



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 24 June 2022 and the information is correct at the time of publication (03:38 P.M., 24 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

■ Carbon Capture and Storage

Mr Barry Sheerman: [18786]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to further incentivise carbon capture and storage initiatives for energy from waste (a) schemes and (b) facilities.

Mr Barry Sheerman: [18787]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to support businesses with investing in carbon capture and storage initiatives for energy from waste.

Greg Hands:

In November 2021, the Government set out that waste sector CCUS projects that meet the eligibility criteria will be eligible for business model support through Phase-2 of the CCUS Cluster Sequencing process. In March 2022, applications were received from twelve eligible waste sector projects.

On 25th March 2022, the UK Emissions Trading Scheme Authority published a Call for Evidence to explore whether the UK ETS should be expanded to cover waste incineration and Energy from Waste. Including energy from waste facilities, the UK ETS would provide a market-based carbon price with a long-term trajectory that could incentivise improvements in the efficiency of existing incineration plants, stimulate investment in decarbonisation technologies or practices, and support business investment in carbon capture and storage in the future.

■ Energy Bills Rebate

Mr Alistair Carmichael: [18826]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether combined domestic and business electricity accounts will receive the £400 Energy Bills Support Scheme grant.

Greg Hands:

All domestic electricity customers who have a direct relationship with a licensed electricity supplier will be automatically eligible for the Energy Bills Support Scheme. More information is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/energy-bills-support-scheme-explainer>

■ Energy: Billing

Caroline Lucas:

[\[19604\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 13 June 2022 to Question 9868 on Energy: Billing, if he will make it his policy to revise the supplier licence conditions to ensure that people who pay for their energy by (a) a pre-payment meter and (b) cash or cheque do not pay more for their energy as a consequence of their payment method.

Greg Hands:

The Government has no plans to revise licence conditions. Supplier licence conditions, enforced by the independent regulator Ofgem, state that the differences in price between payment methods for energy, including by prepayment meter, must reflect the cost to the supplier of that payment method. The energy price cap protects prepayment meter customers and ensures they pay a fair price for their energy.

■ Hartlepool Power Station and Heysham 1 Power Station: Decommissioning

Charlotte Nichols:

[\[19008\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the potential impact of the retirement of (a) Heysham 1 and (b) Hartlepool nuclear power plants on (i) electricity prices, (ii) security of electricity supply, (iii) balancing costs and (iv) carbon dioxide emissions.

Greg Hands:

BEIS regularly updates the latest assumptions around decommissioning dates of plants to ensure that its analysis of the power sector takes into account the latest available information. Published outputs inherently capture the impact plant retirements will have on electricity prices, security of supply, balancing costs and CO2 emissions.

■ Hinkley Point B Power Station

Charlotte Nichols:

[\[19007\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department wrote to EDF to request examination of the possibility of a life extension for Hinkley Point B.

Greg Hands:

Whilst there has been parliamentary and public interest in the potential for life extensions, the Department has no formal role in these decisions. The continued operation, or closure, of any UK nuclear power station is a decision for EDF (the stations' owner and operator) and the independent nuclear regulator, the Office for Nuclear Regulation (the ONR), based on safety and commercial considerations. The Department is in regular communication with EDF and the ONR but has not written regarding the extension of nuclear power stations.

■ Hydrogen: Exports

Alan Brown: [\[18948\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether it is his policy to support the export of hydrogen from the UK to Europe; and if he will make a statement.

Alan Brown: [\[18949\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much his Department will spend on support for businesses that export hydrogen in the next 12 months.

Greg Hands:

BEIS is working with industry to assess strengths and capabilities in UK supply chains to help them benefit from the emerging global hydrogen economy. This will ensure UK businesses are well prepared to capitalise on export opportunities as they arise.

■ Shops: Energy

Rachael Maskell: [\[18961\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he is taking steps to encourage high street property portfolio holders to invest in (a) retrofitting their premises to conserve energy and (b) solar and other renewable microgeneration.

Greg Hands:

As of 2018 landlords of commercial rented properties in England or Wales must ensure that their properties reach at least an Energy Performance Certificate rating of E, are cost-effective, before granting a new tenancy to new or existing tenants. From 1 April 2023 the regulations will apply even where there has been no change in tenancy.

Furthermore, Government is supporting commercial rooftop solar installation through providing tax-relief to businesses installing solar panels until March 2023 and business rates exemptions for onsite-renewable generation until March 2035.

The Smart Export Guarantee also enables small-scale electricity generators to receive payment for renewable electricity they export.

■ Small Businesses: Energy

Rachael Maskell: [\[18959\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent assessment he has made of the impact of the rise in energy prices on the cost of running a small business which has its own premises.

Greg Hands:

The Government recognises this is a worrying time for businesses facing pressures due to the significant increase in prices. Extensive engagement continues across

government at both a ministerial and official level to understand, and to help mitigate the impacts of high global energy prices. The Government's priority is to ensure costs are managed and energy supplies maintained.

DEFENCE

■ Afghanistan: Refugees

Caroline Lucas: [\[19603\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many full time equivalent staff were working in the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy team as of (a) 1 April 2021 and (b) 16 June 2022.

James Heapey:

As of 1 April 2021, there were 10 personnel assigned to the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) scheme, equating to 7.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff.

As of 16 June 2022, there were 91 personnel assigned to the ARAP scheme equating to 86.5 FTE staff.

These figures include both civilian and military staff making eligibility decisions, policy and legal teams, and those based in the UK and in third countries who are working to arrange relocation of eligible persons. The Defence Permanent Secretary has recently agreed a further uplift of civilian resource dedicated to processing ARAP applications.

Dan Jarvis: [\[21190\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will take steps to help ensure that members of Afghan Territorial Force 444 are relocated to the UK as part of the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy.

James Heapey:

Eligibility decisions are made on a case-by-case basis, and so it is not possible to confirm eligibility for any group as a whole. Those previously employed in units such as the Afghan Territorial Force 444 who have worked directly for the UK, can apply and will be considered for ARAP alongside all Afghan nationals who worked with or in support of the UK mission.

Dan Jarvis: [\[21191\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many personnel from ATF444 have been (a) relocated to the UK under the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy and (b) have an outstanding application to that scheme.

James Heapey:

It is not possible to provide a breakdown of these figures by job role or specific unit.

Since April 2021 we have relocated over 9,500 ARAP eligible people to the UK.

■ Armed Forces: Protective Clothing

John Healey: [\[18783\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 14 June 2022 to Question 15179 on Ajax Vehicles: Protective Clothing, how many headsets his Department are looking to procure as part of the Armoured Fighting Vehicle headset project.

John Healey: [\[18784\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 14 June 2022 to Question 15179 on Ajax Vehicles: Protective Clothing, which armoured vehicles plan to use the new headsets set to be procured through the Armoured Fighting Vehicle headset project.

John Healey: [\[18785\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 14 June 2022 to Question 5179 Ajax Vehicles: Protective Clothing, whether the new headsets set to be procured through the Armoured Fighting Vehicle headset project for Ajax will be procured through General Dynamics.

Jeremy Quin:

I will write to the right hon. Gentleman with an update on the Armoured Fighting Vehicle Headset programme and place a copy in the Library of the House.

■ Armoured Fighting Vehicles

Mr Tobias Ellwood: [\[18834\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what is the number of working Jackal vehicles in the Army as of 15 June 2022.

Mr Tobias Ellwood: [\[18835\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many working Warrior vehicles were in service in the Army as of 15 June 2022.

Mr Tobias Ellwood: [\[18836\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many working Challenger 2 tanks are in service in the Army as of 15 June 2022.

Mr Tobias Ellwood: [\[18837\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many working Panther vehicles were in service in the British Army as of 15 June 2022.

Mr Tobias Ellwood: [\[18838\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many working Foxhound vehicles are in service in the British Army as of 15 June 2022.

Mr Tobias Ellwood: [18839]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many working Scimitar vehicles are in service in the British Army as of 15 June 2022.

Mr Tobias Ellwood: [18840]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many working Bulldog vehicles are in service in the British Army as of 15 June 2022.

Mr Tobias Ellwood: [18841]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many working Huskys were in service in the British Army as of 15 June 2022.

Jeremy Quin:

The British Army holds and maintains an appropriate amount of all vehicles to meet operational requirements. I am withholding further information on the number of in service vehicles as its disclosure would, or would be likely to prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces.

Details of the number of vehicles in the UK Armed Forces are published on an annual basis on the Government's website. The most recent publication can be found here: [UK Armed Forces Equipment and Formations 2021 tables.xlsx \(live.com\)](#)

■ Army

Mr Tobias Ellwood: [21119]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent assessment his Department has made of whether 72,000 regular army service personnel is sufficient to protect the UK both at home and abroad.

James Heapey:

Through Future Soldier, the Army will have a whole force of over 100,000 comprising of 73,000 Regular Service Personnel and 30,100 Army Reserves. This will deliver a modern force that is more integrated, agile, and lethal, fit for the threats of the future not the battles of the past.

The Army will be balanced to deliver right across the Defence spectrum: Protect the Homeland; Engage with allies and partners overseas; Constrain the aggressive activities of our adversaries; and Fight wars if required.

■ Middle East: Military Operations

Alyn Smith: [18983]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much the Government has paid in compensation for civilian harm since 2001 in respect of (a) Afghanistan, (b) Iraq and (c) Syria.

Alyn Smith: [\[18984\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the total cost was of administration and legal fees relating to all civilian harm compensation claims since 2001 in respect of (a) Afghanistan, (b) Iraq and (c) Syria.

Leo Docherty:

In respect of Afghanistan, both the compensation and claimants' legal fees paid by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) for unlawful detention and mistreatment claims by Afghan nationals are subject to a confidentiality undertaking between the MOD and the claimants' solicitors and we are unable to disclose the information at this time.

In respect of Iraq, the MOD has previously disclosed that £19.66 million was paid in compensation to an early tranche of claims by Iraqi nationals alleging unlawful detention and mistreatment. Further similar claims and the claimants' legal costs are subject to a confidentiality undertaking and we are unable to disclose the information at this time.

The MOD's legal and administration costs of dealing with these claims are not centrally recorded.

In respect of Syria, no claims have been received.

■ Military Aircraft

Mr Tobias Ellwood: [\[21104\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department has taken with international allies on the development of the Next Generation Rotorcraft Capability (NGRC); and if he will make a statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood: [\[21105\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the expected capabilities are of the Next Generation Rotorcraft Capability project.

Mr Tobias Ellwood: [\[21106\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the Next Generation Rotorcraft Capability will be rolled out as standard to all three service arms.

Jeremy Quin:

Since the signing of the Letter of Intent October 2020, the UK has guided the NATO Next Generation Rotorcraft Capability (NGRC) project through the Pre-Concept stage. Since the signing of the NGRC Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 16 June 2022, the project now moves into the Concept Phase over the next three years.

We expect the NATO NGRC project to ultimately develop a Transformational Next Generation Rotorcraft that will remain relevant against future threats and will be a suitable candidate to replace the current fleet of Medium Helicopters in service with the UK and NATO Allies.

The UK is fully engaged with the NATO NGRC project in order to develop options for potential replacements across the three services.

EDUCATION

■ Children in Care: Location

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[19658\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many looked-after children local authorities reported as being placed outside of their local authority area between January 2020 to December 2020.

Will Quince:

The children looked after return (SSDA903 return) collects information about children who are looked after by local authorities from 1 April to 31 March each year. The latest figures show there were 32,890 new placements outside the local authority boundary for children looked after during the year ending 31 March 2021. If a child had more than one placement in the year, then all placements are counted.

■ Children: Asylum

Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck: [\[18916\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what information his Department holds on the number of times that the Children's Commissioner has visited hotels which are accommodating unaccompanied asylum seeking children.

Will Quince:

As an executive non-departmental public body, the department does not hold the requested information regarding specific visits by the Children's Commissioner.

■ Children: Day Care

Rachael Maskell: [\[19643\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he will take steps to ensure that parents on zero-hours contracts have access to the full 30 hours per week of free childcare.

Will Quince:

In order to qualify for the 30 hours free childcare entitlements, parents need to be earning the equivalent of 16 hours a week at the National Minimum Wage or Living Wage. This ensures that self-employed parents or parents on zero-hour contracts are not excluded if they meet this income requirement.

Every three months, parents need to reconfirm their eligibility to confirm that over the next three months, they expect to earn at least £1,976, or the National Living Wage for people over 23. If they have a partner, they will need to expect to earn at least this much too.

■ Children: Disability

Rachael Maskell: [\[19642\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he will take to support parents of disabled children with the increasing cost of childcare.

Will Quince:

The department is fully committed to supporting families with children who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). This is why children with an education, health and care (EHC) plan or children who qualify for the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) are able to access the 2-year-old entitlement. The 2-year-old entitlement offers 15 hours free early education.

All children, including those with SEND, are eligible for 15 hours childcare per week from the term following their third birthday. Working parents may also be eligible for an additional 15 hours of free childcare per week, known as 30 hours childcare, from the term after the child's third birthday.

Working parents can apply for Tax-Free Childcare to help pay for extra hours of childcare. If eligible, parents of disabled children aged 0-16 can save up to £4,000 per year. Tax-Free Childcare can be used for childcare providers to purchase specialist equipment to support the child's needs, such as mobility aids.

Working parents on a low income may also be eligible for help with up to 85% of their childcare costs through the childcare element of Universal Credit. This is subject to a monthly limit of £646 for one child or £1,108 for two or more children aged 0-16.

■ Clothing: Curriculum

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[19566\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will make it his policy to include details of the global fashion industry and supply chains in the National Curriculum.

Mr Robin Walker:

The department will not be making any changes to the national curriculum for the remainder of this Parliament to provide stability for schools, and enable them to remain focused on recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and teaching the broad and rich curriculum.

Over the past decade, the department has reformed the national curriculum to set world-class standards across all subjects. Programmes of study are flexible enough for teachers to be able to add their own content – including taking account of new developments, societal changes, or topical issues, such as global fashion and supply chains – without there being a need for the department to review the national curriculum.

An example of this could be the teaching of textiles in design and technology (D&T). D&T is compulsory in state-maintained schools from key stage 1 to 3 and pupils in maintained schools also have an entitlement to study D&T in key stage 4. The national curriculum is a framework, designed to give teachers the freedom and

flexibility to go into greater depth and cover additional topics, such as details of the global fashion industry and supply chains, as they wish, according to the needs of their pupils. The use of textiles is encouraged in the D&T programme of study, though this is non-statutory guidance.

The department believes it vital that young people are taught about global issues such as sustainability and climate change. Topics related to these are covered in the national curriculum, which are mandatory in all state-maintained school, such as the science and geography curricula and GCSEs. For example, secondary geography includes the study of the climate, how human and physical processes interact to influence and change landscapes, environments and the climate. Citizenship education, which has been a compulsory subject in maintained schools since 2002, also covers contents on global issues, such as the environment. Furthermore, the department introduced a new environmental science A level in 2017. This will enable pupils to study topics that will support their understanding of the global issues, such as climate change.

■ Education: Genito-urinary Medicine

Dame Diana Johnson:

[19589]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he plans to improve the current provision of education on sexual health.

Mr Robin Walker:

The introduction of compulsory relationships, sex, and health education (RSHE) in schools from September 2020 will increase young people's knowledge in several areas of men's and women's health. The department is clear in its 'Relationships and sex education and health education' statutory guidance that pupils in secondary schools should be taught the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, and sexual health in an age-appropriate and inclusive way. This guidance is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>.

The department has given schools the flexibility to design the content of their curriculum to support their cohort of pupils and have signposted them to expert advice on reproductive health.

It is important that teachers have the confidence to teach RSHE effectively, including teaching about sexual health. To help schools with this, the department has published a range of online teacher training modules covering each of the key subject areas. The modules are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teaching-about-relationships-sex-and-health>. The module on 'Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health' indicates that by the end of secondary school, pupils should know the facts about reproductive health, including fertility, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women.

In September 2020, the department also published non-statutory implementation guidance, 'Plan your relationships, sex and health curriculum', and funded the

delivery of a train the trainer and peer support programme to schools from April 2020 to July 2021. The programme reached 4,800 schools.

The department has contracted with IFF Research to undertake a national survey of school leaders, RSHE leads and RSHE teachers, supported by qualitative research with school staff and pupils. The research will test whether schools are implementing the requirements with sufficient quality and help us to understand barriers and facilities to quality implementation, to inform any further support offers.

Additionally, the Schools White Paper commits to further strengthening RSHE and Ofsted plans to undertake a review of personal development in schools, which includes RSHE. The report will be published later this year.

■ Faith Schools: Admissions

Wera Hobhouse: [\[18969\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he had made an assessment of the potential impact of religious selection on socioeconomic inclusion in schools.

Wera Hobhouse: [\[18970\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will make it his policy to reduce the number of school places offered on a faith basis.

Mr Robin Walker:

Church and faith schools represent a third of all state-funded schools. The department values the contribution that they make to a diverse school system.

Faith schools have played a longstanding and important role in our education system. Faith schools are popular with parents, with many being high-performing and are more likely to be rated good or outstanding by Ofsted than non-faith schools. New academies and free schools that have a faith designation must allow for a minimum of 50% of places to be allocated to children without reference to faith where the school is oversubscribed.

In 2018, the department published 'Secondary school choice and selection: insights from new national preferences data'. The report found evidence that the smaller proportion of disadvantaged and minority ethnic pupils attending church schools compared to other schools was a result of a range of factors, including admissions oversubscription criteria, as well as parental preference.

The department expects all schools, including faith schools, to be open and inclusive. All schools, including faith schools, must ensure that their admission arrangements are fair and objective, and that the arrangements will not disadvantage unfairly a child from a particular social or racial group.

Many faith schools are oversubscribed, showing that parents value and want these schools. The department also understands that the ability to prioritise children of faith when oversubscribed is important to faith schools and we do not intend to change that.

■ Guardianship

Munira Wilson: [\[19712\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much has been paid by local authorities to special guardians under regulation 6 of the Special Guardianship Regulations 2005 in each of the last five years for which data is available.

Munira Wilson: [\[19713\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many (a) special guardians, and (b) prospective special guardians have received financial support from local authorities under regulation 6 of the Special Guardianship Regulations 2005 in each of the last five years.

Will Quince:

The department does not hold figures on the amount of financial support provided by local authorities to special guardians, nor does it collect data on the number of special guardians and prospective special guardians who have received financial support.

■ Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education

Rachael Maskell: [\[18956\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will take steps to integrate education on individual identity for young people into personal, social, health and economic education.

Mr Robin Walker:

Schools must have regard to the relationships education and relationships and sex education and health education statutory guidance. This states that pupils should be taught the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health, and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive way.

Schools have flexibility over how they deliver these subjects. They can develop an integrated approach that is sensitive to the needs and backgrounds of their pupils.

Schools should be a safe and welcoming space for all pupils, regardless of how they identify. The department understands this can be a difficult subject to address, and we will be working with the Equality and Human Rights Commission to develop guidance in this area.

■ Poetry: Education

Jim Shannon: [\[21179\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to support poetry teaching in (a) primary and (b) secondary schools.

Mr Robin Walker:

Education is a devolved matter, and the response outlines the information for England only.

Poetry is prominent in the national curriculum for English at key stages 1, 2, 3 and 4. At different stages of their education, students should have opportunities to: develop

pleasure in reading and discussing poetry, learn poetry by heart and write their own poetry. As part of the English Literature GCSE, students are taught to read and appreciate the depth and power of the English literary heritage, including studying poetry written since 1789.

The department funds an initiative called Poetry by Heart which helps to develop and support inspiring poetry teaching in schools, and to motivate pupils and teachers to explore our rich literary heritage: <http://www.poetrybyheart.org.uk/>. Pupils choose poems from the online anthology covering 1,000 years of poetry and recite these in school-based competitions. A national final was held in Shakespeare's Globe in June 2022 and was open to pupils in key stages 2, 3, 4 and 5.

■ Schools: Coronavirus and Ventilation

Stephen Morgan:

[19677]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he plans to issue guidance to schools on undertaking work during the 2022 summer school holidays to (a) improve ventilation and (b) reduce the risk of covid-19 transmission.

Mr Robin Walker:

Schools should always create a healthy indoor environment for occupants. This includes keeping spaces ventilated to reduce the concentration of pathogens in the air, such as COVID-19, and to manage indoor temperatures.

In 2017, the department published 'Building Bulletin 101', guidance for school design on ventilation, thermal comfort, and indoor air quality. This includes the World Health Organisation's air quality guidelines and Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010 for indoor air quality. The full publication can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/ventilation-thermal-comfort-and-indoor-air-quality-in-schools>.

When carrying out works to make building improvements, schools should use the environmental standards set out in the department's 'Employer's requirements Part A: General conditions' guidance. The current version was updated recently and published in November 2021. This can be accessed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/output-specification-generic-design-brief-and-technical-annexes>.

The department has produced the 'Good estate management for schools' guidance, located on GOV.UK. The guidance provides education providers with resources and guidance on managing the estate, including reducing water and energy usage. More information can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/good-estate-management-for-schools/health-and-safety>

In the 2021/22 academic year, the department provided over 386,000 CO2 monitors to state-funded education providers, including early years, schools, and further education providers, backed by £25 million in government funding. The monitors enable staff to identify areas where ventilation needs to be improved and provide

reassurance that existing ventilation measures are working, helping balance the need for good ventilation with keeping classrooms warm.

In January 2022, the government committed to fulfil all eligible applications for air cleaning units to state-funded education providers for poorly ventilated teaching spaces where quick fixes to improve ventilation are not possible. The latest delivery figures can be found at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/delivery-of-air-cleaning-units>.

Maintaining adequate ventilation remains the responsibility of individual schools. The law says employers, including education and childcare providers, must make sure there is an adequate supply of fresh air in enclosed areas of the workplace. This has not changed during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Health and Safety Executive provides more information on this here: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/ventilation/index.htm>.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Deposit Return Schemes

Kate Griffiths:

[19708]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department will take to ensure that the planned Deposit Return Scheme will be interoperable with schemes in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Jo Churchill:

Defra officials continue to work closely with colleagues in devolved administrations to promote joint working wherever possible. However, as this is a devolved area of policy, the devolved administrations are in no way required to take the same approach we do.

■ Joint Unit for Waste Crime

Mr Kevan Jones:

[18812]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the performance of the Joint Unit on Waste Crime since its introduction in combatting (a) waste crime and (b) the increase in the involvement of organised crime in the waste industry.

Jo Churchill:

In the two years since its launch in January 2020 the Joint Unit for Waste Crime has worked with over 50 partner organisations and engaged in 74 multi-agency days of action. These have resulted in 52 associated arrests. It is the lead responsible organisation for four organised criminal groups. There have been a number of multi-agency interventions against these groups, including refusal of permits, intelligence-targeted waste sampling and spray marking, and intelligence-led road stops.

■ Joint Unit for Waste Crime: Staff**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[18814\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many personnel are currently employed full-time to the Joint Unit on Waste Crime.

Jo Churchill:

The Joint Waste Crime Team currently employs 14 staff.

■ Waste Management: Carbon Emissions**Mr Barry Sheerman:** [\[18788\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of establishing a requirement for all waste management companies to measure their carbon emissions more accurately beyond just EfW sites.

Jo Churchill:

Defra has made no assessment of the potential merits of establishing a requirement for all waste management companies to measure their carbon emissions.

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE**■ Afghanistan: Embassies****Mr Tobias Ellwood:** [\[19583\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, when the Embassy in Afghanistan will be reopened.

James Cleverly:

The British Embassy in Kabul suspended in-country operations on 14 August 2021. We intend to establish a diplomatic presence in Kabul when the security and political situation in the country allows and are coordinating this effort with allies.

■ Developing Countries: Clothing**Mr Barry Sheerman:** [\[19561\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps she is taking to work with partners abroad to improve workplace rights for people employed in the fashion industry.

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[19562\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps she is taking to help ensure UK fashion brands are not complicit in exploitative labour practices in their overseas supply chain.

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[19563\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the adequacy of the treatment of women in overseas factories producing clothes for the UK market.

Vicky Ford:

The Government is clear that it expects all UK businesses to respect human rights throughout their operations, in line with the UN Guiding Principles and the UK National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights. This also applies to the fashion industry. Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act places a requirement on businesses with a turnover of £36 million or more, to publish an annual modern slavery statement setting out the steps they have taken to prevent modern slavery in their operations and supply chains. Additionally, we announced in 2021 that financial penalties for non-compliance would be introduced. These measures will be included in the Modern Slavery Bill that was announced as part of the Queen's Speech in May 2022.

We know that women and girls are most at risk of modern slavery, making up approximately 70% of victims. Our work overseas seeks to support women and girls, including in the overseas garment sector. The "Work in Freedom" programme works to reduce vulnerability to trafficking and forced labour of women and girls who want to work in the care, textiles, clothing, leather and footwear sectors in South Asia and the Arab States. This programme has reached over 380,000 women and girls since 2018.

The UK's Presidency of the G7 in 2021 and the resulting commitments from G7 members to tackle forced labour in global supply chains, demonstrated our continued commitment to ending modern slavery.

■ Ethiopia: Humanitarian Aid

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

[\[19584\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to provide humanitarian aid in Ethiopia.

Vicky Ford:

This year nearly 30 million people throughout Ethiopia will require life-saving humanitarian aid. Conflict, environmental pressures, COVID-19 and the inflationary impacts of Russia's invasion of Ukraine are the main drivers of humanitarian suffering.

The UK is a major humanitarian donor to the East Africa region including Ethiopia. In financial year 2021/2022 the UK provided more than £230 million towards humanitarian crises across the region of which £86 million was to Ethiopia. UK-funded activities are making a difference. In Ethiopia through the World Food Programme nearly 900,000 people have been provided with food assistance and over 200,000 with nutrition support. Beyond UK finances, the UK is working to secure improved humanitarian access to northern Ethiopia and to improve the performance

of UN agencies in Ethiopia. I have written to World Bank President Malpass this week urging further action on food security in the Horn of Africa.

■ **Finland and Sweden: NATO**

Sir Mark Hendrick: [\[19574\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions she has had with her counterparts in (a) Finland and (b) Sweden on those countries' applications for NATO membership.

James Cleverly:

The UK Government engages regularly with Finland and Sweden and has welcomed their applications for NATO membership. The UK will continue to work with all parties in support of this.

The Prime Minister has underlined the UK's support for the rapid accession of both countries, who will add to the collective security of the Alliance. The UK has deepened our defence and security relationship with both countries through mutual security declarations signed on 11 May.

■ **Hashem Abedi and Salman Abedi**

Kenny MacAskill: [\[18998\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether her Department has made an assessment of the reasons for which Salman and Hashem Abedi were in Libya in August 2014 before being evacuated by the Royal Navy.

James Cleverly:

The Manchester Arena Attack was a horrific terrorist attack on UK soil. We must remain committed to fighting terrorism as an important component of keeping the UK safe. We cannot comment further on this for national security reasons.

■ **Northern Ireland Protocol**

Stephen Farry: [\[19028\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether any Ministers from her Department met with officials from the (a) Democratic Unionist Party and (b) European Research Group on the Government's proposals in the Northern Ireland Protocol Bill.

James Cleverly:

The Government has been discussing the issues with the Northern Ireland Protocol with a wide range of stakeholders since last year. These include politicians, businesses and civil society groups.

The Northern Ireland Protocol Bill is focused on what is necessary to resolve issues with the Protocol and restore the balance we need. It is guided by our duty as Government of the whole United Kingdom to safeguard stability in NI and nothing else.

■ **Russia: Cluster Munitions**

Luke Pollard:

[\[19839\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the prevalence of the use of cluster munitions being used by Russian forces in Ukraine; and whether she has had discussions with her international counterparts on the compatibility of such munitions with international law.

James Cleverly:

The UK Government condemns the indiscriminate or disproportionate use of any weapon, including incendiary weapons or those that have an incendiary effect. The targeting of civilians and civilian objects is not only abhorrent, but also a blatant violation of international law, and should not continue under any circumstances. The UK has been at the forefront of efforts to support the investigation of atrocities being committed in Ukraine, and welcomed the publication of the OSCE's Moscow Mechanism report in April, which found multiple instances of clear violations of international law by Russian forces in Ukraine, including credible evidence of war crimes.

■ **South Sudan: Food Aid**

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[18853\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent estimate she has made of the number of (a) acutely food insecure people and (b) people at risk of (i) malnourishment and (ii) starvation in South Sudan; and what assessment she has made of the potential impact of the suspension of food assistance by the World Food Programme on 14 June 2022 on those figures.

Vicky Ford:

The latest Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) report on South Sudan estimates that during the period April - July 2022 7.74 million people are projected to be in a state of "crisis" or worse. Of this number 87,000 people are projected to be in famine-like conditions, the most serious measure of food insecurity on the IPC scale.

The World Food Programme (WFP) also estimates that around 2 million children under 5 and women face acute malnutrition. WFP have publicly stated that a lack of funding means they will not be able to assist 1.7 million severely food insecure people but they will prioritise aid for a population of 4.5 million people who face emergency and catastrophic levels of food insecurity. Funding constraints mean that WFP will provide reduced rations to this group. As a leading donor to South Sudan we helped 270,000 people in 2020/21 with food rations and over 1.3 million people with improved access to clean water and sanitation. We continue to support WFP emergency food, logistics, livelihoods and essential transport operations in South Sudan. On 17 January, I [Minister Ford] announced £17 million of emergency humanitarian support to help address drought, floods and food insecurity in East Africa, including £3 million for South Sudan.

■ Sri Lanka: Tamils

Stephen Morgan:

[\[19667\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of recent attacks against the Tamil community in Sri Lanka; and whether she has considered imposing sanctions on that country in response to those attacks.

Vicky Ford:

The UK Government regularly engages with the Sri Lankan Government on a range of issues, including human rights concerns such as the targeting and marginalisation of minority groups. We closely monitor the human rights situation, including developments in the North and East, through regular engagement with regional civil society and political representatives. The Minister for South Asia, Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, has strongly condemned violence against peaceful protesters in Sri Lanka. He has reiterated fundamental rights, including the right to peaceful protest, must be protected.

Sanctions are one response among a number of diplomatic tools we can deploy around the world as part of a broader political strategy in order to change or send a political signal regarding particular behaviours. The Global Human Rights sanctions regime was introduced in July 2020, and gives the UK a powerful tool to hold to account those involved in serious human rights violations. We keep all evidence and potential listings under close review. It would not be appropriate to speculate about future designations under the sanctions regime as to do so could reduce their impact. We will continue to consider a range of approaches to tackle serious human rights violations and abuses around the world.

■ UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement

Sarah Olney:

[\[19654\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the impact of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement on UK (a) GDP and (b) financial services.

James Cleverly:

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office does not prepare forecasts for the UK economy and public finances. The latest forecasts from the Office of Budget Responsibility (OBR) were published on 23 March 2022, which used a range of external studies to predict the long-term impacts on UK GDP:

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

The latest monthly data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) shows that UK goods exports to the EU reached their highest value (in current prices) since records began in January 1997.

■ Ukraine: Armed Conflict

Sir Mark Hendrick:

[\[19575\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent representations she has made to the International Criminal Court on conflict-related sexual violence during the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

James Cleverly:

We welcome the decision of the International Criminal Court (ICC) Prosecutor to open an investigation and to include allegations of sexual violence. We stand ready to provide the necessary technical assistance to the ICC to support successful convictions. In coordination with the ICC, The Attorney General led a scoping mission to the region from 8 - 11 May to identify options for further UK support. The team included war crimes and conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) experts and Sir Howard Morrison QC, who was appointed by the Attorney General to help advise the Ukrainian Prosecutor General with her investigations, and cooperation with the ICC. The UK is collaborating closely with the Ukrainian Prosecutor General (UPG) to ensure an effective and coordinated response. We are taking steps to ensure the Murad Code, a UK-funded tool on best practice for documenting CRSV survivors' experiences, is widely adopted.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ Breast Cancer: Screening

Feryal Clark:

[\[19727\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many of NHS England's Breast Screening Units offer (a) walk-in or (b) same day booking screening appointments for women who are eligible to undergo routine mammogram screening every 3 years.

Maria Caulfield:

The NHS Breast Screening Programme does not routinely offer breast screening appointments as either walk-in or same day appointments. The service operates most effectively by ensuring each woman receives an invitation to the appropriate screening unit at the correct time, supporting the maximum use of capacity and allocation of screening slots.

Invitation letters for breast screening request that individuals either book a screening appointment by phone, email or online. Venues for National Health Service breast screening appointments are located either at dedicated breast screening clinics often within a hospital or a mobile breast screening unit.

■ Coronavirus: Medical Treatments

Stephen Hammond: [R] [[18858](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department's plans to expand the eligibility for antivirals to include patients that remain at moderate to high risk of developing severe covid-19.

Maggie Throup:

The PANORAMIC national study is gathering further evidence on which patients would benefit most from oral antiviral treatments for COVID-19. The results from this study inform clinical policy on access to these treatments through the National Health Service, including any expansion of the eligible patient cohorts.

Stephen Hammond: [R] [[18859](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the rollout of covid-19 antivirals; and what comparative assessment his Department has made of his Department's rollout of covid-19 antivirals with other comparator countries.

Maggie Throup:

We are continuing to monitor the deployment of COVID-19 antivirals. In the week commencing 6 June 2022, approximately 1,600 non-hospitalised patients in the United Kingdom have received these treatments, with the total number of patients treated at approximately 63,000.

The UK Health Security Agency is also monitoring the effectiveness of the COVID-19 therapeutics nirmatrelvir+ritonavir (Paxlovid), molnupiravir and remdesivir. Both molnupiravir and Paxlovid are being trialled as part of the PANORAMIC national study. Results from the molnupiravir section of the PANORAMIC national study are expected later this summer. The Antivirals and Therapeutics Taskforce is engaging with other nations on the use, deployment and evaluation of COVID-19 therapeutics and antivirals, which will inform our approach.

■ Endometriosis and Polycystic Ovary Syndrome: Health Services

Feryal Clark: [[19738](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the forthcoming Women's Health Strategy will include ring-fenced funding for research into (a) endometriosis and (b) polycystic ovary syndrome.

Maria Caulfield:

Menstrual health and gynaecological conditions, including endometriosis and polycystic ovary syndrome, will be addressed in the forthcoming Women's Health Strategy.

■ Exercise

Tom Hunt:

[\[18995\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has made an assessment of the most effective interventions for increasing levels of physical activity in a local authority area.

Maggie Throup:

The national framework for physical activity, Everybody Active Every Day enables local authorities to support communities to lead more active lives. This includes setting out the evidence base on successfully enabling people to become more active and options for action at each level of the public health system, including local authorities. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's guidance on physical activity and the environment emphasises that local authorities should prioritise the creation and maintenance of environments which encourage people to be active. Local authorities can access physical activity data at community level through the Public Health Outcomes Framework and Sport England Active Lives survey.

■ Genito-urinary Medicine: Monkeypox

Dame Diana Johnson:

[\[19588\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what additional support he is providing to sexual health services to deal with the increase in demand related to monkeypox.

Maggie Throup:

Public health guidance advises individuals who are concerned about potential exposure to monkeypox to contact NHS 111 or the local sexual health service to receive an assessment. The UK Health Security Agency has provided guidance to healthcare workers, including those working in sexual health services on conducting this assessment and advice on personal protective equipment. Pre-exposure vaccination for staff working in sexual health services who have been identified as assessing suspected cases is also recommended.

■ Lung Diseases: Air Pollution

Geraint Davies:

[\[18764\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department plans to take steps in response to the worsening of symptoms for people with a lung condition triggered by high air pollution; and if he will meet representatives of Asthma + Lung UK to discuss (a) that matter and (b) other findings published in its report entitled Alerting the Nation: Improving the way information is used to protect the most vulnerable from air pollution.

Maggie Throup:

The Government has set two new targets for fine particulate matter and increased the funding available to local authorities through the Air Quality Grant Scheme to £11.6

million to support councils deliver projects to address air pollution and its impact on health.

The Government supports an expert group, including Asthma + Lung UK, to improve the information and advice on air pollution on the UK-AIR website. We are also working with organisations such as Health Education England and the Royal Colleges to ensure that healthcare professionals are equipped to treat those vulnerable to the health impacts of air pollution.

■ **Mental Health Services: Children and Young People**

Rachael Maskell:

[\[18953\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made through workforce planning of the number of mental health professionals that will be required in (a) five and (b) 10 years to provide sufficient support to children and young people.

Gillian Keegan:

No specific estimate has been made. However, the NHS Mental Health Implementation Plan states that the mental health workforce should increase by over 27,000 by 2023/24, including roles to support children and young people. We will work with NHS England and NHS Improvement and Health Education England to develop a workforce plan to complement the new 10-year mental health plan.

The Department also commissioned Health Education England to review long term strategic trends for the health and regulated social care workforce, which is nearing its final stages. In addition, we commissioned NHS England to develop a long term workforce plan. The outcomes will be made available in due course.

■ **Mental Health Services: Hampshire and Isle of Wight**

Stephen Morgan:

[\[19670\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to support Hampshire and Isle of Wight integrated care system to deliver mental health services that meet levels of demand in that region.

Gillian Keegan:

We have provided Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care System with funding to increase access to specialist maternal and perinatal mental health services for at least 600 women by March 2023. This will also allow increased access to psychological support for anxiety and depression for more than 50,000 people a year and new and integrated models of primary and community mental health care for over 13,000 people a year with complex mental health problems.

A suicide bereavement support service has been in place since April 2022 and a problem gambling pilot service has recently been launched. In addition, new mental health provision for rough sleepers is being developed.

Additional investment has improved the capacity and resilience of the mental health crisis pathway for children and young people and specialist community child and adolescent mental health services to address increased demand and historic waiting lists. This investment has also increased the capacity of prevention and early help services and expanded the provision of eight new mental health support teams since January 2021.

■ Miscarriage: Health Services

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[16903\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to rapidly implement improvements to miscarriage (a) care and (b) statistics as part of the Women's Health Strategy.

Maria Caulfield:

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

There are currently no official statistics reported for miscarriages. As a significant number of miscarriages are not reported to a healthcare provider, particularly those that take place at an early gestation, the collection of accurate data in England is challenging. However, we have committed to consider the Lancet Series' recommendation to record all miscarriages.

■ NHS: Pay

Feryal Clark:

[\[19736\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has had recent discussions with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on levels of NHS pay.

Edward Argar:

We have regular discussions with HM Treasury on a range of issues, including National Health Service pay. We have committed to increase pay for NHS workers this year, in addition to the 3% rise last year, when pay was frozen in the public sector. While the level of this year's increase has not yet been determined, the Government will consider the recommendations. The independent PRBs consider a range of factors, including the cost of living and inflation, recruitment, retention and morale, affordability and value for the taxpayer.

■ Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

Rachael Maskell:

[\[19646\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the (a) effectiveness of and (b) timeliness of complaint resolutions by the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman.

Maria Caulfield:

No assessment has been made. The Ombudsman reports directly to Parliament through the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee, which holds an annual scrutiny session to evaluate performance.

Rachael Maskell:[\[19647\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the support that is available to people when submitting a case to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman.

Maria Caulfield:

We have no current plans to make such an assessment. The Patient Advice and Liaison Service available in most hospitals can provide assistance to those wishing to raise a complaint. The independent National Health Service complaints advocacy service also supports those raising a complaint about their NHS care or treatment. The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman provides online guidance and support, including a helpline.

■ Self-harm and Suicide**Jim Shannon:**[\[18906\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has had recent discussion with the Samaritans on the potential merits of introducing new legislation aimed at tackling suicide and self harm.

Gillian Keegan:

The Department has discussed a range of issues relating to suicide and self-harm with Samaritans, including through the National Suicide Prevention Strategy Advisory Group. These discussions have related to the Government's Online Safety Bill to address harmful suicide and self-harm content online and the proposed introduction of a new offence relating to the encouragement or assistance of serious self-harm, as recommended by the Law Commission in its report on modernising communications offences, published in July 2021.

HOME OFFICE**■ Biometric Residence Permits: Applications****Caroline Nokes:**[\[17922\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent steps she has taken to reduce the backlog in processing applications for biometric residence permits.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 22 June 2022]: We are not aware of any delays in processing biometric residence permits once a decision has been made on a customer's immigration application.

■ HM Passport Office: Newport**Ruth Jones:** [\[18046\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many staff were employed by HM Passport Office in Newport on 14 June 2022; and what proportion of those staff were agency workers.

Kevin Foster:

To meet the elevated demand for passports, Her Majesty's Passport Office has recruited through the use of both temporary staff and permanent civil servants.

■ Passports**Rachael Maskell:** [\[19644\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has made an assessment of the potential merits of allocating time slots for appointments for hon. Members' staff to discuss matters relating to passports instead of a queuing system.

Kevin Foster:

Consideration has been given to implementing an appointment system at Portcullis House for Hon. Member's staff, but the nature and length of each enquiry is different and it would be impractical to do so.

We do though monitor the staffing levels at the Hub in response to demand and there are regular periods when there is no queue present.

■ Passports: Applications**Ian Byrne:** [\[19741\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to Answer of 16 June 2022 to Question 15396 on Passports, whether her Department holds a weekly breakdown of data between March and May 2022 on the processing times of UK passport (a) applications and (b) renewals.

Kevin Foster:

Since April 2021, people applying for a passport have been advised to allow up to ten weeks when applying for their British passport as more than 5 million people delayed applying due to the pandemic. This guidance is in place for all applications from the UK, including those for a first British passport and renewals.

Between March and May 98.5% of UK applications processed were completed within ten weeks.

■ Refugees: Afghanistan**Dan Jarvis:** [\[18908\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has had discussions with the Secretary of State for Defence on the impact of the cost of a

Pakistan visa on the ability of people residing in that country to relocate to the UK following a successful application under the Afghan Assistance and Relocation policy.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 20 June 2022]: There has been no change in either the UK or Pakistan visa requirement for eligible Afghan nationals being relocated under the ARAP scheme.

The UK Government continues to work closely with Pakistan to relocate eligible individuals.

■ **Refugees: Ukraine**

Sir David Evennett: [\[19577\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people have arrived in (a) Bexley Borough and (b) Greater London through the Ukraine Family Scheme as of 16 June 2022.

Kevin Foster:

Applicants to the Family Scheme are not required to provide their address/location where they will stay in the UK, hence this data is not available.

■ **Visas: Afghanistan**

Imran Hussain: [\[20257\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many visa fee waivers have been granted for Afghan national spouses and dependents of British nationals since 1 July 2021.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 23 June 2022]: The Home Office publishes data on entry clearance grants by nationality in the 'Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release'. Data on the number of visas granted to Afghan nationals is published in table Vis_D02 of the 'entry clearance visa applications and outcomes detailed datasets'. Information on how to use the dataset can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook. The latest data relates to the year ending March 2022. Additionally, the Home Office publishes a high-level overview of the data in the 'summary tables'. The 'contents' sheet contains an overview of all available data on entry clearance visas.

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

Imran Hussain: [\[20258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many visa fee waiver applications for Afghan national spouses and dependents of British nationals have been made since 1 July 2021.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 23 June 2022]: The Home Office publishes data on entry clearance grants by nationality in the 'Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release'. Data on the number of visas granted to Afghan nationals is published in table Vis_D02 of the 'entry clearance visa applications and outcomes detailed datasets'. Information on how to use the dataset can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook. The latest data relates to the year ending March 2022. Additionally, the Home Office publishes a high-level overview of the data in the 'summary tables'. The 'contents' sheet contains an overview of all available data on entry clearance visas.

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

JUSTICE**■ Asylum: Rwanda**

Daniel Kawczynski: [\[19599\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he has made of the amount of legal aid that has been allocated to law firms representing litigants who are proposed to be transported to Rwanda for the processing of their asylum applications.

James Cartlidge:

There is no specific allocation of legal aid funds for the representation of asylum seekers who have received removal directions to Rwanda under the Migrant and Economic Development Partnership with Rwanda. Funding for legal aid is on a demand led basis, the Legal Aid Agency (LAA) does not have a specific budget allocation for delivery of legal aid services under its contracts.

Similarly, legal aid funding is not pre-allocated to providers in individual cases. Claims for payment are, in the majority of cases, submitted at the end of the case where they are subject to assessment by either the LAA or court as may be appropriate.

■ Criminal Proceedings: Bolton

Yasmin Qureshi: [\[18866\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he has made of the size of the criminal case backlog in Bolton.

James Cartlidge:

The Government is committed to supporting the recovery of the courts. We recognise that the impact of the pandemic in courts has been uneven across the country, with the North West being one of the areas experiencing a greater increase in caseload.

At the end of December 2021, the outstanding caseload in the Greater Manchester Local Criminal Justice Board was 3,016 and at Bolton Crown Court, it was 478. There were 58,818 outstanding cases nationally. There will always be outstanding cases as these figures include cases that are being prepared to be heard in the courts.

In order to tackle the backlog in cases, we have extended 30 Nightingale courtrooms beyond the end of March 2022. The closest Nightingale court is at Leeds Combined Court, which offers 3 additional criminal courtrooms. We have also opened two new 'super courtrooms' in Manchester and Loughborough, allowing up to an extra 250 cases a year to be heard across England and Wales.

We are also working with the judiciary to explore moving cases across regional boundaries to areas with spare capacity, where appropriate, and using a national, flexible pool of judges for some regions, including the North West, to draw from as required.

I also engage regularly with other key stakeholders in the North West, focusing on how we can deliver further progress in addressing the outstanding caseload and similar challenges. For example, I recently met with Andrew Pratt, the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire, and chair of the Local Criminal Justice Board, and we discussed how the Government's increased funding for Independent Sexual Violence Advisors and Independent Domestic Violence Advisors was enabling the local CJS to deliver better support for victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence.

We have once again removed the limit on sitting days in the Crown Court for this financial year to allow courts to work at full capacity, delivering swifter justice for victims and reducing the backlog of cases. To secure enough capacity to sit at the required levels in 2022/23 and beyond we are expanding our plans for judicial recruitment.

These measures are already working, and as a result we expect to get through 20% more Crown Court cases this financial year than we did pre-Covid. Following an increase in funding as part of the Ministry of Justice's Spending Review settlement, we aim to reduce the number of outstanding cases in the Crown Court to 53,000 by March 2025.

■ Legal Opinion: Charities

Ruth Cadbury: [\[21211\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how much grant funding for charities providing early legal services to bid for will be made available in total.

Ruth Cadbury: [\[21212\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what method his Department plans to use in deciding grant applications for charities performing early legal services; and if he will make a statement.

James Cartlidge:

Since 2015 the Ministry of Justice has provided £10,550,000 in funding to the Litigants in Person Support Strategy, and since 2020, the Ministry of Justice has provided £3,100,000 in funding to the Legal Support for Litigants in Person grant. These grants were awarded to the Access to Justice Foundation to administer on

behalf of the department and the Foundation has determined the amounts of awards to individual charities via an application process.

The details on the level of future funding and how it will be administered are still to be finalised but there will be a competed process for determining which charities are awarded funding.

■ Offenders: Deportation

Gareth Thomas:

[15168]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to his Department's press release, Plan to reform Human Rights Act, published 14 December 2021, which states that if he will provide the (a) source, (b) method by which the information was obtained and (c) sample size for the statement in that press release that as many as 70 per cent of successful human rights challenges are brought by foreign national offenders who cite a right to family life in the first instance when appealing deportation orders; and if he will make a statement.

James Cartlidge:

This data is from Home Office management information. In the period 1 April 2016 to 8 November 2021, of 1,011 appeals against deportation by FNOs that were allowed on Human Rights grounds at First Tier Tribunal, an estimated success 70% were allowed solely on Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life) grounds.

This data was published by the Home Office on 24 February 2022. The link to this data on the Government's portal, including the explanation of the methodology and of the sample, is <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/foreign-national-offenders-appeals-on-human-rights-grounds-2008-to-2021>.

I have asked for the press release you have quoted to be updated to read: 'It is estimated that as many as 70% of appeals against deportation by FNOs that were allowed on Human Rights grounds in the first instance were allowed solely on Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life) grounds'.

■ Support Through Court

Ruth Cadbury:

[20255]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how much funding his Department has provided to the charity Support through Court (a) in total since 2010 and (b) in each year since 2010.

James Cartlidge:

The Ministry of Justice does not directly fund the charity Support through Court (StC). Since 2015 Ministry of Justice has provided £10,550,000 in funding to the Litigants in Person Support Strategy. Of this, £4,204,046 has been awarded to StC. Since 2020, the Ministry of Justice has provided £3,100,000 in funding to the Legal Support for Litigants in Person grant. Of this, StC received £280,787 in their joint bid with RCJ

Advice. Both grants are awarded to the Access to Justice Foundation to administer on behalf of the Department.

The information requested for the period 2010-2014, could not be obtained, as we do not hold this information centrally.

We recognise the pivotal role that the advice sector plays in providing legal support services, and we are currently assessing how best to support the sector going forward to deliver services in the most efficient and innovative ways possible, that will build on current evidence in relation to litigants in person.

LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

■ Community Development

Rachael Maskell:

[\[18963\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether he is taking steps to help ensure that local authorities provide resources and facilities to enable groups from all racial backgrounds to self organise and to access spaces that meet their social needs.

Neil O'Brien:

Community spaces have a significant role to play in developing social networks, encouraging community participation, and promoting civic pride. Local authorities along with other public services and the voluntary and community sector do support groups from all backgrounds to access spaces and facilities which enable neighbourhoods to thrive and flourish.

In the Levelling Up White Paper we set out plans to work with partners in local government to develop a new Strategy for Community Spaces and Relationships. The Strategy will provide the framework which supports strong community infrastructure and bolsters community connection.

In addition, the 4-year £150 million Community Ownership Fund, is currently providing community groups with the financial help and practical support to bring local assets at risk of loss by bring them into community ownership.

Finally, our response to the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities' findings, 'Inclusive Britain', sets out a ground-breaking action plan to tackle negative disparities, promote unity and build a fairer Britain for all.

■ Levelling Up Fund and UK Shared Prosperity Fund: Equality

Rachael Maskell:

[\[18962\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps he is taking to help ensure that bids for the next phase of the (a) Levelling Up Fund and (b) Shared Prosperity Fund include the promotion of diversity.

Neil O'Brien:

The Levelling Up Fund invests directly in communities across the UK, helping to tackle economic differences and drive prosperity in left behind regions.

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) provides £2.6 billion of new funding to help places right across the UK deliver enhanced outcomes and recognises that even the most affluent parts of the UK contain pockets of deprivation and need support.

As local authorities will be responsible for delivering UKSPF, we will expect them to make sure the activity they choose to support with their allocation is in line with their own internal requirements and processes. Public bodies are subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty in all their decision-making, and we have asked that places meet these obligations when taking decisions on UKSPF.

We have also asked places to consider complementary interventions at UK, national or local level. This will ensure that funding is effectively targeted and delivered efficiently.

■ Levelling Up Fund: Internet**Kim Leadbeater:**[\[21336\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, on what date he expects local authorities to be able to access and input information to the online Levelling Up round 2 application forms.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 23 June 2022]: Work is ongoing to open the application portal for the second round of the Levelling Up Fund as soon as possible. In the meantime, applicants already have access to all the information needed to develop their applications. We have encouraged places to use these tools to prepare their applications in readiness to upload when the portal launches.

■ Parking: Urban Areas**Tom Hunt:**[\[18996\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the impact of parking costs on footfall in town centres.

Neil O'Brien:

My department is aware of the important link between parking provision and the vitality of our high streets and town centres, especially where transport infrastructure does not allow citizens to use public transport. We know that parking costs may have an impact on whether citizens decide to drive to town centres, but these also need to be balanced against other factors like the availability of adequate accessible parking and attractive alternatives to driving.

My department is currently developing a new, consolidated Code of Practice for the private parking industry which will raise standards and stop unfair practices in the

private parking sector. This includes considering the right level of charges for motorists who have fallen foul of parking restrictions.

Furthermore, in the Build Back Better High Streets Strategy, we also committed to consider how we can further improve local authority parking to make high streets more accessible to shoppers, including working with councils to ensure that parking space supply and parking tariffs support high streets strategies, and are joined up with local transport plans.

■ Regional Planning and Development: East of England

Tom Hunt:

[\[18994\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the levels of funding required to achieve the Government's objectives under its levelling up agenda in the east of England.

Neil O'Brien:

Government is providing substantial investment to achieve our levelling up ambitions in the East of England. This includes £287 million through the town deals programme, supporting twelve towns, including Ipswich, to drive growth and regeneration and an initial £87 million of investment through Round 1 of the Levelling Up Fund, funding five projects across the region. Both Norfolk and Suffolk have been invited to agree early county deals to provide them with more powers and freedom to achieve their levelling up ambitions and further investment will be provided across the East of England through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

TRANSPORT

■ Fly-tipping

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[18817\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the current funding model for the Highways Agency in relation to fulfilling their functions in the clean-up of fly-tipping incidents.

Trudy Harrison:

As part of the second Road Investment Strategy, Government is providing £24 billion to fund infrastructure, maintenance and operations on the Strategic Road Network and that funding covers work towards performance targets including on litter. This focuses on parts of the Strategic Road Network that National Highways is responsible for cleansing and measures the percentage of network where litter is graded at B or above, according to the Code of Practice on litter and refuse.

This provides an incentive for National Highways to do more to combat litter and fly-tipping on the Strategic Road Network. National Highways is funded in five-year periods; we are currently developing the third Road Investment Strategy (2025-2030)

which provides an opportunity to set out our performance requirements and the associated funding required.

■ **Motor Vehicles: Noise**

Stephen Morgan:

[\[19671\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of trialling new technology for roadside vehicle noise measurement in Portsmouth South constituency.

Trudy Harrison:

The Department recently announced that trials of noise camera technology will take place across England and Wales, with MPs encouraged to submit applications to trial them in their local areas.

The Department is currently reviewing applications and will select four sites for inclusion in the trials, representing a range of urban and rural environments.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ **Disability Living Allowance: Children**

Lloyd Russell-Moyle:

[\[21251\]](#)

To ask to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps is she taking to ensure divorced parents are equally considered when a child is entitled to disability allowance.

Chloe Smith:

The current legislation allows for payments of Disability Living Allowance for children to be split, but only where there are exceptional circumstances and where it is in the child's interests. Situations where the child shares residency between parents do not normally constitute exceptional circumstances.

■ **Local Housing Allowance**

Beth Winter:

[\[13262\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many and what proportion of tenants are eligible for Shared Accommodation Local Housing Allowance and reside in a one-bedroom in each local authority in Wales in the latest period for which data are available.

David Rutley:

[Holding answer 20 June 2022]: The information requested is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

■ Means-tested Benefits

Emma Hardy:

[\[18025\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will review the eligibility criteria for means-tested benefits to ensure that people with small work pensions can access support.

David Rutley:

A person with a small work pension can still access support from the welfare system but the amount of benefit they may get will depend on the amount of their pension income.

Within Universal Credit, the general principle is that income, other than earnings, used to meet everyday living costs is taken into account pound for pound in the calculation of an award. As occupational and private pensions are paid to provide support to help people meet their living costs, they are taken fully into account, as unearned income.

In common with the means-tested legacy benefits it replaces, Universal Credit takes into account money available from other sources which allow a claimant to support themselves, allowing a fair balance to be struck between those in the greatest financial need and taxpayers who fund the welfare system. There are no plans to review this approach.

■ Personal Independence Payment: Applications

Catherine West:

[\[21243\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the waiting time is between a personal independence payment (PIP) application being submitted and the applicant's PIP assessment being arranged.

Chloe Smith:

The information requested is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

Available data on journey times for PIP New Claims is published in Table 1A of Personal Independence Payment statistics to April 2022, published on 14 June 2022 [here](#).

■ Social Security Benefits: Fraud

Rob Roberts:

[\[21307\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent steps her Department has taken to ensure that there are appropriate sanctions for people who commit benefit fraud.

David Rutley:

[Holding answer 23 June 2022]: On 19 May 2022, we published our plan for Fighting Fraud in the Welfare System, setting out how the Department will root out existing

fraud in the system and prevent new fraudulent claims being made. The £600 million plan will boost the counter-fraud frontline with 2000 additional staff, and is estimated to save taxpayers £2 billion over three years.

The plan also outlines a range of additional strong measures that we intend to introduce, when Parliamentary time allows, to future proof our work tackle fraud and error. This includes the commitment to introduce a new civil penalty for cases of fraud which can be applied where cases meet a civil burden of proof, sitting below criminal fraud but above error.

This action will ensure that fewer people escape punishment when they have committed wrongdoing, and that the consequence reflects the cost to the taxpayers.

DWP has a published penalty policy [[Penalties policy: in respect of social security fraud and error - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/penalties-policy-in-respect-of-social-security-fraud-and-error)], which sets out the range of penalties currently available for benefit fraud. This includes financial penalties, prosecution, loss of benefit penalties and seeking redress through proceeds of crime.

■ Universal Credit

Alison McGovern:

[18897]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what support his Department provides to Universal Credit claimants on (a) payment of childcare and (b) support in accessing free childcare when appropriate.

David Rutley:

Through Universal Credit, eligible parents can claim back up to 85% of their registered childcare costs each month up to the maximum amount of £646.35 for one child and £1,108.04 for two or more children each month, regardless of the number of hours they work. For those who need extra financial support for their first set of childcare costs when moving in to work, or when they are significantly increasing their work hours, they can apply for help from the Flexible Support Fund. Importantly, the UC childcare element can be used to top up a claimant's eligible 15 or 30 hours of free childcare if further childcare is required to support a working parent.

We also have products in place to ensure Work Coaches are able to explain the free childcare offer to parents. Work coaches signpost to the Childcare Choices website for more information about the wider Government childcare offers available.

Alison McGovern:

[18898]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what support is available for Universal Credit claimants to access a registered or approved childcare provider.

David Rutley:

Through Universal Credit, eligible parents can claim back up to 85% of their registered childcare costs each month up to the maximum amount of £646.35 for one child and £1,108.04 for two or more children each month, regardless of the number of hours they work. For those who need extra financial support for their first set of childcare costs when moving in to work, or when they are significantly increasing their

work hours, they can apply for help from the Flexible Support Fund. Importantly, the UC childcare element can be used to top up a claimant's eligible 15 or 30 hours of free childcare if further childcare is required to support a working parent.

We also have products in place to ensure Work Coaches are able to explain the free childcare offer to parents. Work coaches signpost to the Childcare Choices website for more information about the wider Government childcare offers available.

■ Universal Credit: Cost of Living

Neil Coyle:

[\[18929\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether all Universal Credit claimants will receive the proposed cost of living payments at the same time as everyone else.

David Rutley:

[Holding answer 20 June 2022]: Due to the volume of people entitled to the payment, it is not possible to issue all of the Cost of Living Support Payments at the same time. Issuing payments will be staggered, but not by benefit type, starting on 14/07/2022.

We currently expect the majority of payments to be made by the end of July, there may be potential delays for a small minority of cases due to their unique characteristics.