recent discussions with (a) the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Secretary of States for (b) Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and (c) Work and Pensions on the potential (i) viability of providing financial support for driving lessons and a licence application for unemployed non-drivers and (ii) impact of that proposal on employability.

Trudy Harrison:

The DfT has not had any discussions with any other government department on this subject.

■ Electric Scooters: Regulation**Sarah Olney:**[\[15328\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department plans to take to ensure that the needs of visually impaired people are taken into account when designing regulation of e-scooters.

Trudy Harrison:

E-scooters cannot currently be used on the pavement and we do not expect this to change. As the Government considers regulations for construction and use of e-scooters, we will continue to engage with stakeholders representing the needs of blind and visually impaired people. Additionally, we have instructed all local authorities participating in trials to engage with disability groups in their areas throughout the trial period to ensure their concerns are being heard.

We will consult publicly before any new arrangements come into force, and all interested parties will have a chance to shape the new regime.

■ Electric Vehicles: Charging Points**Tony Lloyd:**[\[14437\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what resources have been committed to the establishment of new electric vehicle charging points; what estimate he has made of the number of electric vehicle charging points that those resources will enable to be created; and if he will publish details of (a) expenditure and (b) the number of electric vehicle charging points by region.

Trudy Harrison:

Government has committed £2.5 billion since 2020 to support the transition to zero emission vehicles. Over £1.6 billion will be used to support charging infrastructure.

On 25 March 2022 the Government published the Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Infrastructure Strategy, setting out our vision and commitments to make EV charging cheaper and more convenient than refuelling at a petrol station. In the strategy, Government laid out that it expects at least ten times more public chargepoints to be installed across the UK by the end of the decade, bringing the number to around 300,000 by 2030.

The Department publishes data on the number of publicly available chargepoints monthly. In addition, on a quarterly basis, it also publishes data on chargepoints installed with support from grants offered by the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles. This includes both the number of installations and the grant value awarded, broken down to regional and local authority level for the whole UK.

Gill Furniss:**[17070]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 8 June 2022 to Question 11567 on Electric Vehicles: Charging Points, whether the UK electric vehicle infrastructure strategy includes (a) metric national targets and (b) costings for local authorities required to identify the number of chargepoints needed.

Trudy Harrison:

We have published a landmark strategy setting out our plans to accelerate the rollout of a world-class charging network.

We have not set national targets at this stage. Setting binding targets at this stage would risk stifling innovative approaches and could lead to the installation of chargepoints in the wrong place at the wrong time.

However, we have set an expectation that there will be at least ten times more public chargepoints to be installed across the UK by the end of the decade, bringing the number to at least 300,000 by 2030. The number of local public chargepoints needed will vary across different areas and over time, depending on the types of chargepoint installed, travel patterns, and consumer preferences.

To ensure that the transition to electric vehicles takes place in every part of the country, we are pledging at least £500m to support local chargepoint provision. As part of this, the Local EV Infrastructure (LEVI) fund will provide approximately £400m of capital and £50m of resource funding to support local authorities to work with industry and transform the availability of charging for drivers without off-street parking.

■ EU Countries: Blue Badge Scheme**Dr Jamie Wallis:****[14614]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what diplomatic steps he is taking to help ensure recognition of Blue Badges for motorists are recognised in (a) Spain and (b) other European countries.

Wendy Morton:

The Government remains committed to confirming the status of UK issued Blue Badges for motorists visiting Europe. Twenty countries have already committed to recognising Blue Badges and are listed on gov.uk:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/blue-badge-using-it-in-the-eu/using-a-blue-badge-in-the-european-union>

Discussions continue with a number of countries. It would not be appropriate for me to comment on the progress of discussions while they are on-going.

■ High Speed 2 Line: West Coast Main Line**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:****[17080]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Government decision to remove the Golborne Link from the HS2 Bill on 6 June 2022, whether the Government

intends that any alternative proposal will link HS2 with the West Coast Main Line; and when it intends to bring forward alternative proposals.

Andrew Stephenson:

The government has confirmed it will look at alternatives which deliver similar benefits to Scotland as the Golborne link, so long as these deliver for the taxpayer within the £96 billion envelope allocated for the Integrated Rail Plan. Options to be explored could range from upgrading existing infrastructure to high speed lines. Any decision to pursue an alternative will be announced at the appropriate time.

■ **P&O Ferries: Redundancy**

Emma Hardy:

[\[17091\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 16 May 2022 to Question 2633 on P&O Ferries: Port of Hull, when the Maritime and Coastguard Agency contacted the Bahamas Maritime Authority when UK seafarers were dismissed from employment on the P&O Ferries vessel Pride of Hull on 17 March 2022.

Robert Courts:

Officials from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) first made contact with the Bahamas Maritime Authority (BMA) on 21 March.

Following initial contact, the MCA were in regular contact with their counterparts in the Bahamas Maritime Authority (BMA) in relation to P&O Ferries and safety compliance and concerns related to safety and seafarers working and living conditions.

■ **Railways: Industrial Disputes**

Sarah Olney:

[\[17072\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will publish the (a) number and (b) dates of times ministers in his Department have met with officials at the RMT union since 13 May 2022.

Wendy Morton:

There have been no meetings between ministers and officials at the RMT union to discuss rail matters since 13 May 2022. The Minister for Aviation, Maritime and Security met with industry stakeholders, including the RMT, to discuss the seafarer protection nine-point plan on 9 June.

The rail disputes are between individual employers and the trade unions and it would not be prudent for Government to intervene in this relationship. We encourage meaningful discussions and for the trade unions to return to the negotiating table in order to end these rail strikes which impact businesses, users and the general public.

■ Roads Policing Review

Gill Furniss: [\[17069\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to his Department's call for evidence on the Roads policing review, published on 13 July 2020, when he plans to publish the (a) summary of responses and (b) recommendations arising from that review.

Trudy Harrison:

The call for evidence saw 149 responses submitted, many of which were incredibly detailed. We will publish once we have given the responses our full consideration.

■ Roads: Accidents

Gill Furniss: [\[17068\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he plans to publish a response to his Department's consultation on Creating a road collision investigation branch.

Trudy Harrison:

My Department ran a public consultation on creating a Road Collision Investigation Branch between 28 October and 9 December 2021. The consultation has now closed, and the Department is currently conducting a full analysis of the feedback. We expect to publish the response to the consultation in due course.

TREASURY

■ Car Allowances

Holly Lynch: [\[15298\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of amending the mileage allowance payment per mile in light of the increasing cost of fuel.

Helen Whately:

The Government sets the Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (AMAPs) rates to minimise administrative burdens. AMAPs aim to reflect running costs including fuel, servicing and depreciation. Depreciation is estimated to constitute the most significant proportion of the AMAPs.

Employers are not required to use the AMAPs. Instead, they can agree to reimburse the actual cost incurred, where individuals can provide evidence of the expenditure, without an Income Tax or National Insurance charge arising.

Alternatively, they can choose to pay a different mileage rate that better reflects their employees' circumstances. However, if the payment exceeds the amount due under AMAPs, and this results in a profit for the individual, they will be liable to pay Income Tax and National Insurance contributions on the difference.

The Government keeps this policy under review.

Martyn Day: [\[15313\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the accuracy of current Advisory Fuel Rates for company cars in relation to the rising price of fuel.

Helen Whately:

Advisory Fuel Rates (AFRs) are reviewed by HMRC on a quarterly basis. The outcome of these reviews is published on GOV.UK on 1 March, 1 June, 1 September, and 1 December respectively.

AFRs were increased on 1 June to reflect the latest fuel prices.

AFRs represent the fuel cost per mile for different engine types and sizes, based on average pump prices in the UK. The latest petrol and diesel prices are taken from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and the LPG (UK average) is from the Automobile Association website.

Christine Jardine: [\[17079\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will adjust the 45p per mile allowance to reflect the sustained increase in petrol prices.

Helen Whately:

The Government sets the Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (AMAPs) rates to minimise administrative burdens. AMAPs aim to reflect running costs including fuel, servicing and depreciation. Depreciation is estimated to constitute the most significant proportion of the AMAPs.

Employers are not required to use the AMAPs. Instead, they can agree to reimburse the actual cost incurred, where individuals can provide evidence of the expenditure, without an Income Tax or National Insurance charge arising.

Alternatively, they can choose to pay a different mileage rate that better reflects their employees' circumstances. However, if the payment exceeds the amount due under AMAPs, and this results in a profit for the individual, they will be liable to pay Income Tax and National Insurance contributions on the difference.

The Government keeps this policy under review.

■ Carers: Finance**Dr Rupa Huq:** [\[15314\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of providing additional financial support to unpaid carers.

Mr Simon Clarke:

The Government recognises the challenges that some carers are facing due to the rising cost of living and values the vital contribution made by carers to society. That is why millions of the most vulnerable households, including carers, will receive at least £1,200 of one-off support in total this year to help with the cost of living. Nearly 60% of the 1 million working age Carer's Allowance recipients receive a means-tested benefit, a disability benefit, or both and will therefore benefit from one or both of the

£650 Means-Tested Benefit Cost of Living Payment and the £150 disability Cost of Living Payment. Carers with a pensioner in the household will benefit from an extra £300 Pensioner Cost of Living Payment and carers will benefit from the £400 per household universal support provided through the Energy Bills Support Scheme.

Previously announced measures to help people tackle the cost of living will also benefit carers, including cuts to the Universal Credit (UC) taper rate, frozen alcohol duty and fuel duty, raising the NICs threshold, council tax rebates and the rise in the National Living Wage to £9.50 an hour.

For carers that are not eligible for Cost of Living Payments or for those that still need additional support, the government is providing an extra £500 million of local support, via the Household Support Fund. The Fund will be extended from this October to March 2023, bringing total funding for the scheme to £1.5 billion.

■ Department for Work and Pensions and Revenue and Customs

Emma Hardy: [17092]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what comparative assessment he has made of the expected returns from the compliance units of (a) Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs and (b) the Department for Work and Pensions for the period 2022 to 2024.

Lucy Frazer:

It is not possible to provide an exact rate of return per compliance unit for HMRC given a range of variables that would affect this figure, including the natural variability in the work HMRC compliance undertakes and the types of risk that compliance officers can be deployed against.

■ Fuels: Excise Duties

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [17082]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the policy objectives are of the reduction to fuel duty by five pence per litre announced on 23 March 2022.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [17083]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment he has made of the impact of the reduction of fuel duty by five pence per litre on the cost of fuel at the pump.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [17084]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he plans to introduce any additional measures aimed at reducing the cost of petrol and diesel.

Helen Whately:

The tax information and impact note for the recent fuel duty cut includes detail of the measure's policy objective and can be viewed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/changes-to-fuel-duty-rates/fuel-duty-rates-2022-23>.

The Government has been clear that it expects those in the supply chain to pass the fuel duty cut through to consumers as promptly as possible. Following a request from the Business Secretary, the Competition and Markets Authority will undertake a short and focused review of the fuel market, and will provide advice to the Government on steps that could be taken to improve outcomes for consumers.

All taxes are kept under review.

■ Retail Trade: Costs

Douglas Chapman: [\[14507\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions his Department has had with organisations representing convenience stores on (a) rising energy costs and (b) rising food costs.

Douglas Chapman: [\[15272\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to help convenience stores with (a) rising energy costs, and (b) rising food costs.

Helen Whately:

We understand that businesses including convenience stores are facing cost pressures such as high energy and commodity prices, which are impacted by global factors.

The Government engages in regular dialogue with a wide range of Business Representative Organisations (BROs) across the UK and will continue to do so. BRO feedback is valuable in understanding the wider economic landscape and to inform and evaluate ongoing policy making. BRO reportage has provided important insights in the context of the various business support measures the Government has announced.

For the retail sector this includes:

- The Recovery Loan Scheme, which has been extended to 30 June 2022, providing businesses with up to £2 million of government guaranteed finance.
- Cutting business rates by 50% for eligible retail, hospitality and leisure businesses in 2022-23, worth up to £110,00 per business.
- Increasing the Employment Allowance from £4,000 to £5,000, cutting the cost of employment for 495,000 small businesses.
- Businesses will also benefit from the cut to fuel duty announced by the Chancellor as part of his Spring Statement. The duty rate on petrol and diesel has been cut by 5p per litre until March 2023.

The Government is in regular contact with business groups about the challenges businesses are facing and we will continue to keep the situation under review. The Government is always open to hearing from businesses on the issues they are facing.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Carer's Allowance: Universal Credit

Bill Esterson:

[16925]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment has she made of the impact of deductions from Universal Credit equivalent to the amount received in Carers Allowance on carers; and what representations she has received on allowing carers to keep their Carers' Allowance without having deductions made from Universal Credit.

David Rutley:

We receive regular representations that receipt of Carer's Allowance should not affect other benefits. But the principle that available income reduces entitlement to means-tested benefits is long-established, for example in income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA(IB)), income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA (IR)) and Income Support.

Universal Credit is a means-tested system of support, and where an individual claims Universal Credit, their award is adjusted to take account of other financial support that the claimant is already receiving – including earnings, other income and benefits.

Where claimants have income available to help meet their everyday living costs, their entitlement to Universal Credit is adjusted accordingly. This includes other benefits such as new style Jobseeker's Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance and Carer's Allowance, which are taken into account in full.

There are no plans to change the treatment of Carer's Allowance in Universal Credit.

Carers on a low income who provide care for at least 35 hours per week for a severely disabled person can get an additional amount, as part of their Universal Credit award. Carers do not need to be claiming Carer's Allowance to be eligible for the additional amount for carers.

The 2022/23 rate for the carer addition in UC is £168.81 per calendar month.

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Management Consultants

Rachel Hopkins:

[17169]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much her Department spent on external management consultants in the financial years (a) 2019, (b) 2020 and (c) 2021; and on which ten projects or work areas her Department spent the most on support from those consultants in each of those financial years.

Guy Opperman:

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) publishes details about headcount and payroll costs for permanent staff and contractors on GOV.UK on a monthly basis. You can find the information you seek at [DWP workforce management information - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dwp-workforce-management-information)

The DWP consultancy spend for the financial years 2019 through to 2021 is shown below.

2018/19 £4,446,169

2019/20 £4,570,665

2020/21 £1,284,861

2021/21 £1,041,058

Information on the projects or work areas DWP spent the most on support from those consultants in each of the financial years is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Recruitment

Rachel Hopkins: [\[17170\]](#)

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

Guy Opperman:

[Holding answer 16 June 2022]: Due to the financial and reporting systems in the department it is not currently possible to separate out spend associated with external recruitment consultancy services from all other consultancy spend for the majority of departmental recruitment. As a result we are also not able to identify the equivalent posts.

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Telephone Services

Jessica Morden: [\[16879\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many new enquiries her Department's MP hotline teams dealt with in each month in 2021; what steps her Department is taking to manage the (a) performance and (b) case management of those teams; what steps she is taking to oversee the performance of those MP hotlines; and if she will make a statement.

Guy Opperman:

Information relating to the numbers of enquiries received by DWP MP hotlines is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

We offer a range of ways for MPs to contact DWP, including through dedicated MP hotlines within Disability Services, CMG, and Retirement Services. Information about how MPs and their staff can best contact us is published on the Parliamentary website and this information is regularly updated. Individual product lines also conduct regular engagement with MPs, including bespoke sessions with MPs and their support teams.

Enquiries received by MP hotlines are managed as part of DWP's correspondence teams. We closely monitor the performance of these teams and regularly review the resource allocated to this work and where process improvements can be made.

All MP hotlines are regularly checked during operating hours and calls from MPs are either answered directly or allow a voicemail message to be left, which will be picked up and responded to as soon as possible.

■ Local Housing Allowance

Ms Karen Buck: [\[16822\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 26 May 2022 to Question 6683 on Local Housing Allowance, what the source is of the data being collected on the proportion of private rented sector tenants facing a shortfall between the rent they owe their landlord and the Local Housing Allowance they are eligible to receive.

David Rutley:

Data on rents and how they relate to the Local Housing Allowance are collected via the Single Housing Benefit Extract and Universal Credit administrative systems.

Ms Karen Buck: [\[16823\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 26 May 2022 to Question 6683 on Local Housing Allowance, whether her Department is collecting data on the prevalence and size of shortfalls experienced by Local Housing Allowance claimants by (a) Government Office Region, (b) Broad Rental Market Area and (c) the size of property.

David Rutley:

The Department has data on Local Housing Allowance by region and Broad Rental Market Area. There is also some data on size of property, in that for most households on Local Housing Allowance data is collected on the number of bedrooms.

Ms Karen Buck: [\[16825\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 15 April 2019 to Question 243314 on Local Housing Allowance: Greater London, if she will place a copy in the Library of any ranking exercise of Broad Rental Market Areas to determine their divergence from actual rent levels in any of the last three years carried out by (a) her Department and (b) the Valuation Agency Office.

David Rutley:

The Department has not undertaken a ranking exercise of Broad Rental Market Areas in the last three years. The Local Housing Allowance was raised to the 30th percentile of market rents in April 2020 and that level has been maintained in April 2021 and April 2022

While the Valuation Office Agency is not part of the Department, we are not aware of any ranking exercise that it has carried out.

■ Mortgages: Housing Benefit**Lisa Nandy:** [\[16929\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will make an estimate of the number of people who could benefit each year from the Government's proposals to allow housing benefit to be used towards the cost of a mortgage.

David Rutley:

There are 5 million in receipt of housing support, and though we know that it is likely most will not be in a position to take up the new policy, it removes a barrier that currently prevents thousands of families from buying their own home.

■ Universal Credit**Ms Karen Buck:** [\[16820\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the letter from the Chair of the Social Security Advisory Committee's (SSCA) of 11 February 2022 to the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, whether SSAC's formal reference report on a framework of oversight, reporting and scrutiny for an agile migration process which will be evolving iteratively over time for the Universal Credit (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2022 has been submitted to her Department as of 13 June 2022.

David Rutley:

We are considering SSAC's formal reference report and will consider how to respond, when we bring forward the Universal Credit (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2022 at the nearest opportunity'.

Chris Stephens: [\[17006\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many universal credit claims were subject to deductions in the most recent month for which data is available, broken down by parliamentary constituency; how much on average was deducted in each constituency; what the total sum was of deductions in each constituency; and what proportion of each of those sums was deducted to repay advance payments; and if she will make a statement.

David Rutley:

The Government recognises the importance of supporting the welfare of claimants who have incurred debt. We seek to balance recovery of debt against not causing hardship for claimants and their families. Processes are in place to ensure deductions are manageable, and customers can contact DWP Debt Management if they are experiencing financial hardship, to discuss a reduction in their rate of repayment or a temporary suspension, depending on their financial circumstances.

Since April 2021, we have reduced the normal maximum rate of deductions in Universal Credit from 40% to 25% of a claimant's Standard Allowance. These positive measures were put in place to support claimants to manage financial difficulties

Advances are a claimant's benefit entitlement paid early, allowing claimants to access 100% of their estimated Universal Credit payment upfront. They ensure nobody has to wait for a payment in Universal Credit and those who need it are able to receive financial support as soon as possible. Claimants can receive up to 100% of their estimated Universal Credit award if required, resulting in 25 payments over a 24-month period. This is not a debt.

The requested analysis of Universal Credit claims with a deduction in February 2022 by Parliamentary Constituency in Great Britain (GB) is provided in the separate spreadsheet.

Attachments:

1. Table [PQ_17006 Table.xlsx]

■ **Universal Credit Complex Needs Steering Group**

Ms Karen Buck:

[\[16821\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Answer of 4 April 2022 to Question 147023 on Universal Credit Complex Needs Steering Group, whether the Complex Needs Steering Group referred to in minutes of earlier meetings is the same as the Vulnerable Claimants Steering Group referred to in the minutes of the Universal Credit Programme Board meeting of 22 October 2019.

David Rutley:

Yes.

■ **Universal Credit: Veterans**

John Healey:

[\[16851\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 8 June 2022 to Question 11553 on Universal Credit: Veterans, if she will provide a breakdown by (a) region and (b) local authority of the total number of veterans in receipt of Universal Credit for assessment periods ending in April 2022.

David Rutley:

The data requested is not available by geography. We do not have data on the total number of veterans on UC, only those who have identified themselves.

MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ Vaccine Damage Payment Scheme

Sir Christopher Chope:

[14411]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many claims for payments under the Vaccine Damage Payment Scheme were assessed by the Government's contractor, Crawford and Company, in the weeks beginning (a) 16 May, (b) 23 May and (c) 30 May 2022; and what was the outcome of those assessments.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 13 June 2022. The correct answer should have been:

Maggie Throup:

The Vaccine Damage Payment Scheme medical assessments commenced from the week of 23 May ~~2022~~2020, with none currently concluded. As these claims are the first related to COVID-19 to be assessed under the Scheme, the NHS Business Services Authority is unable to provide a timescale for the conclusion of these assessments. The NHS Business Services Authority is updating claimants on progress and working with the supplier to progress the cases

As medical assessments have recently commenced, initially the number of cases is being limited to ensure effective and consistent training of medical assessors and therefore outcomes. The NHS Business Services Authority intends to increase the number of medical assessments to ensure claims are assessed as soon as possible.

The following table shows the number of cases shared with Crawford and Company for medical assessment in the weeks commencing 23 May and 30 May 2022.

WEEK COMMENCING	NUMBER OF CLAIMS SENT FOR MEDICAL ASSESSMENT
23 May 2022	10
30 May 2022	10

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ NSI Annual Report

Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Kwasi Kwarteng):

[\[HCWS106\]](#)

I am today laying before Parliament the first Annual Report under the National Security and Investment Act 2021. I will place copies in the Libraries of both Houses and the Report will also be published on Gov.uk.

The National Security and Investment Act 2021 protects the UK from risks to national security arising from acquisitions of control of entities and assets. In doing so it also maintains the UK's status as an attractive place to invest. The system is predictable, enabling businesses involved in acquisitions to have certainty when engaging with it and it provides clear and efficient clearance processes for relevant acquisitions to be assessed, for remedies to be applied if necessary.

The new National Security and Investment (NSI) system commenced on 4 January 2022. The Act requires me to report on the system each year after 31 March.

I am pleased to lay the first NSI Act Annual Report before the House today. This fulfils my requirements under section 61 of the Act for this year.

The Report shows that the system has started strongly. As of 31 March, the Investment Security Unit received 222 notifications and accepted 201 of them. To that date I had issued 17 call-in notices. Of those notifications that were cleared without any further action, all were cleared within the statutory 30 working day limit. I had not imposed any final orders (the means by which I can impose conditions on, block, or unwind an acquisition) by 31 March in relation to the 17 call-in notices issued, though the full national security assessment process was still ongoing for many of them.

Because the data covers only the first three months of the Act's operation, we cannot draw long-term conclusions or observe patterns with accuracy. However, the system is operating well and, extrapolating out, volumes at each stage are within the estimates provided by the Impact Assessment.

We brought forward the reforms in the NSI Act to protect national security while keeping the UK open to investment. The early data is encouraging and shows that these objectives can be complementary rather than mutually exclusive. Those who wish us harm should be in no doubt that we will always act to protect the UK's national security interests. Equally, the Government's ambition is for the UK to be the best place in the world to invest and to start and grow a business, so I hope that business leaders and investors will take confidence from this report.

DEFENCE**■ UK Air Defence Support to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia****Secretary of State for Defence (Mr Ben Wallace):****[[HCWS110](#)]**

After the attacks on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's (KSA) oil production facilities on 14 September 2019, the UK has worked with Saudi Arabia and international partners to help defend critical infrastructure and support the territorial integrity of the Kingdom. The UK deployed two GIRAFFE radars in February 2020 to help mitigate the continued aerial threats that the Kingdom has faced. The deployment was purely defensive in nature. It was necessary to repatriate these radars in December 2021, but the threat to Saudi Arabia has not abated and the requirement to support KSA remains.

The Ministry of Defence has conducted a phased follow-on deployment of air defence equipment to Saudi Arabia. The deployment comprises a small number of High Velocity Missile (Self Propelled) systems and associated personnel. As with the GIRAFFE radars, this is a purely defensive capability, and is being deployed solely to support KSA efforts to defend itself from persistent aerial threats to their territorial integrity.

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE**■ UK-EEA EFTA Separation Agreement Joint Committee meeting, 8 June 2022****Minister for Europe and North America (James Cleverly):****[[HCWS107](#)]**

The UK-EEA EFTA Separation Agreement, which was agreed with Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein, and signed on 28 January 2020, covers citizens' rights and separation provisions. The Separation Agreement established a Joint Committee whose primary role is to supervise and facilitate the implementation and application of the Separation Agreement, with the power to make Decisions. The Joint Committee has a rotating chair which is currently held by Liechtenstein. The third meeting of the Joint Committee took place on 8 June 2022 in London, and focused on citizens' rights. Each of the Parties to the Agreement gave an update on the implementation and application of the citizens' rights provisions, and reiterated their commitment to ensuring continued correct implementation and application. The Independent Monitoring Authority and the EFTA Surveillance Authority also attended to give updates on their monitoring and complaints handling functions as required by the Separation Agreement, and to discuss their annual reports for 2021.

The Joint Committee adopted a Decision to amend Part I of Annex I of the Separation Agreement to reflect decisions taken by the EU's Administrative Commission for the Coordination of Social Security Systems. These decisions relate to the interpretation of the relevant social security coordination provisions, including on data processing and data exchange. They do not impact the rights provided for in the Separation Agreement. Copies of this Decision have been deposited in the Libraries of both Houses

The Joint Committee will meet at least annually, with Norway holding the next rotating chair. The next meeting is expected to take place in 2023. I commit to continuing to

update Parliament following future meetings of the Joint Committee where Decisions are taken.

HOME OFFICE

■ Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures (1 December 2021 to 28 February 2022)

The Minister of State for Security and Borders (Damian Hinds): [\[HCWS105\]](#)

Section 19(1) of the Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures (TPIM) Act 2011 (the Act) requires the Secretary of State to report to Parliament as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of every relevant three-month period on the exercise of her TPIM powers under the Act during that period.

The level of information provided will always be subject to slight variations based on operational advice.

TPIM NOTICES IN FORCE (AS OF 28 FEBRUARY 2022)	2
<hr/>	
Number of new TPIM notices served (during this period)	0
TPIM notices in respect of British citizens (as of 28 February 2022)	2
TPIM notices extended (during the reporting period)	0
TPIM notices revoked (during the reporting period)	1
TPIM notices expired (during reporting period)	1
TPIM notices revived (during the reporting period)	0
Variations made to measures specified in TPIM notices (during the reporting period)	0
Applications to vary measures specified in TPIM notices refused (during the reporting period)	0
The number of subjects relocated under TPIM legislation (during this the reporting period)	1

The TPIM Review Group (TRG) keeps every TPIM notice under regular and formal review. The first quarter TRG meetings were held on 12 and 13 April 2022. On 8 December 2021 one individual was charged with 5 breaches of the electronic communication device measure of the TPIM notice.

JUSTICE

■ Progress update and announcement of measures to improve outcomes in rape cases

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice (Victoria Atkins): [\[HCWS109\]](#)

Today the Government is announcing additional funding for victims of sexual violence and domestic abuse, publishing a progress report on the implementation of the Rape Review action plan and the next iteration of the Criminal Justice System (CJS) Delivery Data Dashboard. These form an important part of our commitment to transform the criminal justice system response to rape, boost transparency and ensure victims get the support they deserve.

The Government is announcing:

- An additional £6.6m p.a boost on a multi-year basis throughout this Spending Review period, for services supporting victims of sexual violence and domestic abuse. £6m is being provided directly to Police and Crime Commissioners to increase community-based support in local areas and £0.6m for training to support the recruitment of the 300 additional Independent Sexual Violence Advisors and Independent Domestic Violence Advisors over the next 3 years.
- The publication of a progress report one year on from the publication of the End-to-End Rape Review Action Plan. This delivers on commitments in the Rape Review to be transparent and accountable to the public on how we are progressing work to improve the cross-system response to rape.
- The third iteration of the Criminal Justice System (CJS) Delivery Data Dashboard, previously named the CJS scorecard. This publication includes additional Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) metrics and population adjustments.

Together, these products will contribute to this Government's commitment to restore faith in the criminal justice system, pursue justice for victims, and build back safer.

LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

■ Housing Update

Minister for Rough Sleeping and Housing (Eddie Hughes): [\[HCWS111\]](#)

The Government has today published its White Paper *A Fairer Private Rented Sector*.

The private rented sector currently offers the most expensive, least secure, and lowest quality housing to a growing number of vulnerable people, including 1.3 million households with children and 382,000 households over 65. This is driving unacceptable outcomes and is holding back some of the most deprived parts of the country.

Many renters face a lack of security as they can be evicted without a reason at just two months' notice (so called 'no fault' Section 21 evictions, under the Housing Act 1988).

This means many tenants do not challenge their landlords or agents on standards. Renters also feel that they can't put down roots in their local areas, which does nothing for community cohesion.

The system doesn't work for good landlords either, the majority of whom do right by their tenants and offer them a positive, secure living situation. They lack the ability to effectively tackle anti-social behaviour or deliberate and persistent non-payment of rent. Most landlords are trying to do the right thing but simply cannot access the information they need. Further, inadequate enforcement is allowing criminal landlords to thrive, which harms tenants and reputable landlords.

The *A Fairer Private Rented Sector* White Paper builds on the vision in the *Levelling Up* White Paper and sets out our plans to fundamentally reform the private rented sector and level up housing quality in this country. It sets the strategic direction for the PRS for the first time in a generation and demonstrates our ambition and determination to give private renters a better deal.

The White Paper sets out a 12-point action plan of how we will deliver a fairer, more secure, higher quality private rented sector:

Safe and Decent Homes

The PRS has some of the worst housing of all tenures. We will improve this by:

- Delivering on our levelling up housing mission and require privately rented homes to meet the Decent Homes Standard for the first time. This will give renters safer and better value homes and remove the blight of poor-quality homes in local communities.
- Accelerating quality improvements in the areas that need it most. We will run pilot schemes with a selection of local authorities to explore different ways of enforcing standards and work with landlords to speed up adoption of the Decent Homes Standard.

Increased Security and Stability

For too long tenants have felt powerless and unable to challenge poor practice. We want to change this. We will rebalance the law to deliver a radically fairer deal for renters, while making sure that landlords can regain possession of their property when needed. We will achieve this by:

- Delivering on our manifesto commitment to abolish Section 21 'no fault' evictions and introducing a simpler, more secure tenancy structure. A tenancy will only end if the tenant ends it or if the landlord has a valid ground for possession, empowering tenants to challenge poor practice and reducing costs associated with unexpected moves.
- Reforming grounds for possession to make sure that landlords have effective means to gain possession of their properties when necessary. We will expedite landlords' ability to evict those who disrupt neighbourhoods through antisocial

behaviour and introduce new grounds for persistent arrears and sale of the property.

Improved Dispute Resolution

Tenants and landlords need structures in place that allow them to resolve disputes efficiently and fairly. We will deliver on this by:

- Only allowing increases to rent once per year, ending the use of rent review clauses, and furthering tenants' ability to challenge excessive rent increases through the First-tier Tribunal to support people to manage their costs and to remain in their homes.
- Strengthening tenants' ability to hold their landlord to account and introduce a new single Ombudsman that all private landlords must join. This will provide fair, impartial, and binding resolution to many issues and be quicker, cheaper and less adversarial than the court system.
- Working with the Ministry of Justice and Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service (HMCTS) to target the areas where there are unacceptable delays in court proceedings. We will also strengthen mediation and alternative dispute resolution to enable landlords and tenants to work together to reduce the risk of issues escalating.

Better Compliance and Robust Enforcement

Landlords, tenants, and local authorities need access to the right information and, for local authorities, the right powers, to crack down on poor practice. We will deliver this by:

- Introducing a new Property Portal to make sure that tenants, landlords and local authorities have the information they need. The portal will provide a single 'front door' for landlords to understand their responsibilities, tenants will be able to access information about their landlord's compliance and local councils will have access to better data to crack down on criminal landlords. We also intend to incorporate some of the functionality of the Database of Rogue Landlords, mandating the entry of all eligible landlord offences and making them publicly visible (subject to consultation with the Information Commissioner's Office).
- Strengthening local councils' enforcement powers and ability to crack down on criminal landlords by seeking to increase investigative powers and strengthening the fine regime for serious offences. We are also exploring a requirement for local councils to report on their housing enforcement activity and want to recognise those local councils that are doing a good job.

A Positive Renting Experience

We want to improve the experience of everyone who rents in the private rented sector and will:

- Legislate to make it illegal for landlords or agents to have blanket bans on renting to families with children or those in receipt of benefits and explore if action is needed for other vulnerable groups, such as prison leavers. We will also improve

support to landlords who let to people on benefits, which will reduce barriers for those on the lowest incomes.

- Give tenants the right to request a pet in their property, which the landlord must consider and cannot unreasonably refuse. We will also amend the Tenant Fees Act 2019 so landlords can request that their tenants buy pet insurance.
- Work with industry experts to monitor the development of innovative market-led solutions to passport deposits. This will help tenants who struggle to raise a second deposit to move around the PRS more easily and support tenants to save for ownership.

We have already taken significant action to improve private renting, including significantly reducing the proportion of non-decent private rented homes, banning tenancy fees for tenancy agreements signed after 1 June 2019, and introducing pandemic emergency measures to ban bailiff evictions – these reforms will finish the job that we started in 201- and deliver a fairer private rented sector.

We have also today published the Government response to the 2019 consultation “*A new deal for renting*” that sets out how the new tenancy regime will work once section 21 evictions are abolished, the Government response to the ‘*Considering the case for a Housing Court*’ call for evidence, and the Government response to the 2019 Tenancy Deposit Reform Call for Evidence. We will be depositing copies of these documents in the House Library.

We will deliver on these reforms in the forthcoming Parliamentary session, which will drive real change and make the private rented sector fit for the 21st century. These reforms will apply to England only.

TRANSPORT

■ Transport Update

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport (Robert Courts): [\[HCWS112\]](#)

Over the Half Term Jubilee weekend, we saw disruption at UK airports with some passengers facing long queues and cancellations largely due to staff shortages at airports, airlines and ground handlers. These experiences, for too many consumers recently, have been unacceptable.

The Secretary of State and I have made it clear to the sector that they need to operate services that are offered for sale properly and according to schedule, or provide swift, appropriate compensation.

The aviation industry is privately owned, operated, and run. It is therefore responsible for making sure that it has enough staff to meet demand and to operate the flights offered for sale. It is important that the sector is a competitive, attractive market for workers. The Government has called upon the sector’s leadership to offer better packages and build a resilient workforce to meet demand.

Since earlier this year, Government has worked across a number of different areas to help the industry alleviate the issues they have been facing. We are clear that consumers should not lose out. The Government is taking steps to boost consumer rights, including recently consulting on using our Brexit freedoms to enhance consumer protections. We have committed to publishing an aviation passenger charter to ensure consumers can access information about their rights all in one place.

We have sought ways to ease the burden of background checks carried out by industry. A Statutory Instrument was laid on 29 April to provide greater flexibility, enabling Ministers to take the decision to allow certain training to be undertaken while background checks were completed. Ministers have also agreed that HMRC employment history letters can be used as a suitable form of reference check - with safeguards in place. These temporary alleviations have helped to speed up recruitment times.

In partnership with the Civil Aviation Authority, the Government has written to the industry setting out five specific expectations we have for the aviation sector this summer:

1. Summer schedules must be reviewed to make sure they are deliverable
2. Everyone from ground handlers to air traffic control must collaborate on resilience planning
3. Passengers must be promptly informed of their consumer rights when things go wrong, and – if necessary – compensated in good time
4. Disabled and less mobile passengers must be given assistance they require.
5. Safety and security must never be compromised

I am chairing a Strategic Risk Group with CEOs of the aviation sector, which will meet on a weekly basis going into the summer. This group will identify possible interventions to further improve the resilience of the sector, and will be used to hold the sector to account for delivering its schedules. DfT Ministers and senior officials will continue to monitor the situation closely to make sure consumers do not lose out from any further disruption.

TREASURY

■ Business Plan of the United Kingdom Debt Management Office

The Economic Secretary to the Treasury (John Glen):

[[HCWS108](#)]

The United Kingdom Debt Management Office (DMO) has today published its business plan for the financial year 2022-23. Copies have been deposited in the Libraries of both houses and are available on the DMO's website, www.dmo.gov.uk.