



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 17 June 2022 and the information is correct at the time of publication (03:34 P.M., 17 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

#### ■ Buildings: Natural Gas

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[15280\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will take steps to suspend the use of gas in all new (a) residential and (b) commercial developments.

**Greg Hands:**

From 2025, the Government anticipates that heat pumps and heat networks will become the primary heating technologies for new residential and commercial developments, under the Future Homes Standard and the Future Buildings Standard respectively.

The Government also committed in the 2020 Energy White Paper to consult on whether it is appropriate to end gas grid connections to new homes being built from 2025, in favour of clean energy alternatives.

#### ■ Carbon Capture and Storage

**Ben Lake:** [\[15351\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the total cost to the public purse of supporting the bioenergy with carbon capture and storage sector in the UK by 2050.

**Greg Hands:**

The Government has not estimated the total cost to the public purse of supporting bioenergy with carbon capture and storage out to 2050. The Government will set out more information on the use of biomass and bioenergy with carbon capture and storage as part of the Biomass Strategy that will be published later this year.

**Ben Lake:** [\[15352\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many trees will need to be burnt each year to reach the target of removing 58 MtCO<sub>2</sub> in the Bioenergy with Carbon Capture and Storage plan laid out in his Net Zero Strategy.

**Greg Hands:**

The Government's Net Zero Strategy includes illustrative scenarios on how to meet net zero in 2050, and those modelled pathways include an illustrative range of carbon removals of 52-58MtCO<sub>2</sub> via Bioenergy with Carbon Capture and Storage (BECCS). This will require a variety of biomass feedstocks, including from forestry. The Government has not yet estimated the quantity of forestry resources needed within that mix. More details on how biomass technologies will be used to meet the UK's Net Zero targets will be released in the forthcoming Biomass Strategy later this year.

## ■ Cost of Living

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[14492\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with (a) large fuel firms and (b) other stakeholders on the impact of the rise in the cost of living.

**Greg Hands:**

The Government understands that fuel prices are an important component of UK household and business expenditures and is sympathetic to the impact of domestic fuel costs on UK consumers.

BEIS Ministers are in regular contact with the fuel industry at all levels and have made it clear operators should do everything they can to reduce the cost to end users.

The Government has asked the Competition and Markets Authority to conduct an urgent review of the fuel market, as well as a longer-term market study under the Enterprise Act 2002, to explore whether the retail fuel market has adversely affected consumer interests.

## ■ Energy Charter Treaty

**Kenny MacAskill:**

[\[14638\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of the UK engaging in a coordinated withdrawal from the Energy Charter Treaty alongside other European nations.

**Greg Hands:**

The Government considers that it is important to remain a Party to the Energy Charter Treaty and support its modernisation, as the Government believes that a renegotiated Energy Charter Treaty will remain valuable in supporting clean energy investment in the future.

The Government welcomes the role of the Energy Charter Treaty in ensuring consistent legal protection for UK investors operating abroad. This allows UK companies, investing in countries that have signed the Treaty, to enjoy more protection for their assets, including those involved in renewable energy production.

## ■ Energy Company Obligation

**Vicky Foxcroft:**

[\[14547\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many grants have been awarded via Energy Company Obligation Schemes to households in (a) the UK, (b) London and (c) Lewisham Deptford constituency as of 8 June 2022.

**Greg Hands:**

The Energy Company Obligation (ECO) scheme is not a grant scheme but an obligation that the Government has placed on larger energy suppliers to install energy efficiency and heating measures in people's homes across Great Britain.

ECO has been in place since January 2013 and has delivered around 3.5 million measures in 2.4 million homes, of which around 172,000 are in London and 1,200 are in the Lewisham Deptford constituency. Statistics available at:

[www.gov.uk/government/statistics/household-energy-efficiency-statistics-headline-release-may-2022](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/household-energy-efficiency-statistics-headline-release-may-2022).

**Philip Dunne:** **[15213]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 1 June 2022 to Question 7959 on Energy Company Obligation, what plans he has to (a) lay and (b) secure Parliamentary approval of the secondary legislation implementing the ECO4 scheme before expiry of the interim delivery phase; and if he will make a statement.

**Greg Hands:**

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

**Philip Dunne:** **[15214]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 1 June 2022 to Question 7959 on Energy Company Obligation, what statutory provisions in force (a) between December 2018 and March 2022 and (b) since April 2022 require energy suppliers to install energy efficiency measures under the Energy Company Obligation scheme.

**Greg Hands:**

The Electricity and Gas (Energy Company Obligation) Order 2018 required obligated energy suppliers to install heating and energy efficiency measures between December 2018 and March 2022.

Since April 2022, a statutory provision has not been in place. Installations under ECO have continued under transitional arrangements that were announced in the ECO4 Government response; primarily via ECO3 interim delivery, as referred to in the answer I gave the hon. Member for Brighton, Pavilion on 1 June 2022 to Question [7959](#).

**Philip Dunne:** **[15215]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 1 June 2022 to Question 7959 on Energy Company Obligation, what assessment he has made of the levels of compliance of licensed (a) gas and (b) electricity suppliers with the Energy Company Obligation scheme since 1 April 2022; and if he will make a statement.

**Greg Hands:**

Compliance for obligated energy suppliers is monitored by the scheme administrator, Ofgem. Ofgem works with suppliers to communicate rules for installing energy efficiency measures.

Ofgem run monthly compliance checks to ensure that what has been delivered to date is eligible and compliant under the scheme. They will make a final decision on all installations at final determination of the ECO3 scheme – the most recent iteration of the scheme – later this year and make a final decision on each supplier's compliance with their obligation. Those found non-compliant may face Enforcement Action.

A written Ministerial statement will be issued once the draft Statutory Instrument for ECO4 is laid.

**Energy Supply: Park Homes****Philip Dunne:**[\[14454\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what progress has been made on taking steps to support residents of park homes without a domestic energy supply contract with the cost of their energy bills following the conclusion of the scheme's technical consultation.

**Greg Hands:**

As set out in the consultation, 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: Advisory Services****Vicky Foxcroft:**[\[15423\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if the Government will make funding available for a public energy advice service in England which is equivalent to the funding provided by the Scottish Government to Home Energy Scotland.

**Greg Hands:**

By this summer, the Government will launch a comprehensive energy advice service on GOV.UK which will provide advice and information to consumers on improving the energy performance of their homes. The Government will also launch additional support for homeowners through telephone support and specific local area advice for energy consumers with further details, including on any funding, to be announced in due course.

## ■ Green Homes Grant Scheme

**Vicky Foxcroft:** [\[15424\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the recommendations of the National Audit Office report entitled Green Homes Grant Voucher Scheme published on 8 September 2021, whether the Government has made an assessment of the potential merits of replacing the Green Homes Grant with another long-term retrofit scheme.

**Greg Hands:**

In order to ensure the Government continues to deliver its net zero ambitions and support a thriving building retrofit industry, the Government will be expanding its funding commitment for both the Homes Upgrade Grant scheme and the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund with up to £950 million and £800 million in additional funding respectively over 2022/23 to 2024/25. This takes total funding to over £6.4billion across the lifetime of this Parliament. The Government has also introduced a new Boiler Upgrade Scheme worth £450 million, which will provide capital grants towards the cost of a heat pump.

## ■ Housing: Energy

**Vicky Foxcroft:** [\[14549\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps the Government is taking to introduce a minimum energy efficiency standard for all homes in the England.

**Greg Hands:**

The Government committed in the Clean Growth Strategy to improve as many homes as possible to EPC Band C by 2035 and as many private rental homes as possible to EPC band C by 2030 where practical, affordable and cost effective. In England, 46% of homes are now at EPC C or better, up from 14% in 2010.

In the Net Zero Strategy, the Government committed to consult on phasing in higher minimum standards across all sectors to meet this ambition. The Government has already consulted on higher standards in the private rented sector and will publish a Government Response in due course.

## ■ Motor Vehicles: Hydrogen

**John Spellar:** [\[15177\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to encourage investment into the manufacturing of hydrogen internal combustion engines in the UK.

**Lee Rowley:**

It is likely that there will be a range of zero emission technologies adopted in the future. The UK is well-placed to be a leader in hydrogen and electric powered transportation.



The Advanced Propulsion Centre (APC) is directed at late-stage R&D to develop important technologies in the transition to zero-emission transport. Hydrogen, including as a fuel for ICE applications, is an important contributor to reducing CO<sub>2</sub> and other harmful emissions and is within the scope the APC. Information about open funding competitions can be found at: <https://apply-for-innovation-funding.service.gov.uk/competition/search>.

## ■ Motor Vehicles: Manufacturing Industries

**John Spellar:**

[15178]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the number of people currently employed in manufacturing supply chains for (a) internal combustion engines and (b) zero-emission vehicle technologies in the UK; and what steps he is taking to help transition those people in internal combustion supply chains to zero-emission manufacturing roles.

**Lee Rowley:**

In 2021, the automotive manufacturing sector accounted for 155,000 direct jobs and estimated to support an additional 346,000 indirect jobs elsewhere in the economy. ONS Employee Jobs data does not separately report employment by propulsion-type of car manufactured.

The Government continues to support the automotive workforce reskilling for electrification as part of the up to £1bn commitment to build EV supply chains.

The Government will continue to support the collaboration between universities and the automotive industry to deliver cutting edge R&D research. The Automotive Transformation Fund (ATF) supports R&D and capital investments across strategically important parts of the electric vehicle supply chain.

## ■ Renewable Energy: Social Rented Housing

**Vicky Foxcroft:**

[14548]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps the Government is taking to help enable local authorities to install renewable power in existing social housing stock.

**Greg Hands:**

The Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) will upgrade a significant amount of the social housing stock currently below EPC C up to that standard, delivering warm, energy-efficient homes, reducing carbon emissions and fuel bills, tackling fuel poverty, and supporting green jobs.

Over £1bn of funding has already been committed to the SHDF and associated Demonstrator, including £800m for the second Wave of funding from FY 22/23 to FY 24/25.

Renewable and low carbon technologies such as solar panels and heat pumps are included as eligible measures for SHDF funding. Solar is a key part of the

Government's strategy for increasing the energy performance of buildings and contributes to meeting the Government's fuel poverty targets.

## CABINET OFFICE

### ■ Office for Veterans' Affairs

**Stephanie Peacock:** [\[14584\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Office for Veterans' Affairs (OVA) has established an advisory group of academics and researchers to ensure a robust academic contribution to the work of the OVA, as committed to in the Veterans Strategy Action Plan.

**Stephanie Peacock:** [\[14585\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Office for Veterans' Affairs has established a working group with Devolved Administration colleagues to meet quarterly as committed to in the Veterans Strategy Action Plan.

**Stephanie Peacock:** [\[14586\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Office for Veterans Affairs has conducted a review of the governance of veterans issues across government as committed to in the Veterans Strategy Action Plan; and when that review will be published.

**Stephanie Peacock:** [\[14587\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Office for Veterans' Affairs has begun conducting the bespoke campaign on employability to promote to the business audience the skills veterans have, and the schemes that are on offer to increase veteran employment committed to in the Veterans Strategy Action Plan.

**Stephanie Peacock:** [\[14588\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Office for Veterans' Affairs has begun work with the Disability Unit to share best practice with Disabled Persons Organisations on how veterans use adaptive sport to help increase activity levels and participate in communities, as committed to in the Veterans Strategy Action Plan.

**Leo Docherty:**

The Veterans' Strategy Action Plan includes over 60 cross-government commitments and has made good progress in its delivery since its launch in January 2022. I will answer each question in turn:

- The Office for Veterans' Affairs has established both an advisory group of academics and researchers, as well as a working group composed of representatives from the Devolved Administrations to meet quarterly.
- The Office for Veterans' Affairs continues to keep the governance of veterans issues across government under review, and has recently advertised for vacancies

on the Veterans' Advisory Board. I look forward to announcing new board members in due course.

- The Office for Veterans' Affairs has recently delivered the bespoke campaign on employability via a media partnership. We have also further developed tailored veteran employment schemes in the public sector, including Great Place to Work in the Civil Service, Advance into Justice in the Prison Service, and Step into Health. Employers taking on veterans in their first civilian job now benefit from a 12-month National Insurance holiday. We've introduced tailored employment schemes in the public sector, and work closely with the private sector to enhance opportunities for veterans to make the best use of their skills.
- The commitment on sharing best practice with Disabled Persons Organisations was delivered in March, when I hosted a roundtable meeting to discuss the experiences and developments in veteran adaptive sports. I also had the opportunity to recently see veteran adaptive sports in action at the Invictus Games in The Hague and the Veteran Games in Tel Aviv.

## ■ Theft

**Stephanie Peacock:**

[\[15340\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what data his Department holds on the prevalence of incidences of theft of items which are essential to a person's livelihood (a) nationally (b) in Barnsley East constituency.

**Mrs Heather Wheeler:**

The information requested falls under the remit of the UK Statistics Authority.

A response to the hon. Member's Parliamentary Question of 9 June is attached.

**Attachments:**

1. UKSA Letter [UKSA\_Response\_to\_PQ15340.pdf]

## DEFENCE

## ■ Agnes Wanjiru

**John Healey:**

[\[14430\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, on what dates officials in his Department have held discussions with Kenyan officials on the ongoing investigation into the killing of Agnes Wanjiru.

**Leo Docherty:**

A number of formal and informal discussions on the investigation into the alleged murder of Agnes Wanjiru have taken place between Kenyan and UK officials. This is an ongoing investigation under Kenyan jurisdiction. In the interests of protecting an active investigation and in the interest of justice, we cannot comment in detail on activity.

**■ Armed Forces: Females****Stephanie Peacock:**[\[14580\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what progress his Department has made on its six month sprint to address uniform and equipment improvements, as committed to in the Government's response to the Women in the Armed Forces Report.

**Leo Docherty:**

The uniform and clothing sprint has provided focus and effort to materially improve the provision of clothing and equipment for women across the Services with the following deliverables in train and completed:

The Personal Clothing System has been redesigned to improve the sizing and fit of the Combat Jacket, Trousers and Under-Body Armour Combat Shirt (UBACS), making them more inclusive for the user population. Proposed changes were reviewed by the Women in Ground Close Combat Forum, the Infantry Trials and Development Unit and other users in February 2022, alongside the technical clothing leads at Team Leidos. The improved garments are being trialled in Warminster by a range of users through June. Following a successful trial, the endorsed designs and sizes can be added to the existing contract. The garments should be available from December 2022.

Tranche 1 of the Narrow Scalable Tactical Vest (NSTV, part of the VIRTUS System) and accompanying Small Yoke have been delivered and are being added to the stores system by Army Logistic Support. Training on fitting of the survivability equipment is being improved with updated information available, along with NSTV, from August 2022. User feedback will be sought via an online questionnaire hosted on the VIRTUS Defence Connect Page, and will identify areas for further improvement/requirements, which can be addressed through Post-Design Services tasks.

All new recruits who require breast support and who are beginning their initial training in single Service training establishments are now issued with sports bras under separate single Service procurement arrangements.

Following the Defence Committee's Women in the Armed Forces report, a full review has been carried out on all Royal Navy (RN) uniform items to ensure equality for all. The developments already being taken forward include sports bras, overalls, rank boards and RIG22 (the new replacement for the existing Royal Naval Personal Clothing System). Further to the recent Army decision to support tailoring of Mess Kit post-maternity leave, the Navy are investigating transitioning to this policy (there is already an exchange policy for daily and formal uniforms on return from maternity leave).

The new 'RIG22' will replace the current RN Personal Clothing System and was introduced at the start of this year for hot climate deployers. It is a dynamic clothing system which maximises fire protection and is functional, modern and practical. Currently, there are 29 size options for the trousers and 31 size options for the shirts

to ensure a better fit for more personnel than the items they replace. A female-specific Thermal Layer for RIG22 has been procured, and a female-specific Base Layer is in development. Maternity variants of the RIG22 Shirts, Trousers, Thermal Layer and Outer Layer (rain jacket) are also in development. The first issues of the new shirt and trouser commenced in January 2022 and almost 500 personnel now have the new kit. The rollout continues in earnest and by the middle of this year it will have been issued to almost 2,000 personnel. Phase 2 of the rollout, which will cover the remainder of the RN and Royal Fleet Auxiliary will commence from spring 2023.

RN personnel are authorised to purchase their own sports bras until a long-term contract has been let. The long-term contract for provision of sports bras to recruits will be active from mid-2023.

A full review has been carried out on all Royal Air Force (RAF) uniform items to ensure equality for all. The developments already being taken forward include amending the hip to waist ratio for female No 2 skirts and trousers, introducing the option for females to wear No 5 trousers and an updated maternity wear line.

A Special Cases for Uniform Entitlement policy is currently in progress and being ratified with the aim to allow RAF Officers to claim either tailored No 1s and new set of No 2s or a new set of No 1s and No 2s on return to the service after maternity leave/menopause. This is not exhaustive to pregnancy/menopause but forms part of the policy. The claimants have two years to claim with a supporting medical letter.

The RAF aim to address the requirement for a sports bra fitting service and supply of sports bras by providing an allowance to women prior to Phase 1 training. A temporary policy is currently being ratified which will allow for all women to claim for a sports bra, with a more permanent policy being introduced next year to allow women undertaking Phase 1 training to claim back the cost of a sports bra on entering service.

**Stephanie Peacock:**

[\[14581\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what progress the Department has made on its six month sprint to deliver a range of new women's health policies, as committed to in the Government's response to the Women in the Armed Forces Report.

**Leo Docherty:**

In response to the House of Commons Defence Committee's 'Women in the Armed Forces' report, the Ministry of Defence stood up the Servicewomen's Health Improvement Focus Team, who have been working on initiatives which we aim to deliver in the summer of 2022. These initiatives are a menopause policy, a breastfeeding policy, a women's health education package, a review of sanitary protection and development of a disposal system, and the development of a urinary support device.

## ■ Armed Forces: Housing

**John Healey:** [\[14426\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 27 May 2022 to Question 5341 on Armed Forces: Housing, what proportion of flammable cladding is on the 24 high rise buildings which are partially clad.

**Jeremy Quin:**

External wall systems on Ministry of Defence buildings do not contain flammable material. The proportion of external wall systems which contain combustible components on the 24 high rise buildings which are partially clad can be found below:

- Six buildings have approximately 15%.
- 17 buildings have approximately 20%.
- One building has approximately 95%.

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

## ■ Armed Forces: Medical Records

**Stephanie Peacock:** [\[15332\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many times the MyHEALTH app has been downloaded.

**Leo Docherty:**

MyHEALTH provides Service personnel details of their medical readiness; lets them know if they need a vaccination, hearing test, dental appointment or medical review; and provides them details of how to contact their medical and dental centre. While MyHEALTH cannot be downloaded, it is readily available to Service personnel via the Defence Gateway. To date, MyHEALTH has been visited 162,611 times since it went live in November 2021.

Also via the Defence Gateway, personnel can access MyHealthcareHub, which provides various information about Defence Primary Healthcare services and facilities. Between April 2020, when the Hub went live, and April 2022, the latest date for which data is available, the Hub was visited 613,116 times.

## ■ Armed Forces: Recruitment

**John Healey:** [\[13041\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 25 May 2022 to Question 4475 on Armed Forces: Recruitment, what the (a) 18 complaints in 2018, (b) five complaints in 2019 and (c) nine complaints in 2020 made against the Defence Recruitment System were in relation to.

**Leo Docherty:**

2018 - the 18 complaints related to candidates who had difficulties creating and submitting applications, problems accessing registration and pre-employment vetting

links, incorrect status or progression of application showing, and issues following a password reset defect.

2019 - the five complaints related to issues with changing application stream and the Army Cognitive Test freezing.

2020 - the nine complaints related to candidates who experienced issues submitting their application and inputting qualifications.

All of these complaints were resolved to a satisfactory conclusion and all candidates who were affected were able to continue with their recruitment journey

## ■ **Armed Forces: Sexual Offences**

**Stephanie Peacock:** [\[15330\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what immediate support is available for members of the armed forces who are survivors of military sexual assault or rape where the incident takes place whilst overseas.

**Leo Docherty:**

Whilst in Service overseas, immediate support in cases of sexual assault or rape will be afforded by Serious Crime trained Service Police officers or non-Service Police professionals trained in the use of First Response Medical Evidence Kits followed by the deployment of specialist trained officers in quick succession. Service Police sign post all victims to Independent Sexual Violence Advisor services and relevant sexual offence support agencies to provide additional impartial support which is outside of Service control. Following the immediate provision of support and necessary collection of forensic evidence the victim would then, with their consent, be recovered back to the UK to attend a Sexual Assault Referral Centre. Alternatively, this may be achieved in theatre by host nation partner agreements. Victims would also be fully supported by their Chain of Command and receive pastoral support via the Chaplaincy.

**Stephanie Peacock:** [\[15331\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 23 May 2022 to Question 1528 on Armed Forces: LGBT+ People, for what reason his Department does not recognise the terms (a) military sexual assault and (b) military sexual trauma.

**Leo Docherty:**

The terms "military sexual assault" and "military sexual trauma" are not recognised as legal concepts, nor as medical conditions or a clinical diagnosis, in the United Kingdom. They are labels which identify the context in which a sexual assault or traumatic experience occurred. While Defence acknowledges these terms are used in some other jurisdictions, such as the United States of America, these terms are not used by the UK National Health Service, nor the World Health Organisation's "International Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems". As such, the Ministry of Defence does not utilise these terms.



## ■ Future Combat Air System

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[14444\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much from the public purse has been spent on the Future Combat Air System programme as of 8 June 2022.

**Jeremy Quin:**

As of the end of May 2022, £1.1 billion of public money had been spent, including on research and development to support our future combat air capability. This is in addition to investment made by our industrial and international partners.

## ■ Military Aid: Commonwealth Games 2022

**Luke Pollard:** [\[17119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what Military Aid to the Civil Authorities requests his Department has received in respect of the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

**James Heapey:**

Military Aid to the Civil Authorities requests received in support of the 2022 Commonwealth Games are summarised in the table below:

	MILITARY AID TO THE CIVIL AUTHORITIES REQUESTS	To NOTE
1	Command, Control and Intelligence (C2I) Capabilities	
2	Air Security and Counter-Unmanned Aircraft Systems (C-UAS)	
3	Real Life Support Cadre	To administer vehicle fleet
4	Imagery Analysis of Venues	
5	Liaison Officers	
6	Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Teams	
7	Venue Assistance Force	Only to be drawn upon to address ad-hoc on-the-day failures
8	Contingency Venue Assistance Force	Only to be drawn upon in the event of longer term commercial failures
9	High Assurance Search	



## ■ Ministry of Defence: Staff

**John Healey:**

[\[14427\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much has his department spent on civilian personnel in each financial year since 2010.

**Leo Docherty:**

The costs incurred on civilian personnel are detailed in the relevant departmental Annual Report and Accounts (ARAc). These can be found at the following link;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-annual-reports>

For ease, please find this extracted information below;

FINANCIAL YEAR	COSTS (£000)
2010-11	2,877,617
2011-12	2,812,382
2012-13	2,408,220
2013-14	2,398,034
2014-15	2,397,978
2015-16	2,292,990
2016-17	2,401,725
2017-18	2,582,049
2018-19	2,398,100
2019-20	2,654,300
2020-21	2,872,700

## ■ Veterans: Medical Records

**Luke Pollard:**

[\[14607\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 7 June 2022 to Question 9141 on Veterans: Medical Records, what his Department's policy is on how long Defence Medical Services should retain the medical records of service personnel after their discharge.

**Leo Docherty:**

The Department of Health and Social Care recommended minimum retention period for primary health care records is 10 years after an individual's death or their permanent migration from the EU. The Ministry of Defence retention period for primary health care records is 100 years from the individual's date of birth.

**Luke Pollard:**

[\[14608\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 7 June 2022 to Question 9141 on Veterans: Medical Records, what procedures are in place to ensure effective transfer of medical records for service personnel who retire overseas including Commonwealth personnel returning to their country of origin.

**Leo Docherty:**

To ensure continuity of care, the transfer of healthcare information is facilitated for all regular military personnel when they leave the Armed Forces. A number of documents are given in an envelope to the Service person to pass onto their civilian GP. This includes the FMED 133 (a summary of the individual's service medical history), the immediate electronic Integrated Healthcare Record summary of care and any relevant referral letters or results.

Personnel intending to reside and receive healthcare abroad are encouraged to register with a provider and provide them a copy of their FMED 133.

## DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

### ■ Swimming Pools

**Damian Green:**

[\[16810\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department is taking to protect people's access to public swimming pools.

**Damian Green:**

[\[16811\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department is taking to support community leisure centres.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

We recognise the importance of ensuring public access to leisure facilities and swimming pools, which are great spaces for people of all ages to stay fit and healthy, and play an important role within communities.

This is why throughout the pandemic we provided the £100 million National Leisure Recovery Fund which ensured the survival of leisure centres and swimming pools during the pandemic, and supported their reopening after the pandemic.

We also recognise the impact rising energy prices will have on businesses of all sizes. Ofgem and the Government are in regular contact with business groups and the leisure sector to understand the challenges they face and explore ways to protect consumers and businesses. The ongoing responsibility of providing access to public leisure facilities lies at Local Authority level, and the Government continues to encourage Local Authorities to invest in leisure facilities.

## EDUCATION

### ■ Children: Day Care

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[15294\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to help ensure that people are able to access childcare in the context of the rising cost of living.

**Will Quince:**

All children aged three and four can access 15 hours of free childcare a week and the department has doubled this for three and four-year-olds in families where parents work, saving them over £6,000 a year, alongside offering 15 hours of free childcare for two year olds from lower-income families. At the Spending Review, the department announced additional funding for these entitlements worth £160 million in the 2022/23 financial year, £180 million in the 2023/24 financial year and £170 million in the 2024/25 financial year, compared to the 2021/22 financial year.

The department has introduced tax-free childcare, through which eligible families are entitled to up to £2,000 per child per year *for children aged 0-11*, and this goes up to £4,000 a year for disabled children *aged 0-16*. Lower income families receiving Universal Credit can also claim back up to 85% of their childcare costs, which is significantly more generous than the previous benefits system and can be used alongside the free early education entitlements.

Our Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme supported more than 600,000 children last summer with free holiday club places. The department is making more than £600 million available to local authorities in England over the next three years for the HAF programme, providing disadvantaged children and families with access to healthy food and enriching activities during the longer school holidays.

### ■ Children: Disability

**Daisy Cooper:**

[\[14624\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to ensure that the proposals in the SEND Green Paper address the backlogs in disabled children's health and social care.

**Daisy Cooper:**

[\[14625\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to ensure that parent carers can hold health and social providers to account when they do not meet legal deadlines for providing SEND support.

**Daisy Cooper:**

[\[14626\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to ensure every family with a disabled child receives the social care support they need.

**Will Quince:**

I refer the hon. Member for St Albans to the answer I gave on 10 June 2022 to questions [13292](#), [13293](#), and [13294](#).

■ **Foster Care: Lewisham**

**Janet Daby:** [\[15372\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many child foster placements there are in (a) Lewisham East constituency and (b) the borough of Lewisham as of 9 June 2022.

**Will Quince:**

There were 358 children looked after in foster placements in Lewisham local authority as of 31 March 2021. These figures on foster placements are available in the statistical release Children Looked After in England (including Adoption) year ending 31 March 2021 at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoption-2020-to-2021>.

Figures on children looked after at June 2022 are not held by the department. The department is currently collecting data on children looked after for the reporting year ending 31 March 2022 from local authorities. The figures will be published towards the end of the year and will show the number of children in foster placements as of 31 March 2022 and during the reporting year (1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022).

The department does not collect data on looked after children by parliamentary constituency.

■ **Special Educational Needs**

**Daisy Cooper:** [\[14627\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to ensure (a) specialist and (b) mainstream schools can provide the (i) therapies and (ii) other services disabled children need to live fulfilling lives.

**Will Quince:**

I refer the hon. Member for St Albans to the answer I gave on 14 June 2022, to Question [13295](#).

**Mick Whitley:** [\[15379\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if his Department will take steps to simplify the process of referring a young person for a Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) assessment.

**Will Quince:**

As per the proposals set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Green Paper, the department proposes to create new national SEND standards spanning early years providers through to further education. These standards would make consistent the provision, processes and systems that should be made available across the country for every child and

young person with SEND, acting as a common point of reference for every partner within the SEND and AP system.

The standards will set consistent processes for decision making on how a child or young person's needs are identified and recorded and instruct on how and when an assessment should take place, who should be involved in the assessment process, and how the information and evidence collected should be recorded and monitored.

All of the proposals within the Green Paper are currently open to a full public consultation, closing on the 22 July, and the department will be listening carefully to all views expressed to ensure the policies secure the department's ambitions to improve outcomes and parental confidence in the system. The department is committed to ensuring everyone has the opportunity to take part in the consultation and encourages everyone to do so.

### ■ **Special Educational Needs: West Midlands**

**Stuart Anderson:**

**[14609]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to increase SEND provision in the Black Country.

**Will Quince:**

In March 2022, the department announced High Needs Provision Capital Allocations (HNPCA) amounting to over £1.4 billion of new investment. This funding is to support local authorities to deliver new places for the 2023/24 and 2024/25 academic years and improve existing provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or who require alternative provision (AP).

This funding forms part of the £2.6 billion the department is investing between 2022 and 2025 and represents a significant, transformational investment in new high needs provision. It will support local authorities to deliver new places in mainstream and special schools, as well as other specialist settings, and will also be used to improve the suitability and accessibility of existing buildings.

Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall, and Wolverhampton collectively received a total of just over £33.9 million through these allocations announced in March 2022 and just under £6.6 million through previous HNPCA allocations announced in April 2021 to deliver new places for the 2022/23 academic year. Information on these allocations can be found published at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/high-needs-provision-capital-allocations>. It is ultimately up to each local authority to determine how to best utilise their HNPCA funding to address local priorities.

The department is also supporting local authorities through our ongoing delivery of new special and AP free schools. Sandwell currently has a new special free school in the pipeline and the department has recently launched the 'How to Apply' guidance for the 2022 Special and AP free school application waves. These waves are open to all local authorities in England. Guidance can be found online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/special-free-school-applications> and

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-to-open-an-alternative-provision-free-school>.

The department is further supporting local authorities to achieve the shared endeavour to secure a financially sustainable high needs system. This includes investment of £9.1 billion high needs revenue funding in 2022/23 (a £1 billion increase from 2021/22), continuing work with local authorities as part of the safety valve programme, the introduction of the Delivering Better Value programme and the recommendations outlined in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Green Paper.

## ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

### ■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]

**Carol Monaghan:**

**[900508]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment her Department has made of the impact of trends in the level of imports on food security and availability in the UK.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The UK has a highly resilient food supply chain, as demonstrated throughout the Covid-19 response. It is well equipped to deal with situations with the potential to cause disruption. Our high degree of food security is built on supply from diverse sources; strong domestic production as well as imports through stable trade routes. We produce 60% of all the food we need, and 74% of food which we can grow or rear in the UK for all or part of the year, and these figures have changed little over the last 20 years.

UK consumers have access through international trade to food products that cannot be produced here, or at least not on a year-round basis. This supplements domestic production, and also ensures that any disruption from risks such as adverse weather or disease does not affect the UK's overall security of supply.

Recognising the importance of food security, in the Agriculture Act 2020, the Government made a commitment to produce an assessment of our food security at least once every three years. The first UK Food Security Report (UKFSR) was published in December 2021.

The UKFSR is an analysis of statistical data on food security in the UK. The report examines past, current and predicted trends relevant to food security, to present the best available and impartial analysis of food security in the UK, and to lay the groundwork for future Food Security Reports. While constructing the UKFSR, Defra consulted widely with leading food security experts in academia and engaged extensively with Government bodies and the devolved administrations. This information and the statistics used throughout the report informed its key findings.

The Government published its first ever food strategy on 13 June, outlining our plans to transform our food system to ensure it is fit for the future. Food security sits at the heart of the strategy. We want to create a sustainable food system, from farm to fork and catch to plate, seizing on the opportunities before us and ensuring that everyone has access to nutritious and healthier food.

## ■ Agriculture: Costs

**Daniel Zeichner:**

[\[9905\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the potential impact of increases in the cost of (a) animal feed, (b) fertilisers and (c) fuel on (i) the agricultural sector and (ii) food prices.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The turbulence of the market in light of the invasion of Ukraine, and the global spike in oil and gas prices, has brought into focus again the importance of a resilient global supply chain and the importance to our national resilience of having strong domestic food production. In the UK, we have a high degree of food security. We are largely self-sufficient in cereal production, growing 88% of all the cereals that we need. We are 86% self-sufficient in beef and fully self-sufficient in liquid milk, and we produce more lamb than we consume. We are also close to 100% self-sufficient in poultry. Sectors such as soft fruit have seen a trend towards greater self-sufficiency in recent years because of the extended UK season.

Farmers are however facing increased input costs including for fertiliser, feed and fuel. I have already set out measures to support farmers and growers in England ahead of the coming growing season. Those measures are not a silver bullet, but they will help farmers to manage some of their input costs from fertilisers. We continue to keep the market situation under review through the UK Agriculture Market Monitoring Group, which monitors UK agricultural markets including price, supply, inputs, trade and recent developments. We have also increased our engagement with industry to supplement our analysis with real time intelligence.

As a result of those rising input costs, there are of course also some pressures on households, predominantly as a result of energy costs. There have also been some rises in food prices in recent months, although the ferocity of retail competition means that price pressures have been contained on certain product lines.

In March, overall food prices rose by 0.2%; the price of fruit actually fell in March by 1.2%. In April, however, food prices rose by 1.5%, which is a faster rise than we have seen in some years. If we look at the price of specific categories of food, in April, bread and cereals rose by 2.2%; sugar, jams and syrups rose by 2%; fish rose by 2%; meat rose by 1.9%; vegetables, including potatoes, rose at a lower level of 1.3%; fruit remained broadly stable; and oils and fats decreased slightly by 1.1%.

The single most important measure of household food security and the affordability of food remains the household food survey that the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has run for many decades. That shows that, among the poorest



20% of households, the amount spent on food consumption was relatively stable at around 16% of household income between 2008 and 2016. It then fell slightly to 14.5%, but with the recent price pressures, we can expect it to return to those higher levels of around 16% in the year ahead.

We are monitoring the situation. The Government have put in place an unprecedented package of support to help those who need it. That includes targeted cost of living support for households most in need through the household support fund, where the Government are providing an additional £500 million to help households with the cost of essentials.

### ■ Agriculture: Investment

**Dr Dan Poulter:**

[\[15231\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans his Department has to financially incentivise investment in British agriculture.

**Victoria Prentis:**

There is a huge opportunity for UK agriculture to improve its competitiveness developing the next generation of food and farming technology, adopting the latest techniques and investing in skills and equipment. To support this, we opened the Farming Investment Fund in November 2021. This provides grants toward a proportion of the total cost of the investment allowing farmers, foresters and growers (including related contractors) to invest in the equipment, technology and infrastructure that will help their businesses to prosper, while improving their productivity and enhancing the environment. Support is available to support smaller and larger investments.

In partnership with UK Research and Innovation, Defra has run a Farming Innovation Pathways fund and launched the £270 million Farming Innovation Programme to stimulate innovation, attract investment in R&D, and provide a boost to sustainable productivity in agriculture and horticulture. These funding programmes will enable agri-businesses to work in partnership with our world-leading research organisations to carry out research and development on innovative farming techniques.

### ■ Agriculture: Seasonal Workers

**Daniel Zeichner:**

[\[13741\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, for what reason his Department has limited the number of labour providers who can participate in the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme to four.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The Seasonal Workers visa route is currently managed by four private sector operators. Two of the current Seasonal Worker visa route operators (Concordia and Pro-force) were originally selected through fair and open competition to manage the 2019 Seasonal Workers Pilot. On 22 December 2020, the Government extended the Seasonal Workers Pilot for one year and expanded the number of visas from 10,000



to 30,000 for 2021. The Home Office concluded that the appropriate total number of operators for the extended Pilot was four, and two further operators (AG Recruitment and Management Ltd and Fruitful Jobs) were selected by fair and open competition in 2021. Any labour provider that was able to meet the minimum standards could have applied, including small and medium-sized enterprises.

On 24 December 2021, the Government announced that the Seasonal Worker visa route would be extended through to 2024. As with the Pilot, it allows overseas workers to come to the UK for up to six months to harvest both edible and ornamental crops. 30,000 visas will be available in 2022, and this was being kept under review with the potential to increase by up to 10,000 visas if there was evidence of need. This has now been realised and to support the sector, the Government will release 10,000 visas for the seasonal worker visa route, with 2,000 of these going to the poultry sector.

Two existing operator licenses are due for renewal before 2023, with a Request for Information to be run this summer and a decision on the appropriate number of operators for years 2023 and 2024 to be finalised this year.

**Daniel Zeichner:**

**[9902]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of whether the 30,000 visas available under the Seasonal Workers Pilot scheme will meet the labour needs of the agricultural sector.

**Victoria Prentis:**

Defra continues to speak regularly with the agriculture sector and other government departments to understand labour supply and demand, including for both permanent and seasonal workforce requirements, and to ensure there is a long-term strategy for the farming workforce.

Whilst numbers vary year on year, we estimate approximately 50,000 - 60,000 seasonal workers are needed annually across the horticulture sector to bring in the harvest. Defra statistics from the Annual June survey of Agriculture and Horticulture provide seasonal, casual and gang labour workforce numbers for England, Scotland and Northern Ireland at 57,000 in 2020.

The need for seasonal labour is met through various sources, primarily migrant labour and EU citizens with settled status. Over 5.8 million EU citizens and their families have been granted status under the EU Settlement Scheme.

The Seasonal Worker visa scheme, which has been extended to 2024, allows overseas workers to come to the UK for up to six months to harvest both edible and ornamental crops. 30,000 visas will be available in 2022, and this was being kept under review with the potential to increase by 10,000 visas if there was evidence of need.

The recently announced Food Strategy White Paper will also seek to address challenges faced by the sector, including through 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 also release 10,000 visas for the seasonal worker visa route, with 2,000 of these going to the poultry sector.

On 24 February the Government announced that all Ukrainian nationals on an existing seasonal worker visa will have their leave in the UK extended to 31 December 2022 and can now switch to the Ukraine Extension Scheme visa if eligible.

## ■ Air Pollution: Greater London

**Fleur Anderson:** [\[14647\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department (a) holds data and (b) has undertaken a impact assessment into air quality in the boroughs of (a) Wandsworth, (b) Richmond, (c) Hammersmith and Fulham and (d) Hounslow following the closure of Hammersmith Bridge to vehicle traffic.

**Jo Churchill:**

Under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995, the Mayor of London has reserve powers and is responsible for air quality in the capital. Local authorities in London are required to review and assess local air quality and report their data to the Mayor.

In addition, the [London Air Quality Network](#) provides data on automatic air quality monitoring in London to the public.

## ■ Alcoholic Drinks: Industry

**Adam Afriyie:** [\[11625\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to support the wine and spirit industry.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The Government is committed to ensuring our regulatory regime for wine and spirits supports innovation and growth in the market. This work sits alongside the Government's ambitious trade agenda that is opening up preferential market access and removing tariffs for our world-renowned products like Scotch whisky.

We have already rolled back unnecessary EU red tape by removing the requirement for VI-1 certification for wine imports, saving businesses money while ensuring high levels of consumer assurance. We are now working with the wine and spirits sectors to identify other legislative barriers to competitiveness and growth. We intend to continue the process of removing or reforming burdensome retained EU law over the coming months to further promote growth in the sector.

The Government also announced last year that we would boost the UK's export capability by recruiting new agri-food and drink attachés. Their work will benefit the wine and spirit industry by maintaining and increasing lucrative access to high-potential overseas markets.

## ■ Animals: Imports

**Alexander Stafford:**

[\[10057\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will urgently review the temporary suspension of the commercial import of (a) rescue animals and (b) other dogs and cats, if they (i) have been dispatched from Belarus, Poland, Romania or Ukraine and (ii) can demonstrate that they will be fully vaccinated and blood tested by a registered charity.

**Alexander Stafford:**

[\[10058\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of exempting certain organisations, subject to full compliance with vaccine and testing requirements, from the current temporary suspension of commercial imports of dogs and cats where they originate from or have been dispatched from Belarus, Poland, Romania or Ukraine.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The UK, Scottish and Welsh Governments have temporarily suspended the commercial import of dogs, cats and ferrets into Great Britain if they originate from or have been dispatched from Belarus, Poland, Romania or Ukraine, until 9 July 2022.

We appreciate the impact that the temporary suspension will have on rescue organisations that operate in these countries. However, this measure is important to protect our biosecurity and the health of pets in this country.

This decision has been taken because of the serious health risk to humans and animals in Great Britain from commercial cats, dogs and ferrets from Belarus, Poland, Romania or Ukraine that do not comply with UK health and documentation requirements.

We understand the fluid situation at present due to the crisis and are aware that Romania, Belarus and Poland are currently experiencing high volumes of animal movements from Ukraine. Movements from these countries into Great Britain therefore present a higher risk at the current time due to the flow of animals from Ukraine.

In particular, there is evidence to suggest that commercial consignments of pet animals from Ukraine are being moved into Poland, Romania and Belarus, including strays, rescue and abandoned animals.

Unlike non-commercial pets accompanying Ukrainian refugees, these animals often have unknown history and disease status which increases the risk of disease spread.

Our standards of biosecurity are among the highest in the world. The Government takes the importation of pets seriously and is committed to preserving our high standards of biosecurity. The movement of commercial pets from Belarus, Poland, Romania and Ukraine represents a clear and serious enough biosecurity risk at the current time that we therefore consider the suspension of these movements necessary to protect the health of people and pets in Great Britain.

This risk has been exacerbated further by serious cases of non-compliance. There is a history of non-compliant movements of rescue animals into Great Britain from this region, which further increases the biosecurity risk.

The Government appreciates the work of genuine rescue and rehoming organisations who work to ensure that unwanted and abandoned animals are given the opportunity to find a forever home while importantly complying with our animal health and welfare legislation. It is important to note that this is a temporary measure which will be reviewed in due course. We would encourage organisations which are temporarily unable to import rescue dogs, cats, and ferrets into Great Britain to provide help and assistance to animals in situ.

### ■ Dairy Products and Meat: Labelling

**Dr Dan Poulter:** [\[15232\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of the measures called for by Compassion in World Farming's campaign on Honest Labelling.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The Government recently ran a call for evidence to assess the impacts of different types of labelling reform for animal welfare. We are very grateful for the data and insights that Compassion in World Farming and many other stakeholders have provided. Based on the responses received, the Government has committed to consult on proposals to improve and expand current animal welfare labelling, covering both domestic and imported products, as well as equivalent measures in the food service sector. This was announced in the Government's Food Strategy White Paper published on 13 June, and a summary of the responses to the call for evidence will be published shortly. We will continue to engage closely with Compassion in World Farming and other stakeholders from across a broad range of sectors as we develop these proposals.

### ■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Media

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[13675\]](#)

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

**Victoria Prentis:**

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

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

Core Defra spend for media buying services provided under the Crown Commercial Service's medial buying framework agreement reference RM6003 are tabularised below:

YEAR	CORE DEFRA SPEND
2018-19	£239,688.50
2019-20	£440,893.90
2020-21	£1,139,394.00
2021-22	£1,062,949.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,882,925.40</b>

#### ■ Dogs: Electronic Training Aids

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[15278\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he plans to make any exclusions from his proposed ban on the training of dogs with electronic collars.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[15279\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he plans to make any exceptions for the use of electric shock collars for (a) training dogs and (b) any other animals, within the Government's proposed ban on the use of electric shock collars.

#### **Victoria Prentis:**

One of the key reforms in the Action Plan for Animal Welfare is to ban electric shock collars controlled by hand-held devices, given their scope to harm the welfare of dogs, including those deemed reactive. We continue to work closely with the animal welfare sector, enforcement agencies and Governments across the four nations on this ban.

The ban will be made via secondary legislation under the Animal Welfare Act 2006. The legislation needed to ban these e-collars in England will be laid before Parliament as soon as Parliamentary time allows.

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 Government does not plan to extend the ban to invisible fencing systems, as they are associated with reduced risks of harming pets.

**■ Fisheries: Quotas****Peter Aldous:** [\[14473\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will mark World Oceans Day by committing that the UK will not set any 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.

**■ Food Supply: Proteins****Dr Matthew Offord:** [\[14466\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will make it his policy to fund research into development of the sustainable protein sector.

**Dr Matthew Offord:** [\[14467\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the (a) current size and (b) size within the next five years of the sustainable proteins market.

**Dr Matthew Offord:** [\[14468\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of developing a national sustainable protein strategy for the UK.

**Victoria Prentis:**

Alternative proteins are often credited with having higher sustainability credentials compared to traditional proteins of animal origin. The alternative proteins category of foods includes plant-based meat and dairy substitutes, fermented and cultivated meat and seafood and novel food sources (insects, algae and jellyfish) not routinely consumed in the Western diet.

The Government has made no formal assessment of the size of the alternative protein market but recognises that developing this sector could support UK growth. Though no assessment has been made of the potential merits of developing a national alternative protein strategy, the recently published Government Food Strategy sets out the Government's ambition and priorities for the food system, including for alternative proteins.

On research we are making significant investment to unlock innovation and translate our world leading research into practical, farmer-led solutions that improve productivity, environmental sustainability and resilience, and which move towards net zero emission farming systems.

We have several funding programmes open to industry as well as our own farming and food science research. These funding streams address key areas such as soil systems and land management, regenerative agriculture, sustainable feed and pest management, automation, alternative proteins, and precision farming.

As stated in the Government's Food Strategy, through funding we will support progress on a wide range of issues, including alternative proteins and progress on gene editing. We will also work with the FSA to develop dedicated guidance materials for approval of new alternative protein products while reviewing our novel food regulations. This will ensure they are transparent for innovators and investors, whilst maintaining world-leading consumer safety standards.

## ■ Food: Public Sector

**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:**

[\[11582\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the impact of global food price rises on public sector caterers; and whether he is taking steps to (a) help protect public sector food provision from food cost increases and (b) mitigate the impact of potential future food cost increases on those services.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The rising cost of living has presented additional financial challenges to many people and businesses.

We are also aware that there are a number of challenges that caterers and suppliers are currently encountering in the wider commercial environment including general inflation, energy price increases, material shortages and supply chain disruption.

International commodity prices are heavily influenced by factors such as energy costs and exchange rates. Recent pressures have been sustained and we have seen year-on-year food price inflation rise to 6.7% in April, up from 5.9% in March. The Russia/Ukraine conflict adds further cost pressures to UK food supply chains (via international commodity and fuel price rises).

Defra has well established ways of working with the industry and across Government to gather evidence and monitor risks that may arise. This includes extensive, regular and ongoing engagement in preparedness for, and response to, issues with the potential to cause disruption to food supply chains. Lead Government departments will be responsible for ensuring that they have sufficient evidence to show that major suppliers can fulfil their public sector food contracts. The Government Commercial Function has provided general guidance on handling inflationary pressures to Contracting Authorities.

The Government recently published its Food Strategy and this sets out a plan to transform our food system to ensure it is fit for the future. As part of this the government is developing an ambitious and transformational approach to public sector food and catering. We want the public sector to lead by example, championing healthier, sustainable food, provided by a diverse range of suppliers. To underpin this



approach we are launching a consultation on public sector food and catering policy, including updating the Government Buying Standards for Food and Catering Services.

**Dr Dan Poulter:**

**[15233]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to support public sector procurement of British farmed foods.

**Victoria Prentis:**

We are committed to opening up public sector supply chains and supporting a diverse range of suppliers.

We launched a consultation on public sector food and catering policy alongside the Government Food Strategy on 13 June. In the consultation, we are proposing that the public sector reports on progress towards meeting an aspiration that 50% of its food expenditure is on food produced locally or to higher environmental production standards. The proposed policy also requires suppliers to meet UK production standards or equivalent, high animal welfare standards, and public sector menus must reflect seasonal, local food. More details of the consultation can be found at <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/public-sector-food-procurement/food-and-catering-consultation/>.

Under domestic and international regulations, we cannot stipulate that food procured for the public sector must be British. Nevertheless, there is a strong case for celebrating sustainable, high-quality produce in the public sector.

## ■ Food: Retail Trade

**Beth Winter:**

**[14652]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent discussions his Department has held with food retailers on the need to ensure food remains accessible and affordable.

**Victoria Prentis:**

Defra engages with food retailers on a regular basis and discusses the cost of living issue. We welcome the steps announced by some food retailers to support their workforce and customers. We will continue to explore with retailers the options available to them to ensure the availability of affordable food, such as maintaining value ranges, price matching and price freezes.

We recognise that people are facing pressures with the increasing cost of living and that some people continue to require extra support. From last month, the Government is providing an additional £500 million to help households with the cost of essentials, bringing the total funding for this support to £1.5 billion.



## ■ Food: Supply Chains

**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:**

[\[11589\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the United Kingdom Food Security Report 2021: Theme 3: Food Supply Chain Resilience published in December 2021, what assessment he has made of public (a) confidence and (b) trust in the UK's food supply chain.

**Victoria Prentis:**

Recognising the importance of food security, in the Agriculture Act 2020, the Government made a commitment to produce an assessment of our food security at least once every three years. The first UK Food Security Report (UKFSR) was published in December 2021 and will serve as an evidence base for future policy work. The UKFSR covers food security in the widest sense from global food availability and sustainability to domestic supply chain resilience, household food security and food safety.

Chapter 5 of the UK Food Security Report provides data on the key factors that underpin confidence in the UK food system. Data from the Food Standards Agency consumer survey *Food and You 2, Wave 2 (2021)* [[www.food.gov.uk/research/food-and-you-2/food-and-you-2-wave-2](http://www.food.gov.uk/research/food-and-you-2/food-and-you-2-wave-2)] shows that 77% of respondents in England, Wales and Northern Ireland were confident in the food supply chain. Furthermore, respondents in England, Wales and Northern Ireland were asked specifically about the extent to which they were concerned about the availability of a variety of food; 13% of respondents were highly concerned, 34% somewhat concerned, 38% not very concerned, and 11% not at all concerned.

The UK has a highly resilient food supply chain, as demonstrated throughout the COVID-19 response. It is well equipped to deal with situations with the potential to cause disruption. The Government published its first ever food strategy on 13 June, outlining our plans to transform our food system to ensure it is fit for the future. Food security sits at the heart of the strategy. We want to create a sustainable food system, from farm to fork and catch to plate, seizing on the opportunities before us and ensuring that everyone has access to nutritious and healthier food.

## ■ Marine Protected Areas: Fisheries

**Peter Aldous:**

[\[14474\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will mark World Oceans Day by committing that the UK will ban (a) bottom-towed fishing gear and (b) other destructive fishing activities from all offshore Marine Protected Areas.

**Rebecca Pow:**

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

We have designated over 100 Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) since 2010, so that now 40% of English waters are within the protected area network. We have already

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

#### ■ **Members: Correspondence**

**Robert Largan:** [\[15397\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when he plans to respond to the enquiry from the hon. Member for High Peak of 3 May 2022, referenced RL37157.

**Rebecca Pow:**

A reply was sent to the hon. Member on 16 June 2022.

#### ■ **Nature Reserves**

**Stuart Anderson:** [\[15373\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department is taking steps to improve access to nature reserves for people in densely populated urban communities.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan sets out its ambition to connect more people from all backgrounds with the natural environment for their health and well-being and we recognise the role that parks and green spaces, including in our urban areas, play in the nation's wellbeing and are committed to improving access and safeguarding our green spaces.

We are developing the Levelling Up Parks Fund which will create parks and green spaces on urban land which has become unused, undeveloped or neglected.

As set out in the England Trees Action Plan we will continue to support community orchards and forests which sit alongside other funds such as the Urban Tree Challenge Fund, which will make our towns and cities greener and help give more people nature on their doorstep.

Natural England's England-wide map of green infrastructure launched in December 2021 as part of the emerging Green Infrastructure Framework will help local areas identify priorities for creation and enhancement, including to address inequalities in access to greenspace. The full Framework to be launched later this year will include a green infrastructure design guide with advice on designing to promote access and to maximise the benefits that access provides. The provision of more and better quality green infrastructure will make towns and cities attractive places to live and work, promote engagement with nature, enable local social interaction and help to develop strong community networks through participation and shared achievements.

This Government is firmly committed to protecting and enhancing the Green Belt. National planning policy includes strong protections to safeguard this.

#### ■ **Waste Management: Licensing**

**Stephanie Peacock:** [\[15337\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of increasing the level of background checks for waste carrier license application.

**Stephanie Peacock:** [\[15338\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of raising public awareness of how to identify a legitimate waste carrier license.

**Jo Churchill:**

Our consultation on potential measures to strengthen the waste carriers, brokers and dealers regime closed in April. We are looking carefully at the comments made and will respond in due course.

#### ■ **White Fish: Fishing Catches**

**Paul Girvan:** [\[11831\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if the Government will commit to setting future catch limits for cod in line with scientific advice to allow stocks to recover and rebuild.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The UK advocates an approach towards setting Total Allowable Catches for cod stocks and other species that is founded on the best available scientific advice, which seeks to maintain or rebuild sustainable fish stocks and fisheries in the long term. For many whitefish stocks, such as cod, a further key consideration when setting the Total Allowable Catch is their interaction with other stocks caught in the same mixed fishery.

### FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

#### ■ **Afghanistan: Muslims**

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[14536\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent progress she has made on providing support to the Hazara Muslim community in Afghanistan.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[14537\]](#)

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 levels of violence

perpetrated against the Hazara Muslim community in Afghanistan and need to prioritise members of that community's safe passage out of that country to the UK.

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[14538\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if it is her Department's policy to offer support to Hazara Muslims refugees reaching Pakistan to enable them to travel to the UK under (a) the ACRS or (b) another scheme.

**James Cleverly:**

Hazara people, and other ethnic and religious minorities, have long faced attacks and discrimination in Afghanistan. We are monitoring the situation closely, including concerning reports of targeted killings and forced displacement in recent months. FCDO officials regularly raise human rights, including the rights of minority groups, in discussions with the Taliban, and urge them to uphold the rights of all Afghans. The Government has also made clear our serious concerns about the human rights situation in Afghanistan, including through statements from the UN Security Council, the G7 and women foreign ministers.

The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) prioritises those who have assisted UK efforts in Afghanistan and vulnerable people, including members of minority groups at risk. Since the end of Op Pitting, the Government has supported over 4,600 individuals to leave Afghanistan. We will continue to work to ensure those still in Afghanistan are able to depart the country safely.

## ■ Developing Countries: Famine and Humanitarian Aid

**Dr Matthew Offord:**

[\[14469\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what progress the UK has made on taking steps to implement its commitments made in the G7 Famine Prevention and Humanitarian Crises Compact over the last 12 months.

**James Cleverly:**

The UK has provided its agreed share of the \$7 billion in humanitarian assistance to the countries one step from famine in 2021, and we have allocated a further £3 billion for humanitarian response over the next three years. The Compact also commits G7 nations to support action to prevent and respond to gender-based violence, exploitation, economic harm and health impacts experienced by women and girls in conflict and crises. We are coordinating closely with the German G7 Presidency on its developing plans for a Global Alliance for Food Security.

**Dr Matthew Offord:**

[\[14470\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what plans his Department has to take steps in response to commitments made in the G7 Famine Prevention and Humanitarian Crises Compact, particularly with regards to the launch of the Global Alliance for Food Security.

**James Cleverly:**

The UK has provided its agreed share of the \$7 billion in humanitarian assistance to the countries one step from famine in 2021, and we have allocated a further £3 billion for humanitarian response over the next three years. The Compact also commits G7 nations to support action to prevent and respond to gender-based violence, exploitation, economic harm and health impacts experienced by women and girls in conflict and crises. We are coordinating closely with the German G7 Presidency on its developing plans for a Global Alliance for Food Security.

**■ Famine: Humanitarian Aid****Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[14471\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the role of anticipatory action in preventing future hunger crises; and what progress has been made towards implementing that approach to famine prevention.

**James Cleverly:**

The UK is a global leader in driving effective approaches to crises and preventing and anticipating future shocks. This includes FCDO's emergency humanitarian assistance and commitment of £3 billion over the next 3 years to the most vulnerable countries.

In 2021 we partnered with UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and Germany to co-host the High-Level Event on Anticipatory Action, securing further commitments from the 75 participating Member States for early action to prevent major food crisis. In addition, we secured a commitment from the World Bank to continue its Early Response Financing at \$1 billion. We are working closely with the Bank on Food Security Crisis Preparedness Plans to support more timely and better coordinated use of this additional finance.

We are one of the largest donors to the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). CERF is now expanding its anticipatory action pilots to more countries experiencing food crises such as Burkina Faso, Niger and South Sudan.

We also committed £120 million to expand the use of disaster risk finance and insurance to ensure countries are able to respond rapidly when disasters strike. We will honour our COP26 commitments and boost sustainable agriculture productivity in developing countries.

**Sarah Champion:**[\[14495\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps she is taking to help those effected by hunger as a consequence of the war in Ukraine, including (a) humanitarian cash, (b) malnutrition prevention and response, and (c) climate-sensitive food security programmes.

**James Cleverly:**

We are calling for all countries to keep food trade flowing. At the World Bank and IMF Spring Meetings, the UK and partners secured a commitment from the World Bank to

provide \$170 billion until the end of June 2023 to support countries facing economic hardship due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The UK also played a leading role in persuading the World Bank to commit \$12 billion of new projects in the next 15 months to respond to the food security crisis. Over the next 3 years the UK will direct £3 billion of humanitarian assistance to prevent famine and alleviate suffering. With G7 allies, we are discussing Germany's proposal for a G7 Global Alliance on Food Security to scale up a rapid, needs-based response building on current food security architecture.

## ■ Myanmar: Journalism

**Catherine West:** [\[15323\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions she has had with her counterpart in Myanmar on journalists who are awaiting criminal trials and executions.

**Amanda Milling:**

Since the coup, the UK has had no senior bilateral engagement with the military regime. The UK continues to raise our concerns publicly about the treatment of journalists. The UK opposes the death penalty in all circumstances. I made this clear in my statement of 7 June in response to reports that the military regime was planning on executing individuals involved in the pro-democracy movement.

**Catherine West:** [\[15324\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps she is taking to support journalists in Myanmar who have experienced physical violence and threats of imprisonment for their media work.

**Amanda Milling:**

Since the military coup on 1 February 2021, Myanmar's military and police continue to undermine and violate media freedom. 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 also providing emergency funding to help journalists and media organisations continue reporting what is happening in Myanmar.

We have called and continued to call for the protection of civilians, including journalists, and the release of all those in arbitrary detention, including at the UN Security Council and Human Rights Council.

## ■ Myanmar: Propaganda

**Catherine West:** [\[15322\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of reports that Myanmar nationalists and military are using Telegram, Youtube, Telegram, VK and Viber to disseminate propaganda news.

**Amanda Milling:**

Misinformation is rife in Myanmar and the UK is committed to tackling it. The military continues to perpetuate propaganda, including their unsubstantiated claims of electoral fraud in 2020. In response to the February 2021 coup, the UK Government established the Myanmar Witness programme which verifies and reports on open-source information of serious human rights violations and abuses. This project is essential to countering disinformation. We call on the regime to end its obstruction of the Myanmar people's right to information and freedom of expression, which is vital to de-escalating the crisis.

The UK Government strongly believes that the rights of individuals and independent media to express opinions and peacefully challenge authority are essential to a free and open society. The FCDO launched its media freedom campaign in 2018 to shine a global spotlight on media freedom and to raise the cost to those who abuse the media. Myanmar remains a priority country for the UK on media freedom.

**■ Nigeria: Violence****Kate Osamor:**[\[14562\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what representations officials in her Department have received from (a) organisations and (b) representatives of the Nigerian diaspora in the UK on the frequency of attacks taking place across Nigeria and potential solutions to bring about peace in the region.

**Kate Osamor:**[\[14563\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs whether her Department is taking steps to engage with (a) organisations and (b) representatives of the Nigerian diaspora in the UK on (i) potential solutions to the extremist attacks taking place across Nigeria and (iii) options to help bring about peace in the region.

**Vicky Ford:**

Increasing insecurity across Nigeria is having a devastating impact on affected communities. We welcome views from both organisations and representatives of the Nigerian diaspora in the UK, including on peace-building efforts in Nigeria and the wider region. I [Minister Ford] regularly respond to correspondence from MPs on behalf of constituents who are members of the diaspora, and my officials regularly respond to letters sent directly by members of the diaspora or diaspora organisations.

The principal causes of violence across Nigeria are complex, and include violent extremism in the North East, and criminality and competition over resources elsewhere in Nigeria. At the first dialogue of our Security and Defence Partnership in February, the UK and Nigerian Governments committed to work together to respond to rising insecurity across Nigeria and promote human rights. We will continue to encourage the Nigerian Government to take urgent action to implement long-term solutions that address the root causes of violence.



**■ Pakistan: Politics and Government**

**Sarah Owen:** [\[15387\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment the Government has made of the implications of the removal of Imran Khan as Prime Minister of Pakistan.

**Sarah Owen:** [\[15388\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment the Government has made on the current political unrest in Pakistan.

**James Cleverly:**

The recent change in government is a domestic matter for Pakistan. We respect Pakistan's democratic system and do not interfere in its internal political affairs. We will continue to work with the Government of Pakistan to advance our shared priorities and interests, including the promotion of regional stability.

**■ Rwanda: Humanitarian Aid**

**Claudia Webbe:** [\[14671\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much humanitarian aid has been provided to Rwanda in each of the last ten years prior to the agreement to enter into an offshoring refugee partnership.

**Vicky Ford:**

The UK is a longstanding partner to Rwanda, having provided Official Development Assistance (ODA) to support Rwanda's social and economic development for over a decade. The UK's annual bilateral assistance to Rwanda from 2009-2020 is available via our Statistics on International Development publication, and 2020-21 final audited spend in the FCDO Annual Report and Accounts.

**■ South Sudan: Homicide**

**Ms Lyn Brown:** [\[16898\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will (a) raise the killing of 16-year-old Justin Lisok Lomuresuk and his brother by soldiers in South Sudan with the authorities in that country and (b) monitor the credibility of any investigation into the killings.

**Vicky Ford:**

South Sudan is an FCDO human rights priority country. As such we have raised our concerns at reports of extrajudicial killings, wider abuses and a lack of accountability in South Sudan within the FCDO Annual Human Rights Report and directly with the Government of South Sudan. We have also ensured continued attention on the situation at the UN Human Rights Council and UN Security Council. We will continue to raise concerns and to press the South Sudanese authorities on their responsibility to protect civilians, and for investigations into killings such as that of Justin Lomuresuk. Most recently, alongside partners, we released a statement on 18 May



calling for the authorities to take additional measures to protect civilians and address the root causes of conflict.

## ■ Sri Lanka: Development Aid

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[14487\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he is taking steps to assist Sri Lanka with petrol prices.

**Vicky Ford:**

The UK Government recognises Sri Lanka is facing its worst economic crisis since independence and the impact this is having on fuel prices and other commodities. Concurrent challenges in public finance and sovereign debt, as well as the availability and affordability of essential items like food, fertilisers, medicines and fuel, have disrupted livelihoods across the country.

UK economic support is forthcoming through multilateral institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank (WB) and UN, as underlined by the Prime Minister when he spoke to the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Ranil Wickremesinghe, on 30 May. The UK has the joint fifth largest share in the IMF, and is a major contributor to the UN and WB. We welcome the start of in-depth discussions with the IMF on reforms needed to bring the economy back to a sustainable path. In April, the WB agreed to provide USD\$ 600 million in financial assistance and we understand there are discussions to extend this support. We also have a significant voice in international fora like the Paris club and will work on solutions to Sri Lanka's debt crisis. We continue to monitor the situation closely and will encourage a peaceful, democratic and inclusive approach to help support Sri Lanka through its economic and political challenges.

## ■ Wales: UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement

**Hywel Williams:**

[\[15195\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether her Department has conducted an impact assessment of the impact of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement on the Welsh labour market.

**Hywel Williams:**

[\[15197\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she has had recent discussions the Devolved Administrations on conducting periodic impact assessments of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement.

**James Cleverly:**

The Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) is a comprehensive free trade deal which maintains zero tariffs and zero quotas on trade in goods between the UK and the EU. It also secures market access across a broad range of key service sectors and establishes close cooperation in areas like transport, digital, and fighting crime.

The Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office has not prepared an economic Impact Assessment on the TCA. The Government is taking action to support businesses across the UK to trade effectively with Europe, including through the free-to-use Export Support Service. The Government is committed to working with the Welsh Government where it has an interest in TCA implementation.

## HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

### ■ Asthma: Medical Treatments

**Jim Shannon:** [\[15261\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the proportion of patients with uncontrolled asthma who are eligible for alternative treatments to oral corticosteroids do not have access to those treatments.

**Jim Shannon:** [\[15262\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many and what proportion patients with asthma who require three or more courses of oral corticosteroid each year do not receive care from a specialist asthma service.

**Gillian Keegan:**

No specific estimate has been made. NHS England and NHS Improvement's Severe Asthma Collaborative is developing the capacity of the severe asthma centres to streamline patient pathways to biologic therapy and reduce variation in prescribing and patient management, with a toolkit produced to support clinical teams. The Accelerated Access Collaborative is supporting the increased uptake of biologic therapy through the improved identification of patients with potential severe asthma in primary and secondary care and enable patient referrals to severe asthma centres to determine eligibility.

The information requested on the number and proportion of patients with asthma who require three or more courses of oral corticosteroid each year do not receive care from a specialist asthma service is not held centrally.

### ■ Breast Cancer: Surgery

**Sir George Howarth:** [\[16859\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has put plans in place (a) nationally and (b) locally to help tackle waiting lists for breast reconstruction surgery.

**Paula Barker:** [\[18109\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what (a) local and (b) national steps he is taking to help ensure all patients across England can access free flap or autologous breast reconstruction and implant reconstruction.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The NHS Cancer Programme has asked Cancer Alliances to ensure that wherever possible, surgery takes place with immediate breast reconstruction and to seek opportunities to accelerate reconstruction for those women who have not undergone the procedure following previous breast surgery during the pandemic. The NHS Cancer Programme has stated that no local time limits should be applied to reconstructive surgery, in particular where the reconstructive surgery has been delayed as a result of the pandemic.

**Care Homes: Ophthalmic Services****Marsha De Cordova:**[\[11858\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of removing the requirement for pre-visit notifications for domiciliary eyecare visits to care homes to ensure that the care people receive in residential care homes is in line with that received by people in their own homes or attending a high-street optician.

**Marsha De Cordova:**[\[11860\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make it his policy to review pre-visit notifications for domiciliary eyecare visits to care homes.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The current regulatory framework for domiciliary eye care services requires contractors to provide at least 48 hours' notice to NHS England of the intention to provide National Health Service sight testing services to two patients at the same address and at least three weeks' notice where contractors intend to provide services to three or more patients. However, the current framework allows for contractors to see up to three additional urgent cases without notice on the day of a planned visit.

The Department and NHS England are in discussions with the eye care profession on whether there is a need to amend the legal framework for domiciliary services, including the potential review of pre-visit notifications.

**Carers: Cost of Living****Stephanie Peacock:**[\[15344\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what extra support his Department is providing for unpaid carers facing financial hardship due to the rising cost of living.

**Gillian Keegan:**

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

with a pensioner in the household will benefit from the Pensioner Cost of Living Payment.

#### ■ Carers: Government Assistance

**Sir David Evennett:** [\[14438\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to (a) identify and (b) support unpaid carers.

**Gillian Keegan:**

The white paper 'People at the Heart of Care' sets out how we will invest up to £25 million to improve services provided to support unpaid carers. We expect this funding will identify and test a range of new and existing interventions for unpaid carers, which could include respite and breaks and peer group and wellbeing.

To support the identification of unpaid carers, we are encouraging the use of unpaid carer markers in National Health Service electronic health records by simplifying data collection and registration. We will also introduce a new marker indicating the presence of a contingency plan, where one is available, which describes the actions to take if the carer is no longer able to provide care.

#### ■ Carers: Respite Care

**Ian Paisley:** [\[15258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will (a) make a comparative assessment of the adequacy of respite support for carers in (i) England and (ii) Northern Ireland and (b) publish the findings from that assessment.

**Gillian Keegan:**

We have no plans to make an assessment. However, we will invest up to £25 million to improve the support provided to unpaid carers in England. We expect this funding will identify and test a range of new and existing interventions, which could include respite and breaks, peer group and wellbeing support. We will also work with the sector, including local authorities, to explore different models of respite, how respite services are accessed by carers and any barriers which carers may experience in accessing these services.

**Bell Ribeiro-Addy:** [\[17126\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish a Recovery and Respite Plan for Unpaid Carers.

**Gillian Keegan:**

*[Holding answer 16 June 2022]:* There are no plans to publish a specific recovery and respite plan for unpaid carers in England. 'People at the Heart of Care' published on 1 December 2021, aims to empower unpaid carers to live happy, healthy and fulfilling lives. This includes an investment of up to £25 million to improve the services provided to support unpaid carers. In addition, funding provided through the Better Care Fund (BCF) can be allocated to carers' breaks and respite. The BCF

Framework for 2022/23 will be published shortly and will request that all local BCF partnerships state how funding is being used to support unpaid carers.

On 13 May 2022, we wrote to local authorities to reiterate the importance of respite support for carers and to understand any challenges which may prevent these services returning to full capacity. Unpaid carers in low-income households will also benefit from the Means-Tested Benefit Cost of Living Payment. Those living in the same household as the disabled person for whom they care will benefit from the disability Cost of Living Payment, while families with a pensioner in the household will benefit from the Pensioner Cost of Living Payment.

### ■ **Chronic Fatigue Syndrome: Young People**

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[13731\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will provide additional support for young people suffering with ME.

**Gillian Keegan:**

Health services for people with myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS), including those for young people, are commissioned locally by clinical commissioning groups. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) updated its guideline on ME/CFS in October 2021 and published an implementation statement in May 2022. The guideline provides advice on diagnosis and support to manage ME/CFS, including for children and young people.

On 12 May 2022, we announced the intention to develop a cross-Government delivery plan on ME/CFS. We are working with other departments and stakeholders to review support for young people with ME/CFS and will consider any additional measures.

### ■ **Dementia: Diagnosis**

**Sir George Howarth:**

[\[15191\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, by which date he expects the dementia diagnosis rate to return to the target rate of 66.7 percent.

**Gillian Keegan:**

In 2021/22, we allocated £17 million to address dementia waiting lists and increase the number of diagnoses. In 2022/23, NHS England is funding an evidence-based improvement project to fund two trusts in each region, to pilot the Diagnosing Advanced Dementia Mandate tool to improve diagnosis of dementia in care homes.

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

**Sir George Howarth:**

[\[15192\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 19 May 2022 to Question 1489 on Dementia Diagnosis, how many extra diagnoses he

expects to be facilitated through NHS England's funding to pilot new diagnostic approaches.

**Gillian Keegan:**

NHS England and NHS Improvement have not made a formal assessment of the number of additional dementia diagnoses. Evaluation of applications to progress the pilot is underway.

**Mr Virendra Sharma:**

[15718]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how the national dementia strategy will help people with Alzheimer's disease receive a diagnosis.

**Gillian Keegan:**

*[Holding answer 15 June 2022]:* We will set out plans for dementia in England for the next 10 years later this year, which will focus on the specific health and care needs of people living with dementia and their carers, including diagnosis. The strategy will be informed a range of experts, including those with dementia and their carers.

■ **Dementia: Health Services**

**Sarah Owen:**

[15391]

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

**Gillian Keegan:**

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

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

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

■ **Dental Services: Standards**

**Stephanie Peacock:**

[15750]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what advice his Department provides to people who are unable to register with a NHS dentist as a result of lack of local availability.

**Maria Caulfield:**

Dental patients are not registered to a particular practice. A practice can accept a patient for a course of treatment and there are no geographical restrictions on which dental practice a patient may attend. NHS England's customer service centre can

advise patients on available practices and those with urgent needs should contact NHS 111.

## ■ Health: Housing

**Andrew Gwynne:**

[\[15710\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the article by Dr Caglar Koksak, Incorporating health and wellbeing into housing developments, published by the University of Manchester on 27 January 2022, if his Department will make an assessment of the potential merits of setting robust design standards for housing developments, including a requirement for health net gain.

**Gillian Keegan:**

*[Holding answer 15 June 2022]:* Setting design standards for housing developments is the responsibility of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. Its National Planning Policy Framework published sets an expectation that local authorities should use the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code (NMDC) to determine design guidance and local design standards in consultation with communities. The NMDC provides standards and guidance on how the design of new developments should enhance the health and wellbeing of local communities and create safe, inclusive, accessible and active environments. The Government currently has no plans to include health net gain as a planning requirement.

## ■ Hormone Replacement Therapy

**Navendu Mishra:**

[\[13834\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 17 May 2022 to Question 1000 on Hormone Replacement Therapy, if his Department will take steps to help ensure that there is a sufficient supply of testosterone through the NHS for women undergoing hormone replacement therapy in line with NICE guidelines.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's (NICE) guideline 'Menopause: diagnosis and management' recommends testosterone supplementation for menopausal women with low sexual desire if hormone replacement therapy alone is not effective. We have received no reports of supply issues in relation to testosterone which would prevent its use according to NICE's guidelines.

## ■ Insomnia: Drugs

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[14489\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the number of people who (a) suffer with insomnia and (b) take medication for it.



**Gillian Keegan:**

We have no current plans to make a specific assessment. We commissioned the former Public Health England to undertake an evidence review on sleep and health which has now been completed and will be published in due course.

■ **Veterans: Mental Health Services**

**Stephanie Peacock:**[\[14582\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the average waiting time was for an assessment conducted by the (a) Transition, Intervention and Liaison veterans' mental health service, (b) Community Therapeutic Services and (c) High Intensity Services following a person's first contact with Op COURAGE in each month from January 2022 to May 2022 inclusive.

**Stephanie Peacock:**[\[14583\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department will set a target for wait times upon referrals to the Veterans High Intensity Service for mental health.

**Gillian Keegan:**

There are no plans to set a target waiting time for referrals to the Op COURAGE High Intensity Service. This service augments existing provisions and veterans will receive support within Op COURAGE or mainstream mental health services such as the Crisis Team. The following table below shows the average waiting time for an assessment in the Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service, the Complex Treatment Service and the High Intensity Service within Op COURAGE from January to April 2022. Data for May is not yet available.

	TRANSITION, INTERVENTION AND LIAISON SERVICE	COMPLEX TREATMENT SERVICE	HIGH INTENSITY SERVICE
January 2022	9 days	11 days	2 days
February 2022	9 days	8 days	3 days
March 2022	9 days	7 days	3 days
April 2022	10 days	5 days	3 days

**HOME OFFICE****■ Animals in Science Regulation Unit**

**Feryal Clark:** [\[15392\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the enforcement of regulations by the Animals in Science Regulation Unit.

**Feryal Clark:** [\[15393\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has made a recent assessment of the potential merits of reviewing the effectiveness of the Animals in Science Regulation Unit; and if she will make a statement.

**Damian Hinds:**

The use of animals in science is highly regulated, including a three-tier system of licensing, the monitoring of compliance of licence holders, and on-site inspections.

All licensed establishments are required to have a dedicated governance framework comprising of individuals that includes veterinary surgeons with legal responsibilities for the care and welfare of animals. Ethical review bodies embedded in each establishment review proposals for the use of animals and promote the 3Rs of animal use (replacement, reduction, refinement).

The Animals in Science Regulation Unit continues to ensure compliance with the legal requirements of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986. As part of continuous improvement, a regulatory reform programme is underway to modernise the regulator and strengthen its regulatory oversight.

**■ Asylum: Rwanda**

**Claudia Webbe:** [\[14660\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department made an assessment of the human rights situation in Rwanda prior to the partnership agreement on the hosting of refugees in Rwanda.

**Tom Pursglove:**

Our own assessment carried out prior to the agreement of the Migration and Economic Development Partnership found Rwanda to be a safe and secure country. Our Country Policy and Information Notes on Rwanda provide a robust report that demonstrates our commitment to fully evaluating whether Rwanda would be suitable for each potentially eligible person to be relocated. These notes are published and can found on gov.uk: [Rwanda: country policy and information notes - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/country-policy-and-information/notes-on-rwanda)

We would only ever work with countries that we know are safe and will treat asylum seekers in accordance with relevant international human rights laws.

**Claudia Webbe:** [\[14661\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has made an assessment of whether Rwanda is a safe country to which to send LGBT+ refugees.

**Claudia Webbe:** [\[14662\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to publish guidelines that protect LGBT+ refugees in relation to her proposals to offshore refugees to Rwanda.

**Tom Pursglove:**

There are currently no plans to publish any LGBT+ specific guidance for individuals considered for relocation to Rwanda as part of the Migration and Economic Development Partnership.

The Home Office published a Country Policy and Information Note (CPIN) for Rwanda on 9 May 2022, which provides an assessment on the Rwandan asylum system and various human rights aspects. It supports decision-makers as they consider relocating an individual to Rwanda. In the CPIN, it states that 'there are not substantial grounds for believing that a person, if relocated, would face a real risk of being subjected to treatment that is likely to be contrary to Article 3 ECHR by virtue of their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.' However, it acknowledges that this may be different for trans individuals.

The decision to relocate an individual to Rwanda will be taken on a case-by-case basis and no one will be relocated if it is unsafe to do so.

**Claudia Webbe:** [\[14663\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the grant rate for asylum applications at her proposed offshore processing centres in Rwanda.

**Tom Pursglove:**

The Migration and Economic Development Partnership between the UK and Rwanda will see those migrants travelling to the UK through unnecessary and dangerous methods, considered for relocation to Rwanda, where they will have their asylum claim processed. Once a person is relocated to Rwanda, their asylum claim becomes the responsibility of that country and falls under their jurisdiction. We therefore cannot comment on the grant rate for asylum applications in Rwanda. However, we expect asylum claims will be decided within a reasonable period of time.

**Claudia Webbe:** [\[14664\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her proposals to offshore refugees to Rwanda will only apply to single men.

**Claudia Webbe:** [\[14668\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the potential effect of her proposals to offshore refugees to Rwanda on refugee (a) women and (b) children.

**Claudia Webbe:** [\[14669\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to help ensure that children who are mistakenly assessed as adults are not sent to Rwanda during the pilot stage of the Government's offshoring agreement with that country.

**Claudia Webbe:** [\[14670\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will ensure that (a) women and (b) people who are assessed to be vulnerable will not be offshored under the Government's plans to offshore refugees to Rwanda.

**Tom Pursglove:**

With the exception of unaccompanied children, any individual who has arrived in the UK since 1 January 2022 by unnecessary and dangerous means from safe countries – including those arriving by small boats, hidden in the back of lorries - may be considered for relocation to Rwanda

An individualised assessment of each suitable person's circumstances will be undertaken prior to any decision to relocate them to Rwanda. Any vulnerabilities will be taken into consideration and every individual who is suitable for relocation under this policy will be able to make representations where they are concerned the country in question would not be safe for them. We would not relocate someone where it would be unsafe or inappropriate to do so. More details are set out in our inadmissibility policy guidance on GOV.UK.

Our assessment is that Rwanda is a safe and secure country with respect for the rule of law. Our Country Policy Information Note, published on 9 May on GOV.UK, provides further information on the basis by which we have determined that Rwanda is a safe place for refugees.

In a case where someone is claiming to be under 18 years old, they would not be relocated until the appropriate age assessment process has been completed. Where an individual has no credible evidence of their age and where there continues to be doubt, a thorough age assessment process will be followed. They will be treated as though they are a child until a decision on their age has been made.

**Claudia Webbe:** [\[14665\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Memorandum of Understanding between the UK and Rwanda published on 14 April 2022, when the monitoring group will be established; and whether the findings and recommendations of that group will be published.

**Tom Pursglove:**

An independent Monitoring Committee will monitor the entire relocation process and compliance with assurances in the Memorandum of Understanding, including the processing of asylum claims and provision of support in Rwanda.

The Monitoring Committee is due to become operational in the coming months. More details on this will be set out in due course.

**Claudia Webbe:** [\[14666\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the plans to offshore refugees to Rwanda, whether people arriving in the UK to join family members will be considered eligible to be sent to Rwanda.

**Claudia Webbe:** [\[14667\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the potential effect of her proposals to offshore refugees to Rwanda on family reunion as a safe route of entry to the UK.

**Tom Pursglove:**

With the exception of unaccompanied children, any individual who has arrived in the UK since 1 January 2022 by unnecessary and dangerous means from safe countries – including those arriving by small boats, hidden in the back of lorries - may be considered for relocation to Rwanda.

An individualised assessment of each suitable person's circumstances will be undertaken prior to any decision to relocate them to Rwanda. We would not relocate someone where it would be unsafe or inappropriate to do so. More details are set out in our inadmissibility policy guidance on. GOV.UK.

For those with family links in the UK, who want to be considered for entry to the UK, they should seek to do so via legal and safe routes. Nobody should put their lives into the hands of criminal people smuggling gangs by making dangerous and irregular journeys.

## ■ Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

**Lee Anderson:** [\[15377\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of her Department's progress in preventing undocumented migrants from crossing the English Channel since December 2019.

**Tom Pursglove:**

Preventing the illegal entry of people to the UK in small boats is an ongoing priority for the Government. These crossings are dangerous and unnecessary and must be made unviable. To achieve this, the UK and France maintain a longstanding relationship on tackling illegal migration at the shared border. Most recently, a bilateral arrangement was reached between the UK and France on 20 July 2021, where the UK pledged to make a further financial investment of approximately £54 million (€62.7 million) in 2021/22 to tackle illegal migration and small boats.

The UK and France have agreed to keep the impact of these measures and their implementation, under close review, including via a UK-France Joint Monitoring Committee, chaired by senior officials from both countries. This will enable us to respond to our shared challenges as they change. Last year's investment saw France doubling the number of its officers patrolling French beaches. Our joint activity with France prevented more than 23,000 crossings in 2021. So far in 2022, over 8,000

people have been prevented from crossing – more than twice the number to this point in 2021. Furthermore, since the UK-France Joint Intelligence Cell (JIC) was established in July 2020, we have, with France, dismantled 21 small boat organised criminal groups and secured over 500 arrests. We assess that this has had a considerable impact upon facilitators. Going forward, the Home Office will continue to cooperate closely with the French Government on this important issue.

## JUSTICE

### ■ **Bill of Rights: Freedom of Expression**

**Dr Jamie Wallis:**

[\[15425\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will include provisions to strengthen freedom of speech in the legislative proposals for a Bill of Rights announced in the Queen's Speech 2022.

**James Cartlidge:**

Freedom of expression is a fundamental freedom that underpins our democracy. The Bill of Rights will strengthen protections that support and preserve the space for wide and democratic debate.

### ■ **Prisons: Alcoholic Drinks and Drugs**

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[15286\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of introducing a harm reduction approach to (a) alcohol and (b) other substances misuse for people in the criminal justice system.

**Kit Malthouse:**

We are taking a range of approaches to support people with a substance misuse need, as set out in our ambitious and evidence-based Drugs Strategy – a landmark 10-year plan to work across Government to address illegal drug use, underpinned by a record investment of nearly £900 million. Our goal is to ensure that appropriate and high-quality treatment is available to all offenders with an addiction, which includes some harm reduction approaches – however we must also enable offenders to focus on recovery by taking a zero-tolerance approach to drugs, with consequences for those who breach this.

To achieve this we are expanding mandatory and voluntary testing regimes in prison, expanding the use of Incentivised Substance Free Living units, and Health and Justice coordinators to support people to engage with community treatment providers before they are released. For those on community sentences, we will increase the use of intensive drug and alcohol rehabilitation requirements. We are also expanding the use of GPS-enabled and alcohol abstinence-monitoring electronic tagging, to help offenders in the community stay off alcohol.

## ■ Prisons: Drugs

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[15285\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of establishing overdose prevention units in prisons.

**Victoria Atkins:**

All prisons must have a zero-tolerance approach to drugs. Introducing units where prisoners can self-administer illegal drugs would undermine that approach, and the Ministry of Justice has no plans to do so.

As set out in the Prison Strategy White Paper, we are committed to ensuring that all prisoners with a substance misuse need have access to high-quality, recovery focused treatment. This includes enhancing testing regimes in prison, expanding the use of Incentivised Substance Free Living units where prisoners commit to remain drug-free and undergo regular voluntary drug tests, and supporting prisoners to engage with community treatment ahead of their release. We will also ensure prisoners are protected from the harms of drug misuse by supplying life-saving naloxone medication in prisons, for staff to administer to anyone who has taken an opiate overdose.

## ■ Public Defender Service: Operating Costs

**Steve Reed:** [\[16963\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, the annual cost to the public purse of the Public Defender Service in each year since 2001.

**James Cartlidge:**

Information for the years prior to 2016 could only be obtained at disproportionate cost. I am able, however, to provide the annual costs for financial year 2016-2017 onwards. This data is set out in the table below:

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Annual cost (£m)	5.6	5.4	5.4	6.3	6.2	6.0

The Public Defender Service (PDS) provides defence advice and representation in all types of criminal cases from the police station to the higher courts. It is part of the LAA and represents legally aided defendants. The casework undertaken by PDS offsets, to some extent, its costs by savings made against legal aid fund spend.

## ■ Public Defenders: Convictions

**Steve Reed:** [\[16965\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he has made of the conviction rate in trials in which the Public Defence Service was used in each year since 2001.



**James Cartlidge:**

The information requested could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

**Public Defenders: Trials****Steve Reed:**[\[16964\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many trials have been undertaken by Public Defenders in every year since 2001.

**James Cartlidge:**

The emphasis of the Public Defender Service (PDS) is ensuring access to justice and the value of the PDS is made up of many factors, not just representation at trial. As such, there has been no direct assessment of the outcomes in cases where the PDS is instructed, including making estimates about the PDS's conviction rate.

The PDS plays a vital role in ensuring access to justice by providing advice and representation to eligible clients in the event of market failure or disruptive action by the criminal-defence sector and undertaking cross examination of witnesses in the capacity of court appointee in cases where the defendant is unrepresented.

**Robbery: Remand in Custody****Steve Reed:**[\[16967\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will publish figures on the (a) number of offenders who were held on remand awaiting trial for robbery and (b) length of time those offenders were held on remand for in each prison in England and Wales in each of the last five years.

**James Cartlidge:**

The number of prisoners who were held on untried remand for alleged robbery and the length of time those prisoners were held on remand, in each prison in England and Wales, as at 30 June in each of the last five years, is shown in the attached tables.

The Bail Act 1976 provides a presumption in favour of bail, which recognises that a person should not be deprived of their liberty unless necessary for the protection of the public or the delivery of justice.

It is the courts that decide on a case-by-case basis whether a defendant presents such a bail risk as to warrant custody. Bail can only be refused where there is justification, as prescribed in Schedule 1 to the Bail Act, such as substantial grounds for believing that the defendant, would abscond, commit further offences, interfere with witnesses or otherwise obstruct the course of justice.

Since Covid the number of remand cases has increased as the courts were forced to pause jury trials in March 2020 for a short period, and social distancing requirements were brought in to stop the spread of the virus. The Government is committed to supporting the recovery of the courts and we continue to take action to tackle the impact the pandemic has had on the system. We have extended 30 Nightingale

courtrooms beyond the end of March 2022 and have again removed the limit on the number of days the Crown Court can sit this financial year. To secure enough capacity to sit at the required levels in 2022/23 and beyond, we are also expanding our plans for judicial recruitment.

**Attachments:**

1. Table [2022-06-16 16967 table.xlsx]

■ **Sexual Offences and Terrorism: Lie Detectors**

**Steve Reed:**

**[16966]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will publish the data his Department holds on the effectiveness of polygraph testing of convicted (a) terrorist and (b) sex offenders.

**Kit Malthouse:**

Prior to polygraph testing being fully rolled out across the Probation Service in 2014, an evaluation of its effectiveness with high-risk sex offenders released on licence was undertaken and a report published in 2012. The report is publicly available here:

[The evaluation of the mandatory polygraph pilot \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Provisions in the Counter Terrorism and Sentencing Act 2021 introduced polygraph testing for terrorist offenders, and those provisions came into force in June 2021. The Government committed to undertake a review of its use with terrorist offenders after a two-year period, and report on its findings.

The report will be a process evaluation focusing on specific points, including the numbers of terrorist offenders subject to testing, how results of polygraph testing have been used, the effect of testing on compliance with licence conditions and how frequently terrorist offenders are recalled to prison on the basis of polygraph test results. The report is scheduled to be laid before Parliament in Autumn 2023.

■ **Theft: Sentencing**

**Stephanie Peacock:**

**[15339]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of the length of sentences for theft of items which are essential to a person's livelihood.

**James Cartlidge:**

An assessment of the adequacy of the length of sentences for theft of items which are essential to a person's livelihood has not been carried out. Data on items stolen when a theft offence has been committed is not centrally held.

Sentencing is entirely a matter for our independent courts. When deciding what sentence to impose the courts take into account the circumstances of the offence, the offender and any aggravating and mitigating factors, in line with any relevant sentencing guidelines – which are issued by the independent Sentencing Council. The sentencing guideline for theft makes it clear that the value of items stolen to the

loser, regardless of monetary worth, and any consequential financial harm to victims or others must be considered when determining the sentence.

## LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

### ■ Affordable and Social Rented Housing: Construction

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[15289\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will make it his policy to require all new build homes to be (a) social or (b) affordable housing until the current demand for housing is met.

**Stuart Andrew:**

Increasing the provision of affordable housing is a central pillar of the Government's levelling-up agenda - enabling us to end the housing crisis, tackle homelessness and provide aspiring homeowners with a step onto the housing ladder.

Our £11.5 billion Affordable Homes Programme runs from 2021 to 2026, and will deliver up to 180,000 affordable homes, should economic conditions allow. Around half the homes will be for affordable and social rent. The 2021-2026 programme will deliver more than double the amount of social rent homes (around 32,000) compared to the 2016-2023 programme that came before it.

The Government wants to see local authorities playing a key role in the delivery of social housing, alongside housing associations. Government has given councils more freedom in how they can spend the money they receive from Right to Buy sales on replacement homes, as well as abolishing the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) borrowing cap to help them achieve this.

Ultimately, the country needs a mixture of different types and tenures of housing. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that local planning authorities should assess the type and tenure of homes needed and reflect this in their local planning policies.

### ■ Building Safety Fund

**Tulip Siddiq:**

[\[15317\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether he plans to announce additional funding for the Building Safety Fund.

**Stuart Andrew:**

The Government is providing £5.1 billion, including £4.5 billion through the Building Safety Fund, to address the fire safety risks caused by unsafe cladding on high-rise residential buildings. This will be used where the original developer and/or the building owner are not funding the works. On 13 April, the Department announced that leading residential developers had pledged to remediate life critical fire safety works in buildings over 11 metres that they have played a role in developing or refurbishing over the last 30 years in England. As of 13 June, over 45 have signed

the pledge. Developers making this commitment have also agreed to reimburse any funding received from government remediation programmes in relation to buildings they had a role in developing or refurbishing. This action will make sure that funding grants will only be used where there is no industry solution available and there should be no need for additional funding from the tax payer.

## ■ Housing: Insulation

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[15282\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will take steps to encourage increased insulation of new homes to reduce domestic heating requirements.

**Eddie Hughes:**

In December 2021 the Government introduced an uplift in energy efficiency standards which came into force on 15 June 2022. The uplift comprises a revised package of performance metrics that ensure a fabric-first approach is at the heart of all new homes. This will likely mean an increase in the thickness of insulation in many new homes compared to the current levels.

We also anticipate that many builders will choose to comply with the 2021 standards by installing solar panels or low carbon heating such as heat pumps (or both), meaning that homes built to the 2021 standards will have a lower overall energy demand.

From 2025, the Future Homes Standard will deliver a further considerable improvement in energy efficiency standards.

## ■ Leasehold: Ground Rent

**Kim Johnson:** [\[15394\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether he plans to introduce the second phase of the Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Act 2022 to apply to existing leaseholders.

**Eddie Hughes:**

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

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

We understand the difficulties some existing leaseholders face with high and escalating ground rents. Unfair practices have no place in the housing market. This is why we asked the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) to investigate potential

mis-selling of homes and unfair terms in the leasehold sector. The Government has welcomed this action and wants to see homeowners who have been affected obtain the justice and redress they deserve.

The CMA has secured commitments from Aviva, Persimmon, Countryside Properties and Taylor Wimpey to amend their practices, including commitments to remove lease terms that led to doubling ground rents, houses sold as leasehold and to support leaseholders to buy the freehold at the original price quoted. This is a hugely important step and demonstrates our determination to support existing leaseholders affected by egregious ground rents. We urge other developers to follow suit.

### ■ **Parking: Planning Permission**

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[15283\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will make it his policy to impose a limit in planning regulations on the number car parking spaces for any new residential development.

**Stuart Andrew:**

Parking standards are not set nationally. The setting of parking standards is a matter for local authorities who know their areas best. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out matters that should be considered in setting these, including: the accessibility of the development; the type, mix and use of development; the availability of and opportunities for public transport; local car ownership levels; and the need to ensure an adequate provision for charging of zero and low emission vehicles.

### ■ **Veterans: Housing**

**Stephanie Peacock:**

[\[14589\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether the Government has made an assessment of statistics on veteran housing from the most recent census data.

**Eddie Hughes:**

The government is committed to making the UK the best place in the world to be a veteran.

In line with the Armed Forces Covenant, we changed the law in 2012 so that seriously injured, ill or disabled Service personnel, and former members of the Armed Forces, with urgent housing needs are always given high priority for social housing. In June 2020 we also published new statutory guidance for local authorities to improve access to social housing for members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and their families.

Top level summaries of the veteran population and how it is broken down by age and gender are expected to be published by the Office for National Statistics towards the end of this year. Following the release of these summaries, the Office for National

Statistics will work with the Office of Veterans Affairs to conduct analyses on veteran housing and make an assessment of the findings.

## NORTHERN IRELAND

### ■ Loyalist Communities Council

**Stephen Farry:** [\[15399\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, if he will publish the dates of each meeting of (a) Ministers and (b) officials in his Department with representatives of the Loyalist Communities Council in each of the last 12 months.

**Conor Burns:**

Ministers and officials have not met with anyone in the last twelve months who has stated that they are attending in their capacity as a representative of the Loyalist Communities Council (LCC).

I attended a meeting on 16 December 2021 where an individual understood to be a member of the LCC was present, but in this instance it was made explicitly clear to all attendees in advance of the meeting that this individual was attending in a different capacity.

The Northern Ireland Office does not have a definitive list of representatives of the LCC, nor does it have set criteria for what constitutes being a representative of that organisation. Furthermore, individuals who Ministers and officials meet as part of routine engagement and outreach may not always be explicit about the capacity in which they are attending those meetings.

## TRANSPORT

### ■ Aviation: Standards

**Gareth Thomas:** [\[15170\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the number of holiday flights cancelled in an average year out of (a) Manchester, (b) Stanstead, (c) Gatwick and (d) Heathrow airport; and if he will make a statement.

**Robert Courts:**

Monthly and annual data, up to March 2022, is available from the CAA on their website at <https://www.caa.co.uk/data-and-analysis/uk-aviation-market/flight-punctuality/uk-flight-punctuality-statistics/>.

### ■ Cycling: Safety

**Alberto Costa:** [\[14517\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to help improve road safety for cyclists.

**Trudy Harrison:**

The Government takes very seriously the safety of cyclists and other vulnerable road users and is committed to reducing the number of cyclists killed or seriously injured on England's roads. In July 2020 the Prime Minister launched ambitious plans to encourage cycling and walking. This includes a £2 billion package of funding for active travel over 5 years, which is the largest ever boost for cycling and walking, and will deliver transformational change and improve safety for people cycling.

On 14 May 2022 the Government announced £200 million of funding for new walking and cycling schemes across England, including £35m for the National Cycle Network and a new £8 million e-cycle programme. We have also set up Active Travel England as an Executive Agency of the Department for Transport, which will have a much more hands-on role with local authorities: working with them to get their cycling and walking schemes right and making sure they deliver them properly.

**Alberto Costa:**[\[16998\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to improve road safety for cyclists.

**Trudy Harrison:**

The Government takes very seriously the safety of cyclists and other vulnerable road users and is committed to reducing the number of cyclists killed or seriously injured on England's roads. In July 2020 the Prime Minister launched ambitious plans to encourage cycling and walking. This includes a £2 billion package of funding for active travel over 5 years, which is the largest ever boost for cycling and walking and will deliver transformational change and improve safety for people cycling.

On 14 May 2022 the Government announced £200 million of funding for new walking and cycling schemes across England, including £35m for the National Cycle Network and a new £8 million e-cycle programme. We have also set up Active Travel England as an Executive Agency of the Department for Transport, which will have a much more hands-on role with local authorities: working with them to get their cycling and walking schemes right and making sure they deliver them properly.

**■ Railways: Job Security****Rachael Maskell:**[\[17021\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent steps he has taken to increase job security across the rail network.

**Wendy Morton:**

The railways employ around 100,000 people directly. During the pandemic, the Government provided unprecedented support meaning no staff at DfT contracted train operators and Network Rail were furloughed. The Government earmarked £16 billion of emergency funding to assist in balancing the books - equivalent to £600 for every family in the UK £160,000 for every rail worker.



Change is vital to put the rail industry back on a sustainable footing and to create a rail system fit for the future. That's why we're overhauling the industry with Great British Railways and building new hi-tech trains and high-speed lines to create a railway for the 21st Century, all while creating thousands of jobs.

### ■ Railways: Passengers

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[17022\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make an estimate of the likely timescale for rail passenger numbers to return to pre covid-19 levels; and what steps he is taking to encourage people to use public transport.

**Wendy Morton:**

There is a considerable amount of uncertainty about when rail passenger numbers will return to pre covid-19 levels, with some areas already at pre-covid levels, and other areas returning more slowly.

To support commuters return to the railway, we launched flexible season tickets in June 2021. Over 250,000 new flexible season tickets have been sold since launch, offering commuters travelling two to three days a week significant savings.

To help encourage passengers back to the railways, we introduced the Great British Rail Sale, the first ever nationwide rail sale. The Great British Rail Sale helped save families money and connect them with friends and families. Over 1.3 million tickets were sold, offering around £7million worth of savings for passengers.

### ■ Railways: Staff

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[17023\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he plans to convert contracted railway staff into directly employed staff.

**Wendy Morton:**

It is not for the Government to intervene in the operation of Network Rail and Train Operating Companies regarding contracted and directly employed staff. It is down to employers to make such decisions.

### ■ Travel Agents: Competition

**Alexander Stafford:** [\[15411\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the impact of the collapse of online travel agents in the low-cost carrier sector on (a) competition, (b) consumers, (c) that market and (d) public funds.

**Robert Courts:**

Under competition law, responsibility for investigating individual competition issues falls to the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), the UK's competition authority. As an independent authority, the CMA has discretion to investigate competition cases which, according to its prioritisation principles, it considers most appropriate. The

CMA also has powers to conduct detailed examinations of why particular markets may not be working well, and decide what remedial action is appropriate. Concerns about market competition can be submitted to the CMA.

## TREASURY

### ■ Agriculture: Tax Allowances

**Dr Dan Poulter:**

[\[15230\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will take steps to introduce tax relief for investment in (a) agricultural buildings and (b) farming equipment.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The UK's capital allowances regime provides tax relief for investment in buildings via the structures and buildings allowance, which allows businesses to deduct 3 per cent of the cost of construction and renovation of non-residential structures and buildings a year.

The UK's capital allowances regime also provides tax relief for investment in plant and machinery. For example, the super-deduction allows companies to claim 130 per cent of qualifying plant and machinery investments for expenditure incurred from 1 April 2021 until the end of March 2023. The Annual Investment Allowance (AIA) currently provides 100 per cent relief for plant and machinery investments up to £1 million. At Autumn Budget 2021, the Government extended the temporary £1 million AIA limit to 31 March 2023.

In the Spring Statement 2022, the Chancellor set out a series of potential policy changes to the UK's existing capital allowances regime, which the Government will consider ahead of the end of the super-deduction. HM Treasury is currently seeking the views of businesses on the different options via business engagement and a survey that can be found here:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1062708/Spring\\_Statement\\_2022\\_Print.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1062708/Spring_Statement_2022_Print.pdf).

## WORK AND PENSIONS

### ■ Carer's Allowance

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[15292\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will hold discussions with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on securing an increase in Carers Allowance.

**Chloe Smith:**

Carer's Allowance was updated in April 2022 by 3.1% in line with the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) as measured by the CPI for the previous September. The Secretary of State's annual review of benefits will commence in the autumn and the

Carer's Allowance rate for 2023/24 will be announced to Parliament following the completion of her review in November.

### ■ Department for Work and Pensions: Public Opinion

**Rachel Hopkins:** [\[17168\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much her Department spent on (a) focus groups and (b) polling services in 2021.

**Guy Opperman:**

*[Holding answer 16 June 2022]:* In this case opinion polling has been taken to mean all quantitative research which measures attitudes, behaviours, and campaign recall.

Spending on focus groups and polling services for financial year 21/22 for communications and social research which informs policy development is as follows:

A) FOCUS GROUPS	£264,550
b) Opinion polling services	£220,900
Total	<b>£485,450</b>

### ■ Employment and Support Allowance: Cost of Living

**Alex Sobel:** [\[14603\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, on what basis her Department made the decision to exclude people in the support group for new style Employment and Support Allowance from the £650 cost of living payment.

**David Rutley:**

The Government is committed to managing the public finances in a responsible way by targeting the £650 Cost of Living Payment support at the 8 million low income means-tested households where it is most needed. Contributory based Employment and Support Allowance is not a means-tested benefit.

In addition to the means-tested Cost of Living Payment, 6 million disabled people who receive an eligible non-means tested disability benefits, including Personal Independence Payments, will receive a one-off disability Cost of Living Payment of £150.

These payments are part of the government's £15bn package of support and sits alongside

- the £400 of support for energy bills that the Government is providing through the expansion of the Energy Bills Support Scheme, doubling the £200 of support announced earlier this year and making the whole £400 a non-repayable grant.
- an increased Winter Fuel Payment

- the extension of the Household Support Fund with an additional £500 million to support households with the cost of essentials, bringing the total funding for this support to £1.5 billion, and
- new support, people on low incomes but not means-tested benefits may also benefit from previously announced measures to help people tackle the cost of living, including frozen alcohol duty and fuel duty, raising the NICs threshold, council tax rebates and the further rise in the National Living Wage to £9.50 an hour from April 2022.

The guidance with the full list of support can be found at:

[Overall government support for the cost of living: factsheet - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/factsheets/overall-government-support-for-the-cost-of-living)

### ■ In-work Progression Commission: Government Responses

**Alison McGovern:**

[15256]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when the Government plans to publish its response to Baroness Ruby McGregor-Smith's review into in-work progression.

**Mims Davies:**

This Government is committed to ensuring that everyone, no matter their background, has the opportunity to start, stay and progress in work. We aim to publish our response to the In-work Progression Commission's report as soon as possible, where we will set out our new approach to supporting people on low pay and helping them to progress in work.

### ■ Jobcentres: Training

**Alison McGovern:**

[15249]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many benefit claimants were referred by Jobcentre Plus to providers for training literacy in 2021, broken down by UK region, London and mayoral combined authority, age, ethnicity, gender and disability.

**Alison McGovern:**

[15250]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many benefit claimants were referred by Jobcentre Plus to providers for numeracy training in 2021, broken down by UK region, London and mayoral combined authority, age, ethnicity, gender and disability.

**Alison McGovern:**

[15251]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many benefit claimants were referred by Jobcentre Plus to providers for digital skills training in 2021, broken down by UK region, London and mayoral combined authority, age, ethnicity, gender and disability.

**Mims Davies:**

The information requested is not readily available. Jobcentre Plus works in partnership with local training providers to ensure/facilitate delivery of essential communication skills, numeracy skills, digital literacy skills and English for Speakers

of Other Languages (ESOL) training to unemployed benefit claimants in England, Scotland and Wales. Wider adult education and skills policy is the responsibility of the Department for Education in England and devolved to the Scottish and Welsh Governments in Scotland and Wales.

### ■ Kickstart Scheme

**Mr Barry Sheerman:** [\[14434\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, why the Kickstart Scheme ended in January 2022.

**Mims Davies:**

Kickstart has seen over 163,000 jobs started by young people since it launched in September 2020 and the number of people on payrolls is now above pre-pandemic levels for every age group. The Scheme was a temporary response to protect young people from the risk of the scarring effects of long-term unemployment caused by the pandemic.

Kickstart was designed to deliver value for money in uncertainty and successfully responded to huge variations in the labour market and delivery context, including major Covid-19 restrictions, the closure of the Covid Job Retention Scheme and the extension of the scheme for an additional three months. The ongoing economic recovery, with 1.3 million vacancies available in the labour market, now means there is plenty of opportunity for young people to find unsubsidised work.

Kickstart closed to applications from employers and gateways on 17 December 2021 with the final job starts taking place on 31 March 2022. The last Kickstart jobs will come to an end on 30 September 2022.

**Mr Barry Sheerman:** [\[15187\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what was the total number of work placements provided by the Kickstart Scheme.

**Mims Davies:**

As of 5 June 2022, over 163,000 Kickstart jobs had been started by young people. The last Kickstart jobs were started by young people on 31 March 2022.

### ■ Kickstart Scheme: Finance

**Alison McGovern:** [\[15254\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 23 May 2022 to Question 4563 on Kickstart Scheme: Finance, how much and what proportion of Kickstart Scheme funding from the her Department was handed back at the end of the financial year 2021-22.

**Alison McGovern:** [\[15255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 23 May 2022 to Question 4563 on Kickstart Scheme: Finance, what total amount of Kickstart

Scheme funding from her Department was handed back to the Treasury at the end of the financial year 2020-21.

**Mims Davies:**

In the financial year 2020-21, DWP obtained £25m ring-fenced funding for the Kickstart Scheme. None of the £25m was subsequently returned to HM Treasury.

DWP's 2021-22 financial accounts are currently being audited, so we are unable to provide this information.

■ **Universal Credit**

**Kate Osamor:**

[\[14564\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether risk scoring or other algorithms are used to identify Universal Credit claimants for potential review by the Risk Review Team.

**David Rutley:**

Risk scoring is used to identify Universal Credit claims for potential review by the Risk Review Team. Once the review is completed a DWP agent would decide if a fraud investigation is required.

**Kate Osamor:**

[\[14565\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Universal Credit Risk Review Team, whether a risk review can be initiated solely due to a claimant being identified by a computer system as being high risk, or whether a human will always make the final decision to commence a review.

**David Rutley:**

As set out in the Department's Personal Information Charter DWP does not use algorithms to replace human judgement. Risk indicators are determined by DWP agents and where a computer highlights a risk a DWP agent intervenes and reviews the claim. A DWP agent would take into account all circumstances/information before a final decision.

**Alison McGovern:**

[\[15246\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will publish the data underlying Table 4 in her Department's recent paper entitled Completing the Move to Universal Credit: Our 2022-24 strategy for implementing the final phase of Universal Credit, published in April 2022.

**David Rutley:**

The requested information is provided in the attached methodology document 'Universal Credit Full-Service employment impact evaluation'.

**Attachments:**

1. 15246 Attachment [UCFS Employment Impact Evaluation.pdf]

**Alison McGovern:**

[15247]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment her Department has made of whether the economic and fiscal benefits outlined in the Universal Credit Full Business Case Summary, published on 7 June 2018, have been delivered.

**David Rutley:**

The performance of Universal Credit (UC) continues to be monitored as we proceed to complete the move to Universal Credit. As implementation of UC is not yet complete, it is not possible to carry out a full assessment of the 2018 Business Case.

Since first being introduced in 2013, Universal Credit (UC) has streamlined and simplified the benefits system to better support those in work on low incomes, as well as those who are unemployed or who cannot work. By improving work incentives and support, Universal Credit helped deliver the highest ever level of employment seen in this country just before COVID hit. A dynamic benefit that reflects people's needs from month to month, Universal Credit successfully supported millions of people and processed a ten-fold surge in claims during the pandemic, when legacy systems would have collapsed.

**Alison McGovern:**

[15248]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Universal Credit Statistics Release Strategy published on 23 March 2022, when her Department plans to start publishing experimental statistics on flows between conditionality groups, including flows on and off Universal Credit.

**David Rutley:**

Universal Credit statistics, with respect to conditionality regimes and flows, are still under development, as detailed in section 4 of the Department's [statistical work programme](#). The production of these statistics is dependent on further data development. Progress on these developments will be provided through the Universal Credit Statistics bulletin and the Statistical Work Programme and then pre-announced in the [statistics release calendar](#).

## ■ Universal Credit: Employment

**Alison McGovern:**

[15253]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what proportion of people claiming Universal Credit and in the searching for work conditionality group as at January 2021 found a job within (a) six and (b) 12 months of being placed in the searching for work group; and how for how long those people held that job.

**David Rutley:**

The Information requested can only be provided at disproportionate cost because the required information is not all readily available to analysts in a format that would enable them to undertake the analysis and quality assure the figures, to answer this PQ in the timescales.



**■ Way to Work Scheme****Alison McGovern:**[\[15252\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 25 May 2022 to Question 5651, on Way to Work Scheme, if his Department will publish the modelling referred to in that answer and any forecasts generated.

**Mims Davies:**

The Way to Work campaign is scheduled to conclude at the end of June, after which, we aim to publish details of the movements into work achieved during the campaign.

The data we are using to measure performance through Way to Work is experimental and was developed to support delivery. We will use the insights of this data, as well as wider learning from the preparation, delivery and outcomes of the campaign to inform ongoing policy development at the Department. As this process is ongoing, we have no plans to publish any modelling prepared for Way to Work.