



## Daily Report

Monday, 27 June 2022

This report shows written answers and statements provided on 27 June 2022 and the information is correct at the time of publication (08:03 P.M., 27 June 2022). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

## CONTENTS

<b>ANSWERS</b>	<b>8</b>	■ EU Law	15
ATTORNEY GENERAL	8	■ Government Property Agency: Contracts	15
■ Charity Tribunal	8	COP26	15
■ Health Professions: Criminal Proceedings	8	■ Climate Change	15
BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY	9	DEFENCE	16
■ Adoption Leave	9	■ Afghanistan: Refugees	16
■ Coronavirus: Vaccination	9	■ Air Force: Discharges	16
■ Directors	9	■ Antitank Missiles	17
■ Energy Company Obligation	10	■ Armed Forces: Discharges	17
■ Hydrogen: National Grid	11	■ Armed Forces: HIV Infection	17
■ Insolvency	11	■ Armed Forces: Recruitment	18
■ Public Holidays	11	■ Armed Forces: Uniforms	18
■ Qualifications: Ukraine	12	■ Army	19
■ Renewable Energy	12	■ Army: Reserve Forces	19
■ Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme	13	■ Army: Unmanned Air Vehicles	20
■ Renewables Obligation	13	■ Chinook Helicopters	20
■ Wave Power	14	■ Defence Equipment: Procurement	20
■ Wind Power: Seas and Oceans	14	■ European Fighter Aircraft	21
CABINET OFFICE	14	■ Joint Strike Fighter Aircraft	21
■ Coronavirus: Cross Border Cooperation	14	■ Military Aid	22
		■ Ministry of Defence: Fuels	22
		■ Navy: Discharges	23
		■ Reserve Forces: Deployment	24

■ Type 23 Frigates	24
■ Ukraine: Military Aid	25
■ War Pensions: Disability	26
DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT	27
■ BBC: Older Workers	27
■ Channel Four Television	28
■ Chelsea Football Club: Sales	28
■ Cricket: Racial Discrimination	28
■ Football: Gambling	29
■ Football: Sales	30
■ Fundraising: Ukraine	30
■ Gambling	31
■ Gambling: Addictions	31
■ Gambling: Regulation	31
■ Holiday Accommodation: Age	32
■ Parthenon Sculptures	32
■ Sports: Ombudsman	33
■ Swimming Pools	33
■ Voluntary Work: Refugees	34
■ Youth Investment Fund	34
■ Youth Services: Finance	35
EDUCATION	35
■ Academies	35
■ Apprentices	36
■ Apprentices: Females	36
■ Children: Day Care	37
■ Educational Psychology: Training	38
■ Pupils: Assessments	38
■ Religion: Education	39
■ Romanian Language: GCSE	40
■ Schools: Racial Discrimination	40
■ Schools: Sexual Offences	42

■ Special Educational Needs	43
■ Special Educational Needs: Coronavirus and Ventilation	44
■ Turing Scheme: Industry	44
ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS	45
■ Agriculture: EU Countries	45
■ Animal and Plant Health Agency: Weybridge	46
■ Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks	46
■ Bovine Tuberculosis: Disease Control	47
■ Food: Consumption	48
■ Food: Prices	49
■ Gardens: Biodiversity	49
■ Grasslands: Fertilisers	50
■ Lighting: Pollution	50
■ Natural England	51
■ Veterinary Services	51
■ Water Abstraction	52
FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE	52
■ Armed Conflict: Sexual Offences	52
■ Development Aid: Climate Change	53
■ Eastern Europe: Diplomatic Relations	53
■ Ecuador: Demonstrations	54
■ Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Correspondence	54
■ North Korea: Nuclear Weapons	55
■ Russia: Sanctions	56

■ Sri Lanka: Development Aid	56	■ Genito-urinary Medicine: Local Government	70
■ Sri Lanka: Tamils	56	■ Health Professions: Domestic Abuse	70
■ Ukraine: Development Aid	57	■ Health Professions: Refugees	71
HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	57	■ Health Professions: Regulation	71
■ Autism and Hyperactivity: Diagnosis	57	■ Health Professions: Training	71
■ Blood Tests: Halton	58	■ Health Services	72
■ Breast Cancer: Bedfordshire	58	■ Health Services: Infrastructure	72
■ Breast Cancer: Health Services	58	■ Hormone Replacement Therapy	72
■ Breast Cancer: Plastic Surgery	59	■ Hormone Replacement Therapy: Shortages	73
■ Cancer: Medical Treatments	59	■ Hospitals: Devon	73
■ Cancer: Radiotherapy	60	■ In-FACT	74
■ Care Workers: Cost of Living	60	■ Learning Disability: Loneliness	74
■ Carers	61	■ Liver Diseases	75
■ Cholesterol: Health Services	62	■ Liver Diseases: Screening	75
■ Chronic Illnesses: Health Services	62	■ Long Covid: Children	75
■ Coronavirus: Vaccination	62	■ Members: Correspondence	76
■ Dental Services: Finance	64	■ Mental Health Services: Children	76
■ Disability: Children	64	■ Mental Health Services: Young People	76
■ Disability: Respite Care	65	■ Monkeypox: Vaccination	77
■ Domestic Abuse: Ethnic Groups	65	■ NHS Trusts: Waiting Lists	77
■ Eating Disorders	66	■ NHS: Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	77
■ Eating Disorders: Hospital Beds	66	■ NHS: Dentistry	78
■ Electronic Cigarettes	66	■ NHS: Long Covid	78
■ Endoscopy	67	■ NHS: Staff	78
■ Evusheld	68	■ Paramedical Staff: Prescriptions	79
■ Females: Health Services	68	■ Pharmacy: Equality	79
■ Food: Advertising	68	■ Pharmacy: Regional Planning and Development	79
■ General Practitioners: Income	69		
■ Genito-urinary Medicine: Finance	69		

■ Physician Associates: Training	80	■ Offenders: Deportation	92
■ Primary Health Care: Staff	80	■ Overseas Students: English Language	93
■ Suicide: Travellers	81	■ Police: Recruitment	94
■ Surgical Mesh Implants	81	■ Radicalism: Greater Manchester	95
■ Telephone Systems: Health Hazards	82	■ Ramadan Abedi and Salman Abedi	95
■ Tobacco	82	■ Refugees: Afghanistan	95
■ Travel: Cross Border Cooperation	83	■ Refugees: Ukraine	95
■ Travel: Quarantine	83	■ Salman Abedi	96
■ Vaccine Damage Payment Scheme	83	■ Seasonal Workers: Ukraine	96
■ Voluntary Scheme for Branded Medicines Pricing and Access	84	■ Sexual Harassment: Public Places	97
HOME OFFICE	84	■ UK Border Force: Medals	97
■ Asylum: Beaconside	84	■ Visas: Afghanistan	98
■ Body Searches: Children	85	■ Visas: Applications	98
■ British Nationality: Applications	86	JUSTICE	99
■ Fire and Rescue Services: Finance	86	■ Community Orders	99
■ Hate Crime	87	■ Coronavirus: Disease Control	100
■ HM Passport Office: Disability Aids	87	■ Courts: Pilot Schemes	101
■ HM Passport Office: Secondment	87	■ Crime: Victims	101
■ Home Office: Correspondence	88	■ Crimes of Violence and Sexual Offences: Victims	102
■ Homes for Ukraine Scheme	88	■ Criminal Proceedings	103
■ Immigration Controls: Airports	89	■ Crown Court: Wheelchairs	104
■ Immigration: EU Nationals	89	■ Knives: Crime	106
■ Immigration: Windrush Generation	89	■ Law Commission	107
■ Ismail Abedi	90	■ Prison Governors	108
■ Knives: Crime	90	■ Prison Sentences: Females	108
■ Members: Correspondence	91	■ Prisoners' Release: Temporary Accommodation	109
■ Offences against Children: Rotherham	92	■ Prisoners: Ethnic Groups	109
		■ Prisoners: Females	110
		■ Prisons	111

■ Prisons: Buildings	112	PRIME MINISTER	124
■ Prisons: Digital Technology	112	■ Independent Adviser on Ministers' Interests	124
■ Prisons: Discipline	112	■ Prime Minister: Disclosure of Information	124
■ Prisons: Drugs	113	SCOTLAND	125
■ Prisons: Safety	114	■ Scotland Office: Consultants	125
■ Prisons: Staff	114	TRANSPORT	125
■ Prisons: Video Conferencing	115	■ Acceleration Unit	125
■ Robbery: Criminal Proceedings	115	■ Aircraft and Ships: Russia	126
LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES	117	■ ATOL	126
■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]	117	■ Aviation	126
■ Beach Huts: Property Transfer	117	■ Aviation: Compensation	127
■ Buildings: Insulation	118	■ Department for Transport: Consultants	128
■ Community Ownership Fund and Levelling Up Fund	118	■ Department for Transport: Media	128
■ Cost of Living	119	■ Electric Vehicles: Charging Points	129
■ First Time Buyers	119	■ Electric Vehicles: Infrastructure	129
■ Garden Communities	119	■ Electric Vehicles: North West	130
■ High Rise Flats: Fire Prevention	120	■ Hydrogen Fuelling Stations	130
■ Homes for Ukraine Scheme	120	■ Railway Stations: Visual Impairment	131
■ Homes for Ukraine Scheme: Children	120	■ Railways: Finance	131
■ Homes for Ukraine Scheme: Payments	121	■ Railways: Freight	131
■ Leasehold: Reform	121	■ Railways: Midlands	132
■ Pest Control: Birds	121	■ Railways: Pay	132
■ Planning: Reform	122	■ Railways: Strikes	133
■ Recreation Spaces	122	■ Spaceflight	133
■ Regional Planning and Development: Greater London	123	■ Supply Chains	133
NORTHERN IRELAND	124	■ Travel: Compensation	134
■ Northern Ireland Office: Consultants	124	TREASURY	134
		■ Car Allowances	134

■ Cars: Liquefied Petroleum Gas	136	■ Long Covid	148
■ Charging Points: VAT	136	■ Personal Independence Payment	149
■ Council Tax: Valuation	137	■ Personal Independence Payment: Medical Examinations	149
■ Cryptocurrencies	137	■ Personal Independence Payment: Standards	150
■ Cryptocurrencies: Regulation	137	■ Poverty: Children	150
■ Economic Growth: West Midlands	138	■ Refugees: Ukraine	151
■ Energy: Taxation	139	■ Social Security Benefits: Disability	152
■ Financial Services: Competition	139	■ State Retirement Pensions: Canada	153
■ Fuels: Excise Duties	139	■ Unemployment: Bolton	153
■ Fuels: Prices	140	■ Universal Credit	153
■ Individual Savings Accounts: Cost of Living	140	■ Universal Credit: Disqualification	153
■ Inflation	141	■ Universal Credit: Self-employed	154
■ Infrastructure: Investment	141	■ Universal Credit: Veterans	154
■ Interest Rates	142	■ Way to Work Scheme	154
■ Motor Vehicles: Hydrogen	142	<b>WRITTEN STATEMENTS</b>	<b>156</b>
■ Public Sector Debt	143	<b>HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE</b>	<b>156</b>
■ Social Security Benefits and Social Services: Cost of Living	143	■ Covid-19 Update	156
■ Tobacco: Smuggling	144	■ Medical Devices Update	156
<b>WOMEN AND EQUALITIES</b>	<b>144</b>	■ Mental Health Update	157
■ Endometriosis	144	<b>LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES</b>	<b>158</b>
■ Equality: Public Sector	145	■ Contingent Liability arising from the EWS1 Professional Indemnity Insurance Scheme	158
■ Government Departments: Ethnic Groups	145	<b>TRANSPORT</b>	<b>159</b>
<b>WORK AND PENSIONS</b>	<b>146</b>	■ Transport Update	159
■ Children: Maintenance	146		
■ Department for Work and Pensions: Correspondence	146		
■ Discretionary Housing Payments	147		
■ Employment: Disability	147		
■ Food Banks: Domestic Visits	148		

---

TREASURY	160
----------	-----

■ Review of the UK's AML/CFT regulatory and supervisory regime	160
--	-----

**Notes:**

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

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

## ANSWERS

### ATTORNEY GENERAL

#### ■ Charity Tribunal

**Emily Thornberry:** **[23238]**

To ask the Attorney General, on how many occasions the Charity Commission asked her Department for a reference to the Charity Tribunal in each year since 2010; and how many and what proportion of those requests were (a) granted and (b) rejected.

**Alex Chalk:**

As set out in the Attorney General's written evidence to the Charities Bill Special Public Bill Committee on 6 October 2021, there have been three occasions on which the Charity Commission has asked for a reference to the Charity Tribunal. In two of these cases the Attorney General agreed with the Charity Commission and took the proceedings forward. In one case the Attorney General refused consent. There have been no further requests.

The full written evidence submission is available [here](#).

#### ■ Health Professions: Criminal Proceedings

**Derek Twigg:** **[22356]**

To ask the Attorney General, with reference to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) guidance on the Full Code Test within the document entitled The Code for Crown Prosecutors, published on 26 October 2018, whether the CPS applies the same survival rate threshold when making charging decisions for people who are trained or licensed (a) doctors, (b) nurses and (c) other medical practitioners.

**Alex Chalk:**

The evidential threshold that is applied by the CPS when making charging decisions is the same threshold that is applied in all cases, for all offences and for all suspects. There is no separate threshold that is applied for different types of suspects, such as trained or licensed doctors, nurses and other medical practitioners.

[The Code for Crown Prosecutors](#) (the Code) is issued by the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) under section 10 of the Prosecution of Offences Act 1985. The Code gives guidance to prosecutors on the general principles to be applied when making decisions about prosecutions.

Prosecutors must only start or continue a prosecution when the case has passed both stages of the Full Code Test (FCT), which is set out at section 4 of the Code. The FCT has two stages, the evidential stage, followed by the public interest stage.

At the evidential stage, prosecutors must be satisfied that there is sufficient evidence to provide a realistic prospect of conviction. The Code provides further guidance on how the evidential stage should be assessed.



If the case passes the evidential stage, prosecutors must go on to consider whether a prosecution is required in the public interest. The Code provides a series of questions that prosecutors should consider when applying the public interest stage.

When making charging decisions, prosecutors must also comply with any guidelines issued by the Attorney General, and with the policies and guidance of the CPS. CPS guidance contains further evidential and public interest factors for specific offences and is available for the public to view on the [CPS website](#).

## BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

### ■ Adoption Leave

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[23333\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment has he made of the potential merits of introducing paid adoptive leave for parents of adopted children.

**Paul Scully:**

The Government introduced Adoption Leave and Pay in 2003. Adoption Leave is a “day one” right – in line with Maternity Leave - which enables employed parents to take up to 52 weeks off work when they are adopting a child. Adoption pay is available to employed parents who meet eligibility criteria.

### ■ Coronavirus: Vaccination

**Gavin Robinson:**

[\[23308\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to Answer of 20 June to Question 18928, whether Government has secured any purchase options, subject to approval, of vaccines for under-5s.

**George Freeman:**

The Government keeps the global vaccine picture under ongoing review and through its regular conversations with vaccine developers will explore supply options, should that become necessary.

### ■ Directors

**Margaret Ferrier:**

[\[21208\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what proportion of reports of breaches by directors of the Insolvency Act 1986 and Companies Act 2006 were investigated by the Insolvency Service in each of the last five years.

**Paul Scully:**

The Insolvency Service receives reports on directors’ conduct, in particular of companies entering formal insolvency procedures.

Cases with reports of director misconduct are considered in line with the Insolvency Service's acceptance criteria. The most serious cases are vetted and where appropriate taken forward for investigation.

Information from Insolvency Service internal management systems shows the number of cases vetted and investigations commenced with a view to director disqualification in the last 5 years. The latter includes a number of cases where the investigation commenced as a result of information from another source.

Companies vetted in any one year may be taken forward for investigation in a later year. The figures in the table relate to the number of companies not the number of directors. An investigation may encompass more than one company.

The first column excludes companies vetted in compulsory liquidation cases prior to January 2020.

	<i>COMPANIES VETTED</i>	<i>CIVIL INVESTIGATIONS STARTED</i>
2017/18	8,528	1,669
2018/19	9,059	1,748
2019/20	9,041	1,899
2020/21	6,284	1,484
2021/22	6,340	1,700

## ■ Energy Company Obligation

**Andrea Leadsom:**

[\[22424\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to help ensure that energy suppliers' environmental and social obligation costs are distributed effectively to help households on lower incomes.

**Greg Hands:**

Environmental and social obligations on energy suppliers fund vital support schemes and energy efficiency measures which benefit low income and vulnerable households.

Suppliers are free (but not obliged) to pass the cost of these obligations through to consumers. Preventing suppliers from passing on costs to certain groups of consumers could lead to suppliers being disincentivised from attracting these groups of consumers through beneficial services and increased costs to non-exempt groups.

In order to support low-income households struggling with energy bills there are a range of schemes offering support, for example the Warm Homes Discount and the recently expanded Energy Bills Support Scheme

## ■ Hydrogen: National Grid

**Dr Alan Whitehead:**

[\[22330\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of a dedicated hydrogen transmission network to move excess renewable energy across the UK in the form of green hydrogen; if he will publish that assessment; and whether he is taking steps to facilitate development of a dedicated hydrogen transmission network across the UK.

**Greg Hands:**

The Government has committed to designing a hydrogen business model for transportation infrastructure by 2025, with the aim of providing investors and developers the reassurance they need to bring forward the required transportation infrastructure to meet ambitions for hydrogen. The Government will be publishing an initial consultation on this in due course.

## ■ Insolvency

**Margaret Ferrier:**

[\[21210\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of (a) increasing the value of penalties that Companies House levies on companies for filing failures that trigger automatic strike-off routines, and (b) using the funds raised from such penalties to fund Insolvency Service investigations of insolvent companies.

**Paul Scully:**

The late filing penalty regime was introduced to encourage directors to file their accounts on time. Using it as a source of revenue to fund investigation activity would present difficulties, as it would mean relying on behaviour that we are actively trying to discourage.

We are reviewing funding as part of our wider reforms, and have committed to ensuring that fees remain low by international standards.

## ■ Public Holidays

**Charlotte Nichols:**

[\[20332\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make it his policy to maintain two jubilee bank holidays every year.

**Paul Scully:**

To mark Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, this year's Spring bank holiday was moved to Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June and there was an additional bank holiday on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> June.

The additional bank holiday on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> June provided an opportunity for communities throughout the United Kingdom to come together to celebrate this historic milestone.

There are no plans to make this a permanent bank holiday. Each bank holiday presents a considerable and significant cost to our economy and therefore each proposal has to be carefully considered on that basis.

## ■ Qualifications: Ukraine

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[22470\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to help UK professional bodies recognise Ukrainian professional qualifications.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[22471\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees, what plans he has to passport qualifications for Ukrainian refugees to help enable them to access work.

**Lee Rowley:**

The Government is taking targeted steps to assist Ukrainian refugees to pursue employment in their professions in the UK, while maintaining the principle, supported by the Professional Qualifications Act 2022, that regulators have the autonomy to set standards for their professions and assess who meets these standards.

It will ultimately be for Ukrainian refugees to determine whether and when they wish to look for work in the United Kingdom, along with the type of work they wish to pursue. For those who wish to find work requiring professional qualifications, one targeted step which will be taken is to identify and seek to mitigate entry barriers faced by those arriving from Ukraine. The UK European Network for Information (ENIC) service manages qualification passporting and provides advice on the comparability of international qualifications at all levels of education with those of the UK on behalf of Government. The service maintains an extensive database of international qualifications and education systems, including for Ukraine, and are fully prepared to deal with Ukrainian and other refugees' qualifications.

## ■ Renewable Energy

**Dr Alan Whitehead:** [\[22332\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will undertake a comparative assessment of the cost of moving excess renewable energy between Scotland and other parts of UK by (a) reinforcing electricity grid infrastructure, (b) converting electricity to hydrogen and blending into the national gas transmission system and (c) converting electricity to hydrogen and injecting into a dedicated 100 per cent hydrogen pipeline.

**Greg Hands:**

The Government expects hydrogen to play an important role in decarbonising the economy, including the power sector. The Government is working to accelerate timescales for electricity network infrastructure deployment to ensure renewable power can flow from where it is generated – including in Scotland – to centres of demand. The Government intends for hydrogen to provide flexible low carbon

generation capacity in the UK's future power system and is currently reviewing hydrogen network and storage requirements, with a consultation planned for later this year. The Government is targeting a policy decision for blending up to 20% hydrogen into gas distribution networks in 2023 and will also assess the case for blending at transmission level.

## ■ Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme

**Martyn Day:**

[\[23355\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent estimate he has made of the total lifetime payments to participants under the British Renewable Heat Initiative scheme through to 2042 for the (a) domestic and (b) non-domestic scheme.

**Greg Hands:**

The Renewable Heat Initiative (RHI) will pay participants until March 2041 and BEIS has so far committed £6,414million for expenditure until financial year 2022/23. The total lifetime payments estimates are inherently uncertain as they depend on the future volume of heat that will be produced and on the future tariffs at which the heat produced will be paid.

**Martyn Day:**

[\[23357\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if the Government will launch an independent inquiry into the British non-domestic Renewable Heat Incentive scheme.

**Greg Hands:**

The National Audit Office undertook a review of the Renewable Heat Incentive in 2018. The Government does not intend to carry out a independent inquiry.

## ■ Renewables Obligation

**Bill Esterson:**

[\[22412\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the British energy security strategy published in April 2022, what plans he has to publish a consultation on changes to the Renewables Obligation.

**Greg Hands:**

Alongside the Government's recent announcement about extending the Energy Intensive Industries (EII) Compensation scheme for 3 years, the Government intends to consult on the related EII exemption scheme shortly. This scheme provides exemption from a significant portion of Contract for Differences (CfD), Renewables Obligation (RO), and Feed-in Tariff (FiT) costs.

**■ Wave Power****Sir Greg Knight:** [\[22358\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans has to bring forward new policy proposals to increase the use of wave energy generation; with reference to the Wave Hub marine renewable infrastructure project off the South coast, whether he plans to support new wave energy development in the North of England; and if he will make a statement.

**Greg Hands:**

Wave energy technologies remain at the pre-commercial stage of development. The Government continues to support research and innovation in wave and tidal energy, having allotted more than £80m to this field since 2010. The Government monitors very closely the progress of the sector and when wave energy technologies can demonstrate cost-efficiency and proof of scalability the Government will consider how best to further support the technology's development and deployment.

**■ Wind Power: Seas and Oceans****Dr Alan Whitehead:** [\[22331\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an estimate of the cost of curtailment to consumers in the event that the 2030 50GW target for offshore wind is met.

**Greg Hands:**

Delivering on the Government's ambition for 50GW of offshore wind by 2030 is key to achieving net zero. Network capacity must be increased in line with this additional cheap, green generation to avoid increased costs of curtailment. This will require more infrastructure, both onshore and offshore, than today.

**CABINET OFFICE****■ Coronavirus: Cross Border Cooperation****Neale Hanvey:** [\[20317\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to the National Audit Office report published in April 2022, Managing cross-border travel during the COVID-19 pandemic, if he will take steps to help avoid unnecessary expenditure by Government Departments on official cross-border travel in the context of potential further travel restrictions being introduced due to the emergence of new variants of covid-19.

**Mrs Heather Wheeler:**

The Government currently has no plans to introduce new travel restrictions at this time.

It is the responsibility of each individual department to ensure the proper and efficient use and spending of taxpayers money. All Cabinet Office employees that undertake

cross-border travel must seek relevant approvals to do so and must book this travel through approved contractors.

## ■ EU Law

**Layla Moran:**

[23394]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the cost to the public purse has been of the (a) creation and (b) updating of the Retained EU law dashboard since its inception.

**Mr Jacob Rees-Mogg:**

There has been no additional cost to the public purse by creating the dashboard. The process was led by the Cabinet Office, who commissioned Government Departments to find REUL within their jurisdiction and compile an authoritative account of where REUL sits on the UK statute book.

The dashboard itself is made by the Government Strategic Management Office and is hosted by Tableau, who allow public dashboards to be hosted for free. The dashboard will continue to be updated at no additional cost.

## ■ Government Property Agency: Contracts

**Chris Stephens:**

[R] [22465]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what equalities impact assessment his Department has undertaken in respect of the Government Property Agency's decision to retender their Facilities Management contracts in late 2022; and if he will place a copy of that equalities impact assessment in the Library.

**Mr Jacob Rees-Mogg:**

At this stage no Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the Government Property Agency (GPA) Workplace Services Transformation Programme that will see the procurement of new facilities management contracts in this current financial year. There is no legal requirement to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment and GPA is confident it has had due regard to the public sector equality duty.

The new facilities management contracts will be procured using Crown Commercial Service (CCS) framework agreements. The commercial terms of these agreements include obligations on suppliers to follow all applicable equality law including protections against discrimination and also any other requirements imposed by the authority in relation to equality law.

## COP26

## ■ Climate Change

**Mr Jonathan Lord:**

[22423]

To ask the President of COP26, what assessment he has made of the impact of the war in Ukraine on the global delivery of the Glasgow Climate Pact.

**Alok Sharma:**

Putin's illegal and brutal invasion of Ukraine has demonstrated to countries the dangers of relying on fossil fuels controlled by a hostile actor. Countries now understand the benefits of low-cost, homegrown renewables, the price of which cannot be manipulated from afar. Climate and environmental security are now synonymous with energy and national security. And it is clear that our long-term energy futures do not lie in fossil fuels.

I am pleased that governments are responding by accelerating the transition to clean power. Here in the UK, we have recently published our Energy Security Strategy, to turbocharge our deployment of wind, of solar, of nuclear, and of hydrogen.

**DEFENCE**■ **Afghanistan: Refugees****John Healey:**[\[20211\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference oral contribution by the Minister for the Armed Forces on 13 June 2022, Official Report, columns 12-14 on the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy, how many Afghan nationals could still be relocated to the UK under the ARAP scheme as of 17 June 2022.

**James Heappey:**

We estimate that the number of Afghan nationals who could still be eligible for relocation to the UK under the ARAP scheme is around 8,000 (inclusive of their dependants). This figure is subject to change as we continue to assess applications.

■ **Air Force: Discharges****Mr Tobias Ellwood:**[\[21111\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many service personnel left the Royal Air Force in each year from 2017 to date.

**Leo Docherty:**

The information requested is provided in the following table.

<b>FINANCIAL YEAR</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>
<b>Totals</b>	2,269	2,434	2,495	2,600	2,000	2,259
Trained	2,071	2,223	2,223	2,231	1,783	1,938
Untrained	198	211	272	369	217	321
<b>Officers</b>	449	492	429	459	372	350
Trained	424	478	409	435	360	331



FINANCIAL YEAR	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Untrained	25	14	20	24	12	19
<b>Other Ranks</b>	1,820	1,942	2,066	2,141	1,628	1,909
Trained	1,647	1,745	1,814	1,796	1,423	1,607
Untrained	173	197	252	345	205	302

### ■ Antitank Missiles

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

[\[21122\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Next generation Light Anti-tank Weapons (NLAWs) the British Army has in stores as of 20 June 2022.

**Jeremy Quin:**

I refer my right hon. Friend to the answer I gave on 2 March 2022 to Question 129752 to the right hon. Member for North Durham (Mr Jones).

**Attachments:**

1. Anti Tank Missiles [UIN 129752.docx]

### ■ Armed Forces: Discharges

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

[\[20221\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department has considered returning medals to those who were dishonourably discharged from the armed forces due to their sexual orientation.

**Leo Docherty:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 25 May 2022 to Question 3460 to the hon. Member for North Wiltshire (James Gray).

**Attachments:**

1. Armed Forces; Discharges [3460 - Armed Forces Discharges.docx]

### ■ Armed Forces: HIV Infection

**James Gray:**

[\[22342\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many HIV positive service people were dismissed from the (a) Army, (b) Navy and (c) Air force in the latest period for which figures are available.

**Leo Docherty:**

Between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2022, 30 UK Regular Armed Forces personnel were medically discharged with an ICD-10 code for HIV cited as the principal or

contributory cause. Both principal and contributory causes have been included as it is possible for personnel to be medically discharged for multiple medical reasons. Of the 30 personnel, 24 were Army personnel. The number of Royal Navy and RAF personnel were fewer than five respectively.

Figures include trained and untrained UK Regular personnel; Reserve personnel are excluded. Army Regular personnel include Gurkha and the Military Provost Guard Service. Royal Navy personnel includes both Royal Navy and Royal Marines. In line with Joint Service Publication 200, figures fewer than five have been suppressed.

**James Gray:** [\[22343\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, until what date HIV positive status was a bar to military service; on what evidence was that bar to military service based; and if he will make a statement.

**Leo Docherty:**

On 21 June 2022, the HIV positive status bar was lifted with amendments being made to the Joint Service Manual of Medical Fitness (Leaflet 6-7-7 of Joint Service Publication 950).

The original policy and its amendment were based on specialist medical opinion. This included consideration of the risk to the individual if they were denied essential medication or access to specialist medical services due to operational circumstances; the risk to everyone operating in the military exposure prone environment in the UK and overseas; and the cost-benefit of training an individual with a chronic medical condition, that would previously have attracted career restrictions in a fixed liability organisation.

## ■ Armed Forces: Recruitment

**Mrs Flick Drummond:** [\[21226\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what estimate his Department has made of the number of engineers recruited by (a) the Royal Navy, (b) the Army and (c) the Royal Air Force in each year since 2017; and if he will make a statement.

**Leo Docherty:**

The requested information is provided in the attached document.

### Attachments:

1. Ministry of Defence Engineer Intake [21226 - Engineer intake (OS).xlsx]

## ■ Armed Forces: Uniforms

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:** [\[21103\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when the three services will see kit specifically tailored to women readily available for servicewomen.

**Leo Docherty:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 17 June 2022 to Question 14580 to the hon. Member for Barnsley East (Stephanie Peacock).

**Attachments:**

1. Armed Forces; Females [UIN14580 - Armed Forces Females.docx]

**■ Army****Mr Tobias Ellwood:**[\[20217\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to levels of peer to peer conflict in Europe, if his Department will recommit to a strategic review of the Army doctrine.

**James Heappey:**

The Army has recently conducted a wholesale review of its doctrine that has brought the balance of its focus towards peer on peer conflict.

**■ Army: Reserve Forces****Mr Tobias Ellwood:**[\[20220\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department is taking steps to encourage employers to provide a minimum two weeks additional leave for all British Army reservists.

**Leo Docherty:**

The Ministry of Defence works very closely with reservist employers to maximise the support we provide to our reservists in all three Services. As part of this, we encourage employers to provide a minimum of 10 days additional paid leave to allow reservists to complete their training throughout the year.

At the present time, we judge 10 days additional leave to be the right balance between employment and reserve service, allowing employees to fulfil their commitments both to their employer and to the nation.

At the end of May 2022, a total of 8,691 employers and organisations had signed the Armed Forces Covenant (AFC). AFC signings have shown sustained and consistent growth in the past few years. Each of these organisations has a relationship with Defence managed by the Defence Relationship Management team, either nationally via one of a number of National Account Managers, or regionally via a Regional Employer Engagement Director (REED).

Once organisations have signed the AFC, we encourage them to join the Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS). Currently we have 493 Gold ERS winners, 1,265 Silver, and 4,573 Bronze. Silver ERS winners are required to provide at least five days additional paid leave for reservist training. Gold winners are required to provide 10 days additional paid leave for training. We therefore have a growing cohort of employers seeking a formal relationship with Defence, each of which is encouraged to provide additional paid leave for training.

## ■ Army: Unmanned Air Vehicles

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:** [\[20218\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department has assessed the potential impact of drone warfare on the Army doctrine.

**James Heappey:**

The Army is continually assessing the potential impacts of technology on the character of land conflict. The emergence of uncrewed air systems technology on the battlefield is of great interest to the Army both as a threat and opportunity. The Army has conducted numerous experiments into how to harness this technology to its advantage. Similarly, the Army has drawn lessons from the use of uncrewed air systems in Ukraine, Nagorno-Karabakh, Iraq, Syria, and Libya and is considering how to apply them effectively in doctrine.

## ■ Chinook Helicopters

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:** [\[21107\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Chinooks are in operational service and deployable across the three service arms.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:** [\[21108\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Apaches are fit for operational deployment.

**James Heappey:**

The British Army holds and maintains an appropriate amount of all vehicles to meet operational requirements. For Operational Security reasons, I cannot comment on how many Apache or Chinook platforms are currently deployable.

I am withholding this information 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)

## ■ Defence Equipment: Procurement

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:** [\[20219\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to replenish stocks of equipment gifted to Ukraine to support them in their war against Russia.

**James Heappey:**

Defence continually manages and reviews its stocks of weapons and munitions. These considerations have also informed the numbers of munitions granted in kind to the Armed Forces of Ukraine. There are regular strategic supplier conversations throughout Defence and the department is fully engaged with industry, allies and

partners to ensure that all equipment and munitions granted in kind are replaced as expeditiously as possible.

### ■ European Fighter Aircraft

**John Healey:**

**[23219]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 20 June 2022 to Question 18777 on Military Aircraft, what was the total number of (a) real and (b) simulated flight hours for Typhoon aircraft in each year since 2010.

**Jeremy Quin:**

Flying hours for the Typhoon fleet are given in the table below. Those for synthetic hours prior to Financial Year 2015-16 are not held centrally.

#### **Flying hours for Typhoon Fleet\***

<b>FINANCIAL YEAR</b>	<b>REAL</b>	<b>SYNTHETIC</b>
2010-11	9,980	N/A
2011-12	14,030	N/A
2012-13	15,350	N/A
2013-14	16,970	N/A
2014-15	17,550	N/A
2015-16	19,650	8,950
2016-17	22,220	9,840
2017-18	20,970	7,300
2018-19	20,500	11,150
2019/20	19,840	10,820
2020-21	20,540	11,950
2021-22	21,360	10,772

\*Figures are rounded to the nearest 10

### ■ Joint Strike Fighter Aircraft

**John Healey:**

**[23220]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 20 June 2022 to Question 18777 on Military Aircraft, what the total number of (a) real and (b) simulated flight hours was for F-35 aircraft in each year since 2019.

**Jeremy Quin:**

Figures for real and synthetic flying hours for the F-35B Lightning Force are given in the table below.

**Flying hours\* for F-35B Lightning Fleet**

FINANCIAL YEAR	REAL	SYNTHETIC
2019-20	1,900	2,100
2020-21	1,700	2,610
2021-22	2,470	2,760

\*Figures are rounded to the nearest 10

■ **Military Aid****Mr Tobias Ellwood:**[\[21120\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will make an assessment of the effect of implementation of Military Aid to Civil Authorities on the ability of the armed forces to defend the UK.

**James Heappey:**

Defence support under the Military Aid to the Civil Authorities (MACA) system is carefully calibrated to ensure there is no impact on the ability of the Armed Forces to defend the UK. Defence of the UK is of course our highest priority. The nature, scale and volume of requests under MACA means that the majority are met by assigning latent capacity that can be reprioritised in the short term, and do not therefore impact upon core Defence tasks. MACA tasks may occasionally have a modest impact on training schedules, though in some cases the task itself provides training opportunities (particularly in highly specialist areas such as explosive ordnance disposal, medical evacuation, diving, cyber or intelligence).

Where there is a risk of impact upon core Defence tasks, Ministers are made aware of the risks and costs of diverting resources to support a MACA task in order that they can judge the balance of priorities. This was the approach taken with COVID-19. In the early stages of the pandemic, a number of lower priority Defence tasks were paused or halted to allow the establishment of the COVID Support Force. It should be noted that even at the height of military support to the COVID-19 response, critical Defence tasks and operations were maintained.

■ **Ministry of Defence: Fuels****John Healey:**[\[21082\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many fuel leaks were reported on his Department's estate between 2010 and 2022.

**John Healey:**

[\[21083\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the estimated amount is of fuel lost as a result of fuel leaks on his Department's estate in 2022.

**John Healey:**

[\[21084\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many incidents of fuel leaks have there been on his Department's estate in each of the last five years.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The Defence Safety Authority Fuel and Gas Safety Regulator (FGSR) centrally records fuel spill records which meet the reportable threshold and are reported going back to 2013. The FGSR has received reports of 762 fuel spills between 08 January 2013 and 22 June 2022.

As at 22 June 2022 the FGSR has been notified of 1,074 litres of spilled fuel in the calendar year 2022.

The following number of fuel spills were reported to the FGSR in the last five years:

YEAR	NUMBER OF FUEL SPILLS
2021	78
2020	70
2019	108
2018	83
2017	71

**Notes:**

1. The above data is for fuel spills only and excludes Fuel Furnace Oil, Hydraulic Oil, Lubricant Oil, Miscellaneous / Other and Waste Fuel Oil.
1. The data is based on reports submitted to the FGSR which meet the reporting threshold. Whilst record keeping and reporting has improved year on year, the records received are not considered to represent 100% of spills, and spill quantities are estimates only.

## ■ Navy: Discharges

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

[\[21110\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many service personnel left the Royal Navy in each year from 2017 to date.

**Leo Docherty:**

The information requested is provided in the following table:

FINANCIAL YEAR	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
<b>RN/RM total outflow</b>	<b>3,003</b>	<b>3,088</b>	<b>3,092</b>	<b>3,322</b>	<b>2,868</b>	<b>3,518</b>
Trained	2,252	2,428	2,460	2,390	1,942	2,494
Untrained	751	660	632	932	926	1,024
<b>Officer</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>414</b>
Trained	364	390	355	352	288	360
Untrained	65	70	85	81	71	54
<b>Other Ranks</b>	<b>2,574</b>	<b>2,628</b>	<b>2,652</b>	<b>2,889</b>	<b>2,509</b>	<b>3,104</b>
Trained	1,888	2,038	2,105	2,038	1,654	2,134
Untrained	686	590	547	851	855	970

1. Figures show outflow from UK Regular Forces, both trained and untrained, including personnel leaving the Services, deaths and recalled reservists on release. They do not include promotion from Ranks to Officers or flows between Services.

## ■ Reserve Forces: Deployment

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

[\[21121\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many reservists are currently able to be deployed should the reserve be mobilised.

**Leo Docherty:**

The requested information cannot be provided without incurring disproportionate cost.

Any reservist, be they a volunteer or an ex-Regular who is liable to be recalled for permanent service, must respond to a call-out notice. As of 1 January 2022, there were 31,920 trained volunteer reservists and 35,188 ex-Regular reservists with a recall liability. In addition, there were also 2,033 sponsored reserves.

## ■ Type 23 Frigates

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

[\[20222\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many and what proportion of type 23 Frigates are (a) fit for operational use, (b) in long term maintenance and (c) being retired and sold.

**Jeremy Quin:**

Twelve Type 23 frigates remain in service with the Royal Navy.



As of 1 April 2022, HMS ARGYLL, IRON DUKE, SUTHERLAND and ST ALBANS are in long term refit, the remaining eight are available for operations. MONMOUTH has been decommissioned and is awaiting disposal.

On current plans, HMS MONTROSE's out of service date is 2023.

## ■ **Ukraine: Military Aid**

**John Healey:** [\[22344\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the Ukrainian Government has accepted the Prime Minister's offer for the UK to train up to 10,000 Ukrainian troops every 120 days.

**James Heappey:**

The Ukrainian Government has accepted the Prime Minister's offer for the UK to train up to 10,000 Ukrainian troops every 120 days and we are now working on the details to implement the programme.

**John Healey:** [\[22345\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether NATO allied countries have agreed to help meet the Prime Minister's commitment to train 10,000 Ukrainian troops every 120 days.

**John Healey:** [\[22346\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether he has held discussions with his counterparts in NATO-allied countries on the possibility of cooperating on the training of up to 10,000 Ukrainian troops every 120 days.

**James Heappey:**

We are in discussions with international partners on the longer-term vision for support to Ukraine, including training capabilities and international participation in the training of Ukrainian troops.

**John Healey:** [\[22347\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference the Prime Minister's offer to train 10,000 Ukrainian troops every 120 days, 20 June 2022, Official Report column 555, where those troops will be trained.

**James Heappey:**

The UK is considering several options outside Ukraine to roll out the training programme. This includes locations within the UK and/or other locations in Europe.

**John Healey:** [\[22321\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many meetings he has had with the Prime Minister on the replenishment of UK stockpiles following military assistance provided to Ukraine.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

I have discussed the replenishment of UK stockpiles following military assistance provided to Ukraine with the Prime Minister on numerous occasions. These discussions have taken place within wider meetings on the invasion of Ukraine. Since April, the Prime Minister and I have both attended three National Security Council meetings on the invasion of Ukraine.

■ **War Pensions: Disability**

**Stephanie Peacock:** [\[22497\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement claims were (a) submitted, (b) accepted and (c) rejected in the last year for which data is available.

**Stephanie Peacock:** [\[22498\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the average wait time is for a response to a War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement application.

**Stephanie Peacock:** [\[22499\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many appeals against a decision on a War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement application have been made in the last year for which data is available.

**Stephanie Peacock:** [\[22500\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the average length of time is from start to finish for appeals against a decision on a War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement application.

**Leo Docherty:**

The answer to the hon. Member's questions is based on the War Pension Mobility Supplement (WPMS) data for the calendar year 1 January to 31 December 2021.

CLAIMS REGISTERED	328
Claims cleared	322
Accepted claims	190
Not accepted claims	120
Unable to process	12
Appeals Registered	16
Appeals Cleared	16

The Median clearance time for War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement was 208 working days. Clearance times are calculated as the number of working days between the date the claim was registered and the date the claim was cleared

Of the 16 WPMS appeals cleared between 1 January 2021 and 31 December 2021, the average (median) clearance time was 367 working days. Clearance times are calculated as the number of working days between the date the appeal was registered and the final date that the appeal was cleared by Tribunal. Ministry of Defence have no control over the length of time it takes for a decision to be made at Tribunal as appeal tribunals are independent.

**Stephanie Peacock:**

**[22501]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department is (a) taking steps and (b) plans to take steps to make it easier for people to apply for a War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement.

**Leo Docherty:**

Any veteran wishing to apply for the War Pension Mobility Supplement (WPMS) can do so via the following link available on GOV.UK: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/war-pension-scheme-mobility-supplement-wpms>

The Transformation Programme to digitise existing paper-based processes and create a single customer portal for Veterans is underway. An online Armed Forces Compensation and War Pension Scheme application service has been developed and is currently being tested in a beta phase.

The circa £40 million Transformation Programme will expand the on-line claim service to other types of claims under the Compensation Schemes.

## DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

### ■ BBC: Older Workers

**Jim Shannon:**

**[21180]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions she has had with representatives of the BBC on provision for staff to continue working past State Pension age.

**Julia Lopez:**

The Secretary of State meets regularly with the BBC to discuss a variety of issues.

The BBC is editorially and operationally independent of the government. The Government has no say over the BBC's day-to-day decisions, including its decisions on recruitment and staffing.

**■ Channel Four Television**

**Ruth Jones:** [\[21267\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 20 June 2022 to Question 18050 on Channel Four Television, how many times she has met the Chief Executive of Channel 4 in 2022 as of 20 June.

**Julia Lopez:**

DCMS ministers and officials continue to meet with Channel 4.

The Secretary of State made clear in her oral evidence session with the DCMS Select Committee on 19 May that the Government wants to work collaboratively with the Channel 4 Management and Board to secure the best future for the broadcaster.

**■ Chelsea Football Club: Sales**

**Afzal Khan:** [\[22523\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what progress has been made on the sale of Chelsea Football Club; and whether the Government will consult on that sale with (a) Ukrainian and (b) other international civil society groups.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

On 24 May the Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation (OFSI) issued a licence to Chelsea Football Club to allow the sale of Chelsea FC PLC. We have worked in coordination with international partners to ensure that relevant licences from other jurisdictions have also been issued.

The Club has now transferred ownership to the Boehly-Clearlake consortium. This means that the Club is no longer subject to sanctions. The proceeds are being held in a frozen account and any onward transfer requires a further Government licence to enable that to happen. Abramovich cannot access those funds without a Government licence.

Abramovich has made a number of public statements regarding his intention to transfer the proceeds to the victims of the war in Ukraine. We have agreed a Deed of Undertaking in which he commits the proceeds to a charity in a jurisdiction agreed by the Government for the purposes of helping victims of the war in Ukraine. Any future movement of the sale revenue will be assessed in line with sanctions obligations and the position outlined in the Deed.

**■ Cricket: Racial Discrimination**

**Navendu Mishra:** [\[19721\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment her Department has made of the level of racism in cricket in England.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

The Government is clear that racism has no place in cricket, sport, or wider society. The Independent Commission for Equity in Cricket issued a call for evidence

following the Azeem Rafiq incident at Yorkshire County Cricket Club last year. This received over [4000 responses](#) which indicates that the level of racism in cricket is currently far too high.

The Commission also opened a second call for evidence in March 2022 to seek more detailed views on a number of areas and is currently reviewing the evidence to form an independent report with suggested recommendations to tackle racism and discrimination in cricket.

We welcome the steps taken so far by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) but expect to see clear and sustained evidence of cultural change across the sport resulting from these actions. A [recent update](#) indicates tangible progress on a number of commitments; including the county cricket network having achieved significant progress to increase Board diversity in line with the targets of 30% female representation and locally representative ethnicity.

It has been made clear to the ECB, who have responded positively and constructively, that public funding is explicitly linked to the development and implementation of robust diversity and inclusion policies and plans.

The Government and our arm's length bodies will continue to liaise with the cricket authorities on tackling racism and hold them to account on this.

## ■ Football: Gambling

**Ronnie Cowan:** [\[21227\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how many football clubs in the premier league have gambling sponsors.

**Ronnie Cowan:** [\[21228\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what estimate she has made of the number of children who attended a professional football match in 2020-21 and 2021-22.

**Ronnie Cowan:** [\[21229\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment she has made of the exposure to children of gambling adverts in football stadiums.

**Chris Philp:**

Football clubs can enter a wide variety of responsible commercial partnerships, which may be promoted in different ways including through kit sponsorships, advertising in stadiums or on club websites. In the 21/22 football season, all 20 Premier League clubs had an official betting partner, while nine clubs had front-of-shirt sponsorship by a gambling operator.

The Government does not make an assessment of the number of children attending professional football matches.

Evidence on the impacts of gambling sponsorship in sports, including the issue of children's exposure to gambling brands, is being closely considered as part of the government's Review of the Gambling Act. A white paper will be published in the coming weeks outlining our conclusions and next steps.

## ■ Football: Sales

**Yasmin Qureshi:**

**[23251]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what the Government's policy is on taking a position, either positive or negative, in relation to private individuals intending to purchase a football club; and whether it has ever adopted a position on that matter.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

The Government does not currently assess the ownership or governance arrangements of individual football clubs. This includes any potential purchase by private individuals. However, we recognise that they have unique social value and it is vital that they are protected.

The Fan Led Review recommended that new owners' and directors' tests for clubs should be established by an Independent Regulator for English Football. The Government agrees this will help to ensure the future sustainability of our football clubs and the stability of the game. The Government's response to the Review sets out that the tests should be strengthened by enhancing due diligence to check source of funds and the strength of business and financial plans, and that an integrity style test should be introduced. The forthcoming White Paper will provide further details on how the enhanced tests will work, and what will be in scope of the integrity test.

## ■ Fundraising: Ukraine

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[22486]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will provide advice to Ukrainian refugees who want to fund raise for causes in their communities in Ukraine on the process for doing so.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

The Government welcomes the public's eagerness and generosity to support the people of Ukraine at this time of crisis, including those arriving from Ukraine. To support charitable giving, the government match funded £25 million to the Disaster Emergency Committee's (DEC) Ukraine Humanitarian appeal.

When fundraising, it is important to ensure funds are given safely so that they reach the cause for which they were intended. The Charity Commission for England and Wales and The Fundraising Regulator published a joint statement on 2 March, on [how to give safely to support Ukraine](#).

The Fundraising Regulator has also published information on [how to set up a fundraising appeal](#).

## ■ Gambling

**Justin Madders:**

[\[22459\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 17 May 2022 to Question 808 on Gambling, when she will publish the Gambling Review White Paper.

**Chris Philp:**

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

## ■ Gambling: Addictions

**Scott Benton:**

[\[20331\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the report by Public Health England entitled Gambling-related harms evidence review: the economic and social cost of harms, published in September 2021, if she will make an assessment of the whether Public Health England conducted methodologically robust research when it estimated that there was a £1.27 billion annual economic burden of harmful gambling.

**Chris Philp:**

Public Health England (PHE)'s evidence review on gambling-related harms estimated the annual cost of harmful gambling to society to be between £841 million and £2.2 billion, or approximately £1.27 billion, however the lack of quantitative causal evidence for some of the harms described did not allow PHE to make a direct assessment of the cost of gambling harm specifically. While the review acknowledged that further research is needed to determine costs attributable directly to gambling-related harm rather than those associated with people who are problem or at-risk gamblers, it is the most comprehensive review of the evidence on gambling-related harm and its associated costs, and has been carefully considered as an important input to our Review of the Gambling Act 2005. We will publish our white paper in the coming weeks.

## ■ Gambling: Regulation

**Bill Esterson:**

[\[22413\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of whether changes to gambling regulations are required in response to the Report of the Independent Review of the Regulation of BetIndex Limited.

**Chris Philp:**

The independent review led by Malcolm Sheeran QC has been an important input into our ongoing Review of the Gambling Act 2005. We will publish a White Paper setting out our conclusions and next steps in the coming weeks.

**■ Holiday Accommodation: Age****Rachael Maskell:** [\[18957\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether her Department requires owners of short term holiday lets to verify the age of the persons hiring that property.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

There are no legal requirements to verify the age of person hiring a short term let, however most short- term let platforms require guests to agree to their Terms and Conditions stating that they must be over the age of 18 when making the booking.

The Tourism Recovery Plan, published in June 2021, committed to considering a Tourism Accommodation Registration Scheme in England. To better understand the issues faced by both communities and businesses, we intend first to launch a call for evidence, seeking views on the range of issues that arise from the increase in short term and holiday letting.

We also want to improve the evidence base and better understand the market today, including the benefits and challenges of the increase in short-term and holiday letting we have seen in England in recent years.

**■ Parthenon Sculptures****Tim Loughton:** [\[23212\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what the Government's policy is on the (a) ownership and (b) home of the Elgin Marbles; and if she will make a statement.

**Tim Loughton:** [\[23213\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions Ministers in (a) her Department or (b) other Government Departments have had with their Greek counterparts on the ownership and location of the Elgin Marbles; and if she will make a statement.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

The Parthenon Sculptures in the British Museum were legally acquired under the laws pertaining at the time and are legally owned by the Trustees of the British Museum, which is operationally independent of the Government. Decisions relating to the care and management of the museum's collections are a matter for the Trustees of the British Museum. The Government fully supports the position taken by the Trustees of the British Museum.

DCMS ministers have not had any recent discussions on this matter with Greek counterparts. When the Greek Prime Minister called on the Prime Minister in November last year, Mr Mitsotakis raised the issue of the Parthenon Sculptures. The Prime Minister reiterated the UK's longstanding position that this is a matter for the Trustees of the British Museum. There have been no subsequent ministerial



discussions on the Parthenon Sculptures, although we continue to talk to colleagues in the Greek government on wider issues of cultural co-operation.

## ■ Sports: Ombudsman

**Julian Knight:**

[\[18938\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to Baroness Grey-Thompson's independent report entitled Duty of Care in Sport Review on 21 April 2017, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of that report's recommendation on introducing a sports ombudsman.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

The safety, wellbeing and welfare of everyone taking part in sport is absolutely paramount. National Governing Bodies are responsible for the regulation of their sports and for ensuring that appropriate measures are in place to protect participants from harm. With that in mind, we expect sports to do all they can to protect their athletes.

The Government has carefully considered the recommendations, including for a sport ombudsman, that were made as part of the Duty of Care Review in 2017.

We recognise that this is a very complex area with different challenges across elite and grassroots sport that means a one size fits all solution is not viable. We will continue to strive to improve the culture in sport at all levels.

Our focus has been on strengthening existing structures rather than establishing a new body to deliver the same functions. Working with Sport England and UK Sport, progress has included:

- UK Sport piloting a complaints handling disclosure service with the objective of addressing issues of independence of reporting of complaints.
- Legislation introduced to extend the definition of a 'position of trust' within the Sexual Offences Act 2003 to include sports coaches making a vital step in making our sports clubs more secure to young people.

We will continue to keep the option of an ombudsman under review.

## ■ Swimming Pools

**Tim Loughton:**

[\[23211\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the effect of rises in the cost of energy and chemicals on the viability of public leisure centres with swimming pools; and if she will make a statement.

**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. 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.

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 Government is also working with partners within the sector to monitor the availability and supply of pool chemicals.

## ■ Voluntary Work: Refugees

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[22481\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether she has had discussions with representatives of the voluntary sector on the potential opportunities that exist for Ukrainian refugees to volunteer in a field that they are able to contribute to.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[22482\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will facilitate volunteering support for Ukrainian refugees for the purposes of enabling people to contribute to civil society while learning English.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

Volunteering can play a role in building social connectedness, and can support volunteers to learn new skills or develop existing ones, including learning English. DCMS is focusing its efforts on removing barriers to participation in volunteering and supporting a more inclusive volunteering experience, including for those arriving from Ukraine. Through the £7.4 million Volunteering Futures Fund volunteering opportunities are being created to remove barriers to participation in the arts, culture, sports, civil society, youth and heritage sectors.

The Government recognises that civil society has, and continues, to play a crucial role in the response to Ukraine. Since May 2020, DCMS has funded the Voluntary and Community Sector Emergencies Partnership (VCSEP) to help build capacity in the voluntary sector in responding to emergencies. The VCSEP and its partners have been active in assisting those arriving from Ukraine, including supporting the development of the Homes for Ukraine programme and targeted support.

## ■ Youth Investment Fund

**Dame Diana Johnson:** [\[19590\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if her Department will roll out the Youth Investment Fund by August 2022.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

Phase Two of the Youth Investment Fund is expected to open in summer 2022.

Phase One, administered by BBC Children in Need, has already delivered £12 million of funding this year to over 400 local youth organisations in levelling up priority areas in England. The funding has enabled local youth providers to invest in small-scale

capital projects, including equipment and small redevelopments, that expand the reach, number and range of services they currently offer.

## ■ Youth Services: Finance

**Mick Whitley:**

[\[23411\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will set out a long-term funding strategy for youth services in England.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

Local Authorities have a statutory duty to allocate funding to youth services in line with local need. This is funded from the Local Government settlement, which was over £12 billion last year. DCMS are currently reviewing the guidance associated with the statutory duty.

Last year, DCMS conducted a Youth Review to ensure that our spending, policy and programmes meet the needs of young people. The review heard from over 6,000 young people and 120 youth organisations. Grounded in the findings from this review, the government has committed to a National Youth Guarantee: that by 2025 every young person will have access to regular clubs and activities, adventures away from home and volunteering opportunities. This will be supported by a three year £560 million investment in youth services, reflecting young people's priorities and addressing the inconsistencies in national youth spending, with a firm focus on levelling up.

## EDUCATION

### ■ Academies

**Bridget Phillipson:**

[\[22409\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the (a) value and (b) potential merits of the operating freedoms available to academy schools.

**Bridget Phillipson:**

[\[22410\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential impact of provisions in the Schools Bill on the operating freedoms available to academy schools.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

Academy trust freedoms include the autonomy for academy trusts to make decisions on matters such as financial governance, the school year and day, curriculum, staffing, and pay. These enable academy trusts to collaborate, innovate, and run themselves efficiently to support teachers and schools where the challenge is greatest to deliver the best outcomes for their pupils.

As set out in the Schools White Paper, the department knows the best multi-academy trusts transform outcomes for pupils, particularly the most disadvantaged, and deliver improvement in schools and areas where poor performance had become entrenched.

There are no provisions in the Schools Bill that undermine academy freedoms. The Schools Bill makes provisions for the Academy Trust Standards, which will bring together existing requirements currently set out across funding agreements, legislation, and the Academy Trust Handbook into a single statutory framework. This will bring greater clarity, understanding and reassurance to the sector, and will ensure the same minimum standards apply consistently to all academies now and in the future.

The department will consult with the sector on every iteration of the Academy Trust Standards regulations.

## ■ Apprentices

**Stuart Anderson:**

[\[21268\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has plans to encourage businesses to run new apprenticeship schemes.

**Alex Burghart:**

The department is increasing funding for apprenticeships in England to £2.7 billion by the 2024/25 financial year. We are also encouraging the use of more flexible training models, such as accelerated and flexi-job apprenticeships, so that employers in all sectors can benefit from apprenticeships and apprentices can attain occupational competence as quickly as possible.

We recognise the important role that small-and-medium-sized employers (SMEs) play in creating apprenticeship opportunities, particularly for younger people and those in disadvantaged areas. On 1 June, we reset the reservation levels for all employers who do not pay the levy to zero. This means that employers will be able to make up to 10 new reservations to fund new starts.

We continue to make improvements to the apprenticeship levy transfer system to make it easier for large employers to make full use of their levy funds and support starts in their supply chain, sector, or local area, and to support more employers, including SMEs, to meet local or sectorial skills needs.

We also provide £1,000 payments to both employers and training providers when they take on apprentices aged between 16 and 18 years old, helping to support younger people into apprenticeships.

## ■ Apprentices: Females

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[21186\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will hold discussions with the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on the potential merits of establishing a specialised apprenticeship scheme for women who want to pursue careers in (a) engineering and (b) mechanics.

**Alex Burghart:**

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

Apprenticeships are a great way for women to receive high-quality training and begin or progress in a career in engineering or mechanics. There are over 80 occupationally specific apprenticeship standards available in these sectors, such as digital engineering technician at level 3 and electro-mechanical engineer at level 6. The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education ensures that all standards have a gender-neutral language approach, to ensure that they are appealing to both women and men.

The department has no plans to introduce a specialised apprenticeship scheme for women. Our Apprenticeships Diversity Champions Network is championing gender representation amongst employers in sectors that are traditionally male dominated, such as engineering and mechanics, and we continue to promote apprenticeships to girls in schools through our Apprenticeship Support and Knowledge Programme.

**■ Children: Day Care****Helen Hayes:**[\[22490\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he plans to issue guidance to nurseries, childminders and other early years education and childcare settings on making adjustments and improvements to (a) improve ventilation and (b) reduce the risk of covid-19 transmission in those settings during the 2022 summer holiday period.

**Will Quince:**

The department has provided CO<sub>2</sub> monitors to state-funded education providers, including early years providers. All state-funded early years providers were eligible, including includes private, voluntary, and independent providers, and childminders who work together in groups of four or more and are registered as operating childcare on domestic premises.

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 rooms warm.

Comprehensive advice on how to improve ventilation for education providers is available from the Health and Safety Executive.

From 1 April 2022, the government has withdrawn most pieces of specific COVID-19 guidance for education and childcare providers, although public health and emergency planning guidance for education and childcare settings is still available. If providers suspect an outbreak of respiratory infection, such as COVID-19, they should review and reinforce the baseline infection prevention and control measures they already have in place.

## ■ Educational Psychology: Training

**Darren Jones:** [\[23382\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Green Paper entitled SEND Review: Right support Right place Right time, published on 29 March 2022, when the next cohort of educational psychologist trainees will commence their training.

**Darren Jones:** [\[23384\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will provide funding to Bristol City Council to enhance the training of additional educational psychologists.

**Darren Jones:** [\[23385\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of availability of educational psychologists to support the needs of children with SEND.

**Will Quince:**

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Green Paper sets out our vision for an inclusive education system to ensure that all children and young people have timely access to specialist services and support.

Since 2020, the department has increased the number of educational psychologist trainees that we fund to over 200, from 160 per annum, and we invested £30 million to train three more cohorts for academic years 2020, 2021, and 2022, to reflect increased demand. The first cohort will enter the workforce in 2023 to provide crucial support to children and young people, schools, families, and local authorities.

This February the department announced a further investment of over £10 million to train over 200 more educational psychologists. These trainees will begin their courses in September 2023, and graduate in 2026.

## ■ Pupils: Assessments

**Zarah Sultana:** [\[22569\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential impact of (a) SATs and (b) statutory testing on pupil mental health and wellbeing; and if he will make it his policy to pause such testing to allow for a professional review of the potential impact of the current assessment system in primary schools on pupil wellbeing.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

Schools should support a culture of wellbeing amongst staff and pupils. The department understands that the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people, and that this will have an impact in the longer-term. Although schools should encourage all pupils to work hard and achieve well in primary assessments, the department does not recommend that they devote excessive time to preparation, and certainly not at the expense of pupils' mental health and wellbeing.

Assessments are a crucial part of a child's schooling and are fundamental in a high-performing education system. Statutory assessments at primary school are an essential part in ensuring that all pupils master the basics of reading, writing, and maths to prepare them for secondary school. Assessment data also enables parents, schools, and the department to understand the impact of lost time in education and recovery initiatives.

In 2017, the government carried out a consultation into primary assessment in England. The consultation received over 4,000 responses from a diverse range of backgrounds and specialisms, providing a broad and informed range of views that informed policy on the current primary assessment system. Additionally, the department engages with teachers, parents and their representatives on a regular basis to understand their views on primary assessment.

The department has no current plans to undertake further major reform of assessments.

## ■ Religion: Education

**Tim Farron:**

[\[21150\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Ofsted research review series: religious education, published on 12 May 2021, what plans his Department has to ensure access to high quality in-service training for leaders and teachers of religious education.

**Tim Farron:**

[\[21152\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans his Department has to ensure the quality and quantity of primary religious education training in initial teacher training and for early career teachers.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

One of the department's priorities is to ensure that we continue to attract, retain, and develop the highly skilled teachers needed, as set out in our Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategy in 2019. In the 2020/21 academic year, the department exceeded the postgraduate initial teacher training (ITT) target in religious education (129% of target), and in 2021/22 we met 99% of the target.

The department does not prescribe the curriculum content of initial teacher training (ITT) courses. However, courses must be designed so that teacher trainees can demonstrate that they meet all of the Teachers' Standards at the appropriate level. The ITT Core Content Framework sets out a minimum entitlement of knowledge, skills and experiences that trainees need to enter the profession in the best position possible to teach and support all children and young people. The framework is not subject specific but sets out a minimum entitlement to training that accredited ITT providers must incorporate into their primary and/or secondary ITT curricula. It is up to partnerships to make choices around curriculum and sequencing to suit the subject, phase, and age range that trainees will be teaching.



Beyond the first few years of teaching, the department's priority is to help all teachers and school leaders to continuously develop their expertise throughout their careers. We have improved our training support offer to all schools and teachers, to ensure that they receive high quality training and development at every stage of their career, from initial teacher training and the introduction of the Early Career Framework (ECF) reforms through to leadership qualifications.

The ECF reforms were introduced to improve support for early career teachers. The ECF itself underpins what all early career teachers should learn about and learn how to do based on expert guidance and the best available research evidence. It is designed to work for all early career teachers of religious education as well as all others regardless of subject, phase and/or school.

### ■ Romanian Language: GCSE

**Sarah Owen:** [\[22568\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of introducing a GCSE qualification in the Romanian language.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

Deciding which languages are offered at GCSE is the responsibility of awarding organisations.

The government is committed to increasing the number of pupils studying languages to GCSE level and beyond, including languages that are commonly spoken in Britain. It is for this reason that teaching of languages is in the national curriculum from age 7 to 14, and why GCSEs in languages are included as part of the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects.

However, it is up to schools to decide which languages are taught as part of their curriculum, both at primary and secondary school, and the government does not specify which languages should be taught. When deciding which languages to offer, schools are likely to consider the needs of their local community.

Awarding organisations can offer a GCSE in any modern language, and this decision would be informed by matters such as the level of demand from schools, the proportion of the population in the UK speaking the language, and the availability of examiners. Thus, there is no reason in principle why a GCSE in Romanian could not be introduced, and the government would support any awarding organisation wishing to do so.

### ■ Schools: Racial Discrimination

**Munira Wilson:** [\[21291\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what guidance the Government has issued on racial justice work and workshops in schools.



**Munira Wilson:**

**[21292]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what funding the Government has allocated to support racial justice work and workshops in schools.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The government condemns and strives to tackle all forms of racial discrimination, prejudice, and harassment. Under the Equality Act 2010, schools have a duty to take steps to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations across all protected characteristics, including between people of different ethnic backgrounds.

The department has not provided specific guidance or funding to schools to deliver racial justice work and workshops. Schools have flexibility over how they deliver subjects, so they can develop an integrated approach that is sensitive to the needs and background of their pupils. The department has published advice to support schools to fulfil their duties under the Equality Act 2010, which is available here: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/315587/Equality\\_Act\\_Advice\\_Final.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf).

As part of a broad and balanced curriculum, pupils should be taught about different societies. This includes learning how different groups have contributed to the development of Britain. The curriculum offers many opportunities for schools to do this, notably through citizenship education and relationships education, which is now compulsory in all schools and has a clear focus on the importance of valuing difference. The history curriculum also gives teachers the flexibility to include the contribution of black and minority ethnic history into lessons. This aligns with the school's duty to promote and foster good relations across all protected characteristics, including race.

Guidance on the implementation and teaching of the relationships, sex and health education curriculum is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teaching-about-relationships-sex-and-health>. The national curriculum content for citizenship can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-citizenship-programmes-of-study>.

The department continues to publish information, guidance and support for teachers and school leaders on how to challenge radical views, including racist and discriminatory beliefs, on the website Educate Against Hate, which is available at: <https://educateagainsthate.com/>. One of these resources is the 'Respectful School Communities' toolkit, a self-review and signposting tool to support schools to develop a whole-school approach which promotes respect and discipline. This can combat bullying, harassment and prejudice of any kind, including hate-based bullying. This toolkit is available here: <https://educateagainsthate.com/resources/respectful-school-communities-self-review-signposting-tool-2/>.

It is important that schools take full responsibility for ensuring lessons and materials are age appropriate, suitable, and politically impartial, particularly when using materials produced by external organisations. The department published the

guidance, 'Political impartiality in schools', to support schools to meet their duties in this area, which is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/political-impartiality-in-schools>.

## ■ Schools: Sexual Offences

**Damien Moore:** [22512]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what progress his Department has made on implementing the recommendations made in Ofsted's review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges.

**Damien Moore:** [22514]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether the Government has made progress on the implementation of the recommendations from Ofsted's Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges, published on 10 June 2021.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The department accepted the findings of Ofsted's review in full and immediately began working on delivering a multi-agency, cross-departmental response, tackling the issues identified.

Local statutory safeguarding partners should support schools to address harmful sexual behaviours and sexual abuse. The department's immediate response involved asking all 135 safeguarding partners to review working arrangements with schools and colleges in their area. We ran several events with safeguarding partners, educational establishments and sector experts, ascertaining emerging practice and barriers to effective working. This information will be shared across all safeguarding partners.

The department has published strengthened statutory Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance in 2021, ensuring schools have clearer guidance on dealing with sexual abuse. We are further strengthening this guidance and a draft version was published in May and will take effect in September 2022. Additionally, the Child-on-Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment guidance have been revised.

The department has worked with the Home Office on development of the Harmful Sexual Behaviour Support Service, assisting professionals, such as teachers and designated safeguarding leads (DSLs), to tackle harmful sexual behaviours.

DSLs have a pivotal role in supporting and protecting children in school which is why we have provided more support to DSLs, enabling them to identify and address issues more confidently. We have extended our pilot of supervision and training for DSLs working alongside the Child Sexual Abuse Centre of Expertise and What Works Children's Social Care. Later this year an online hub for DSLs will be launched, in conjunction with professionals and the sector, delivering further advice and guidance.

To address safeguarding issues online and on social media platforms, alongside the Department for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport, we asked the Children's

Commissioner to immediately explore how children's access to pornography and harmful content can be reduced. We have worked with the Children's Commissioner's Office to develop and publish a Parent's Guide: Talking to your child about online sexual harassment. Additionally, Ministers and the Children's Commissioner have sought reassurance from technology companies that they will identify further information which they can share, and continue to make available resources to parents, teachers, and children.

To ensure children and young people are educated about these issues, the department is supporting teachers to implement the compulsory Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) curriculum, including through producing non-statutory guidance to strengthen content and clarity on when relevant topics should be taught and asking schools to prioritise delivery of the full RSHE curriculum this academic year.

Where children and young people are affected by these issues, they continue to be supported by NSPCC's Report Abuse in Education helpline (0800 136663). The helpline is open to anyone who has suffered sexual abuse or harassment in educational settings, and those concerned for someone else.

Work on safeguarding and child protection continues across government, including the Home Office's Violence Against Women and Girls and Tackling Child Sexual Abuse strategies, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport's Online Safety Act, the National Crime Agency's response to abuse and exploitation, and Cabinet Office's Stop Abuse Together campaign.

## ■ Special Educational Needs

**Paul Maynard:**

**[21162]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) there are in each constituency; and what the cost of funding those plans is, broken down by constituency, in the latest year for which figures are available.

**Will Quince:**

Figures for education, health and care (EHC) plans are not available at the level of parliamentary constituency. The department publishes annual figures on the number of EHC plans being administered by each local authority in England. The local authority level figures for 2022 can be found here: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/education-health-and-care-plans>.

The department does not hold figures specifically for the cost of funding the plans. Allocations of high needs funding to local authorities as part of their dedicated schools grant for the current financial year, from which they cover the cost of the provision for those children and young people with EHC plans, are set out here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dedicated-schools-grant-dsg-2022-to-2023>.

■ **Special Educational Needs: Coronavirus and Ventilation**

**Helen Hayes:** [\[22491\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department plans to issue guidance to special schools on making adjustments and improvements to (a) improve ventilation and (b) reduce the risk of covid-19 transmission in those settings during the 2022 summer holiday period.

**Will Quince:**

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

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

In 2021/22, the department provided over 386,000 CO<sub>2</sub> monitors to state-funded education providers, including early years, schools, and further education providers. This was 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 line with the living with COVID-19 announcement in April 2022, which prioritises the most vulnerable, the department has distributed additional CO<sub>2</sub> monitors to special schools and alternative provision providers, including special educational needs units in mainstream settings, given their higher-than-average numbers of vulnerable pupils. These additional monitors will provide coverage in roughly all teaching rooms and some non-teaching rooms.

In January 2022, the government committed to fulfil all eligible applications for air cleaning units to state-funded education settings 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 states 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.

■ **Turing Scheme: Industry**

**Owen Thompson:** [\[23353\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether the Turing Scheme will commit the same proportion of investment to industrial symbiosis as the Erasmus scheme did previously.

**Alex Burghart:**

The Turing Scheme is demand-led, and as such, the scheme does not commit to specific levels of funding for single areas or industries, including industrial symbiosis.

Universities are independent, autonomous bodies, and consequently, responsible for forging their own partnerships, including those with industries.

**ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS****■ Agriculture: EU Countries****Angus Brendan MacNeil:****[19591]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if his Department will make an assessment of the potential impact of recent measures the EU has taken to support its agricultural sector during the conflict in Ukraine on the competitiveness of (a) farmers and (b) fertiliser manufacturers in the UK.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The UK is working with G7 and other partners in multilateral fora such as the World Trade Organization, to monitor and address global food security issues, focusing on the ongoing benefits of open markets, and working together to ensure that sufficient, safe, affordable and nutritious food continues to be available and accessible to all. We are aware that other countries have put various measures in place to support their agricultural sectors. We are monitoring developments and applying our own measures in the UK.

The Secretary of State recently announced a range of measures in support of the current situation, such as delaying changes to the use of urea fertiliser to help farmers manage their costs and improving statutory guidance for use of slurry. On 31 March I hosted the first meeting of the Fertiliser Taskforce with key industry bodies to discuss potential mitigations to the challenges which global supply pressures are causing. The second Taskforce meeting occurred on 18 May, hosted by Minister Churchill. Ministers will continue to meet with key industry bodies for further Fertiliser Taskforce sessions in the coming months, to help identify and mitigate potential risks.

In addition, the 2022 Basic Payment Scheme payment will be made in two instalments to give farmers an advance injection of cash. Farmers with eligible applications will receive half of their payment from the end of July, and the rest from December. By doing this, the Government intends to inject cash into farm businesses, helping them to make business decisions sooner, with more confidence. Leaving the EU has given us flexibility to introduce this measure. In the days of the EU this would never have been possible due to the way audits worked and the need to enforce the three crop rule during the summer.

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.

■ **Animal and Plant Health Agency: Weybridge**

**Caroline Lucas:** [\[18870\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the report entitled Improving the UK's science capability for managing animal diseases, published by the National Audit Office on 15 June 2022, what assessment he has made of the reasons for his Department allowing the Animal and Plant Health Agency Weybridge site to deteriorate to a state where some of the facilities were found to be no longer fit for purpose; what steps he is taking to tackle the (a) under-investment and (b) poor strategic management of the site identified by that report; what recent assessment he has made of the site's ability to respond effectively to a major animal disease outbreak; and if he will make a statement.

**Jo Churchill:**

We are taking all the necessary steps to secure our animal health science capability. Defra recognised that a complete redevelopment was needed to keep the site fit for purpose and since then has carried out a major programme of critical maintenance and set up the Science Capability in Animal Health (SCAH) programme - a major investment to secure the long-term future of the Weybridge facility. We have secured funding of £1.4 billion of which £200 million has been allocated for this SR Period to safeguard and enhance the laboratories at Weybridge and secure our vital scientific capability. This substantial investment recognises the Government's commitment to the strongest possible standards of biosecurity.

We have demonstrated our effective response to significant animal disease outbreaks. For example, Avian Influenza over the last two winter seasons have been the largest on record.

The Animal and Plant Health Agency provides high-quality surveillance, preparedness, detection and response to biosecurity threats from animal diseases - both those that might affect our ability to trade and those which pose a threat to human health. The work which has commenced to safeguard and enhance the Weybridge site will enable its excellent scientists to continue at the forefront of science which protects the country, boosting our resilience against animal diseases.

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

**Rosie Duffield:** [\[22502\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if the Government will bring forward legislation to implement the Landscapes Review's recommendations to reform the purposes, duties and governance of England's National Parks and AONBs in this Parliament; and when those legislative proposals will be introduced.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The Government published its response to the Landscapes Review on 15 January. A consultation on implementing our response to the review ran for 12 weeks until 9 April. We received over 15,000 responses to our consultation, which we are currently

analysing, and will respond in due course. Bringing forward legislation to implement our response to the review will be subject to securing parliamentary time.

## ■ Bovine Tuberculosis: Disease Control

**Geraint Davies:**

[22333]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will review his policy on badger culling prior to the issuing of any new cull licences; and if he will make a statement.

**Jo Churchill:**

No review of the badger culling policy will take place this year.

As set out in the Government response to the 2021 [bovine TB consultation](#) [1], we are now evolving our approach and gradually moving away from intensive badger culling over the next few years, towards badger vaccination. This will involve restricting cull licenses, with no new intensive cull licenses being issued after 2022, and supplementary badger control licenses being restricted to a maximum of two years. Culling would remain an option where epidemiological assessment indicates that it is needed.

[1] <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/bovine-tb-2020/eradication-of-btb-england/>

**Geraint Davies:**

[22334]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if his Department will make an assessment of the implications for his Department's policies of the research by Thomas E.S. Langton et al. entitled Analysis of the impact of badger culling on bovine tuberculosis in cattle in the high-risk area of England 2009–2020, published on 18 March 2022.

**Jo Churchill:**

The research published by Langton et al[1] in the Veterinary Record contained significant methodological flaws. Analysis was carried out in an unusual manner that masks the effect of culling by incorrectly grouping data, which makes it impossible to assess the impact of culling on cattle TB breakdowns.

A more appropriate inspection of publicly available data would have shown clear declining trends in disease following the start of culling which is not seen in areas without culls. These findings are consistent with the results of the [Downs et al](#) [2] study, published in 2019, which demonstrated that culling resulted in significant reductions in TB incidents among cattle herds.

The Chief Veterinary Officer, Christine Middlemiss, and Chief Scientific Adviser, Gideon Henderson, published a letter in the same Veterinary Record edition which outlined these concerns.

—



[1] Langton TES, Jones MW, McGill I. Analysis of the impact of badger culling on bovine tuberculosis in cattle in the high-risk area of England, 2009–2020. *Vet Rec* 2022; doi:10.1002/vetr.1384

[2] <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-019-49957-6>

## ■ Food: Consumption

**Liz Saville Roberts:**

**[23362]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he has had recent discussions with (a) Cabinet colleagues, (b) Devolved Governments and (c) Local Government on the promotion of the consumption of proximate seasonal produce.

**Victoria Prentis:**

This Government wants people at home and abroad to be lining up to Buy British. We will always champion our farmers and producers, supporting them to grow more of our great British food, and to provide a reliable and sustainable food supply to the British public. The recently published Government food strategy sets out our aim to broadly maintain domestic food production at current levels as we deliver our climate and environmental aims.

We work closely with industry and trade associations to engage with and support initiatives that highlight the qualities of British meat, dairy, seafood and fruit and vegetable products. During the pandemic we worked with industry to promote fish caught in UK waters, seasonal veg, and supported the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board's campaign on milk and dairy to the British public. To support producers in promoting their products we hosted a Regional Food and Drink Summit in March 2022. The Summit brought together SMEs and regional organisations to share best practice and access support to grow their business. Building on the success of the Summit we will continue to offer specialised regional support and engagement with food and drink SMEs.

We welcome efforts from all parts of the food chain to promote and source British products. We will lead by example in the public sector, using our purchasing power to champion local, healthy, sustainable, and high-quality food. The consultation on public sector food and catering policy, launched alongside our food strategy, proposes a mandatory standard on menu cycles and seasonality. In this consultation we propose that public sector menus must vary throughout the year to reflect the natural growing or production period for the UK, such as cauliflower and butternut squash in the winter, and new potatoes, berries and lamb in the summer.

Due to the UK-wide and international nature of the food system, we have maintained regular engagement with the Devolved Administrations during the development of the food strategy. Responsibility for public sector food procurement is devolved to England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, and the proposed changes therefore apply to England only. However, we work closely across the Devolved Administrations to share best practice and ensure public sector food policy is complimentary.



## ■ Food: Prices

**Beth Winter:**

[\[14653\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department holds data on the impact of food price inflation on food insecurity for people (a) with protected characteristics, (b) by age group and (c) by annual income.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The Government recognises the impact that food inflation can have on different groups and regularly monitors consumer food prices using the Consumer Prices Index (including Housing Costs) (CPIH).

To analyse the impact that food price inflation has on people:

- (a) with protected characteristics,
- (b) by age group and
- (c) by annual income,

Defra uses the ONS Living Costs and Food Survey. This provides information on household expenditure patterns and food consumption.

## ■ Gardens: Biodiversity

**Paul Blomfield:**

[\[18888\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the Answer of 9 June 2021 to Question 10218 on Gardens: Biodiversity, whether his Department has taken steps to encourage individuals and organisations not to use artificial grass.

**Rebecca Pow:**

In the 25 Year Environment Plan, we committed to introduce new standards for green infrastructure. This new Green Infrastructure Framework will be launched by Natural England in December 2022. It will show what good green infrastructure looks like and help local authorities, developers and communities to improve provision in their area.

The Environment Act 2021 contains an ambitious package of reforms to restore and enhance nature and green spaces. This includes a new mandatory requirement for biodiversity net gain in the planning system, to ensure that new developments enhance biodiversity. In future, developments which involve the laying of artificial grass at the expense of natural landscaping, and are above a de minimis threshold, will be required to enhance biodiversity in other ways, through the biodiversity net gain requirement. This will incentivise more nature positive development.

As part of the Government's work to address the needs of pollinators, most recently set out in the latest Pollinator Action Plan published in May 2022, we encourage everyone to take 'Five Simple Actions' in gardens, on balconies, in window boxes and in allotments to make them pollinator friendly. These include: growing more flowers, shrubs and trees; letting gardens grow wild; cutting grass less often; not disturbing

insect nest and hibernation spots; and thinking carefully about whether to use pesticides.

## ■ Grasslands: Fertilisers

**Daniel Kawczynski:**

**[19597]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to GrassCheck GB data for the week of 13 June 2022, what recent assessment he has made of the potential need for securing reasonably priced chemical fertiliser to help increase domestic grass yields.

**Jo Churchill:**

While global fertiliser prices have risen and this is undoubtedly a challenging period for our agricultural sectors, the supply chain providing imports of fertiliser to the UK has remained resilient. Within the domestic market, CF Fertilisers continues to produce ammonium nitrate fertiliser from their plant at Billingham.

Through our UK Agricultural Market Monitoring Group we are monitoring a range of data around input costs, grass yields and production levels. We have also recently expanded our engagement with industry, to supplement our data with live intelligence. We have also established a ministerial-led fertiliser Taskforce to more closely monitor the fertiliser market. More information about the latest work of the Taskforce is available at the following link.

[The latest from the Fertiliser Taskforce - Future Farming \(blog.gov.uk\)](#)

To reflect the challenges the industry is facing, we have already announced a number of measures to support growers at this time. These include delays to the introduction of restrictions to the use of urea fertiliser, further details of the Sustainable Farming Incentive Scheme and the bringing forward of half of this year's Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) payment to July as an advance injection of cash to farm businesses.

## ■ Lighting: Pollution

**Tony Lloyd:**

**[21095]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he has taken to implement the 25-Year Environment Plan's commitment to ensure that light pollution management eases potential impacts on wildlife.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Defra has funded or co-funded national and international assessments of drivers of change on insects and wider biodiversity such as the global Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services' (IPBES) Assessment Report on Pollinators, Pollination and Food Production. This report notes the effects of artificial light on nocturnal insects may be growing.

Defra has worked with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to ensure that the National Planning Policy Framework is clear that policies

and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution on local amenity, dark landscapes and nature conservation.

Furthermore, Defra has contributed to the development of the DLUHC Planning Policy Guidance on light pollution, published in November 2019, which emphasises the importance of getting the right light in the right place at the right time and sets out the factors that are relevant when considering the ecological impacts of lighting.

A range of measures are in place to ensure that light pollution is effectively managed through: controls in the planning system; the statutory nuisance regime; and improvements in street lighting.

We continue to work with partners including leading scientists to review the latest studies related to light pollution and ensure we continue to address key threats to biodiversity.

## ■ Natural England

**Caroline Nokes:**

[\[18886\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the progress made by Natural England in implementing the reforms outlined in its 2021-22 action plan.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Natural England will be publishing its annual report in the autumn which will detail its operational and financial performance, including progress made on the ambitions identified in the 21-11 action plan. In line with governance guidelines, Defra assesses Natural England's performance at quarterly reviews and an annual Ministerial Performance Review. Recent reviews with Natural England have indicated good performance across its ambitious targets, building its capacity and capability to help tackle the critical challenge of nature recovery, climate change and improving people's wellbeing.

## ■ Veterinary Services

**Alan Brown:**

[\[22466\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the recommendations of The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons on reforming the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966, entitled Recommendations for future veterinary legislation, published on 13 October 2021.

**Victoria Prentis:**

Defra is grateful to the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) for their proposal to reform the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966. Defra officials are reviewing the proposals. I recognise the potential benefits associated with changes to the Act and my officials have been engaging with the RCVS and the sector more widely on how the Act could best be updated.

## ■ Water Abstraction

**Caroline Nokes:**

[\[18887\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department plans to take steps to help prevent excessive water abstraction in areas with high water stress.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The Environment Agency regulates the abstraction of water from rivers, lakes and groundwater across England on behalf of the government. Defra and the Environment Agency launched the Abstraction Plan in December 2017 setting out how the Environment Agency will deliver abstraction reform to protect the environment from unsustainable abstraction. The Abstraction plan is now being implemented. In addition, the Environment Agency is updating its local Abstraction Licensing Strategies for all catchments by 2027, to set out how much water is available for abstraction whilst taking account of local environmental needs.

Furthermore, Water Resources Management Plans, produced by water companies, set out how water supply needs are met from sustainable sources over a 25 year period. New Water Resources Management Plans will be consulted on at the end of 2022.

The Environment Agency's Restoring Sustainable Abstraction programme has already returned 49 billion litres of water to the environment, including 37 billion litres of water to chalk streams since it started in 2008. During this time the Environment Agency has removed the risk of approximately 900 billion litres of water being abstracted from unused or underused abstraction licences.

## FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

### ■ Armed Conflict: Sexual Offences

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

[\[20228\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to help protect women and girls from the use of rape and sexual violence in conflict.

**Vicky Ford:**

The UK is a global leader on action to tackle conflict-related sexual violence, committing £50m since the launch of the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative in 2012. This includes providing £2.7m to the Global Survivors Fund since it was established in 2019. In November 2021, the Foreign Secretary announced that she is determined to strengthen the global response to conflict-related sexual violence and build a new consensus to prevent these atrocities. We will host a conference in November to secure commitments from partners and drive coordinated action on this issue.

## ■ Development Aid: Climate Change

**Wendy Chamberlain:**

[\[22545\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will publish details of the position of the Climate Finance Delivery Plan as of 21 June 2022; what estimate she has made of when the goal of \$100 billion will be reached; through what means that goal will be reached; and what plans the Government has relating to a post-2025 target.

**Vicky Ford:**

The UK COP Presidency played a pivotal role in securing ambitious new climate finance commitments at COP26 from 95% of developed countries, with some doubling or even quadrupling their previous pledges. At the COP President's request these commitments were compiled in the \$100 billion Delivery Plan and supporting analysis from the OECD, launched in Glasgow. This Plan shows with good confidence that the goal will be met by 2023. The UK in our Presidency year continues to champion delivery of these commitments among climate finance providers. At the request of the UK COP Presidency, Canada and Germany will be leading on a progress report to the \$100 billion Delivery Plan, with a focus on progress against its 10 actions. It will include further details on how adaptation finance will be scaled up to meet the Glasgow Climate Pact commitment to double adaptation finance by 2025.

As agreed at COP26, Parties have now initiated their deliberations on the new collective quantified goal on climate finance, which will be determined in 2024 and replace the current \$100 billion target from 2025 onwards. This will create space for Parties to move beyond the \$100 billion and have a serious and inclusive discussion about how the levels of finance to deliver on Paris can be mobilised, ensuring a legacy for the work the UK Presidency has undertaken on both public and private finance for years to come.

## ■ Eastern Europe: Diplomatic Relations

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

[\[20229\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what diplomatic steps her Department is taking to strengthen the UK's (a) security and (b) economic relationship with (i) Latvia, (ii) Estonia and (iii) Lithuania.

**James Cleverly:**

The UK has close security and economic relations with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Together we are deterring Russia, supporting Ukraine and deepening our economic ties, for example, in the technology and digital sectors. As recently as 06 June the PM met the Estonian PM and the Foreign Secretary regularly engages with her Baltic counterparts on these matters. We work closely in the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) and in NATO. The UK has now signed declarations of cooperation with each of the Baltic States which will strengthen our collaboration.

## ■ Ecuador: Demonstrations

**Fabian Hamilton:** [\[22351\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions she has had with her Ecuadorian counterpart on the indigenous-led protests against the administration of the president of that country, Guillermo Lasso.

**Vicky Ford:**

We are carefully monitoring political protests currently taking place in Ecuador, including their potential impact on the safety of British Nationals. Our Embassy is in close contact with the Ecuadorean authorities, including the Ecuadorean Foreign Minister. The British Embassy in Quito is providing support to a small number of affected British Nationals across Ecuador, and we will continue to update the UK's travel advice for Ecuador as necessary.

The UK is clear that law and order must be upheld and that a peaceful resolution to the protests needs to be found. On 21st June we signed a joint statement with other nations represented in Ecuador calling for peace and dialogue by both sides.

## ■ Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Correspondence

**Jessica Morden:** [\[22378\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many new enquiries her Department's MP Urgent Enquiries inbox handled in each month in from January 2021 to May 2022; what steps her Department is taking to manage the (a) performance and (b) case management of those teams; what steps she is taking to oversee the performance of the Urgent Enquiry inbox; and if she will make a statement.

**Amanda Milling:**

The FCDO does not have a specific MP Urgent Enquiries inbox. All MPs use the FCDO correspondence mailbox which is monitored during working hours. MPs can also refer urgent issues via the MP hotline.

Between January 2021 and May 2022 the FCDO correspondence mailbox handled 18,435 pieces of MPs' correspondence. This figure does not include all correspondence about the Afghanistan crisis, given the exceptionally high volume received over a short period last year. MPs' correspondence on Afghanistan received by 12 September 2021 was not recorded on central systems. The data below reflects MPs' correspondence received after 12 September.

The FCDO correspondence mailbox is managed internally through a robust performance system working to Cabinet Office guidance on timeliness. All correspondence is normally handled through our case management system.

MONTH	NO. OF MP CORRESPONDENCE
Jan 2021	762
Feb 2021	1245

MONTH	NO. OF MP CORRESPONDENCE
Mar 2021	1261
Apr 2021	943
May 2021	1310
Jun 2021	1061
Jul 2021	688
Aug 2021	2102
Sept 2021	1869
Oct 2021	1120
Nov 2021	1071
Dec 2021	758
Jan 2022	637
Feb 2022	821
Mar 2022	1244
Apr 2022	724
May 2022	819

## ■ North Korea: Nuclear Weapons

**Sir Mark Hendrick:**

**[20213]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions she has had with international counterparts regarding North Korea and that country's potential preparations to carry out a nuclear weapons test.

**Amanda Milling:**

The UK is deeply concerned by reports that the DPRK may be planning to conduct a nuclear test, its first since 2017. We are working closely with our allies and partners to strongly urge the North Korean regime to return to talks and take credible steps towards denuclearisation. The Foreign Secretary discussed DPRK with her G7 counterparts on 13 May. I have raised concerns about DPRK testing with countries in the region, including with Mongolia, the Republic of Korea and China. Most recently, I raised DPRK with the Chinese Ambassador on 16 June. The UK has also made our concerns about the DPRK's increased ballistic missile testing clear in the UN Security Council and the General Assembly.



## ■ Russia: Sanctions

**Carol Monaghan:** [\[23325\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will make an assessment of the potential steps that can be taken in order to ensure that people who are not subject to the sanctions on Russia are not unduly impacted because of a similarity in name to sanctioned individuals.

**James Cleverly:**

The UK Government publishes the UK Sanctions List, which provides details of those designated under regulations made under the Sanctions Act. The list also details which sanctions measures apply to these persons and in the case of UK designations, provides a statement of reasons for the designation. HM Treasury's Office for Financial Sanctions Implementation provides a consolidated list of persons and organisations under financial sanctions, including those under the Sanctions Act and other UK legislation. Both lists include additional identifying details, where this information is available, to assist with the identification of a Designated Person. This includes date of birth, nationalities, addresses, and any name variations or aliases.

## ■ Sri Lanka: Development Aid

**Dr Matthew Offord:** [\[21170\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what aid programmes have been designated to increase food production in Sri Lanka.

**Vicky Ford:**

The UK is closely monitoring the political, economic, and security situation in Sri Lanka, particularly as it relates to food insecurity and livelihoods. We are working to support the UN and its agencies in their coordinated response based on the UN's recent joint Humanitarian Needs and Priorities (HNP) Plan, launched on 9 June. This called for USD 47.2 million to provide life-saving assistance to 1.7 million people who are most at risk and need immediate support. This includes USD 13.94 million to support food security and USD 16.8 million to support agriculture and livelihoods.

The UK contributes to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) Operation in Sri Lanka. The DREF is supporting the Sri Lanka Red Cross with an allocation of approximately CHF 691,002 in response to shortages and civil unrest. The World Bank, of which the UK is a major donor, has announced over USD 400 million of assistance to provide economic and health sector support.

## ■ Sri Lanka: Tamils

**Stephen Morgan:** [\[19666\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether her Department is taking steps to ensure that those responsible for human rights violations against the Tamil community in Sri Lanka are brought to justice in the International Criminal Court.



**Vicky Ford:**

Sri Lanka is a human rights priority country for the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. Our assessment is that an International Criminal Court (ICC) referral would not have the required support from members of the UN Security Council. It would not advance the cause of accountability for an ICC referral to fail to win Security Council support or to be vetoed.

We, alongside our partners in the Core Group on Sri Lanka, have led international efforts over many years to promote accountability, reconciliation and human rights in Sri Lanka. On 23 March 2021 the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) adopted resolution 46/1, which provides a continued framework for international engagement on human rights. It calls on the government of Sri Lanka to make progress on human rights and stresses the importance of a comprehensive accountability process for all violations and abuses committed in Sri Lanka. The Minister of State for South Asia, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, visited Sri Lanka in January 2022. He travelled to the North and East as well as Colombo and met a range of civil society groups, including Tamil representatives, to discuss human rights. The Minister also urged the Government of Sri Lanka to take steps to deliver justice and accountability.

**■ Ukraine: Development Aid****Mr Tobias Ellwood:**[\[20230\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what diplomatic steps she is taking to help support preparations for the rebuilding of Ukraine.

**James Cleverly:**

The UK supports Ukraine's vision for rebuilding a sovereign, prosperous, democratic nation that is stronger than before Putin's invasion. The Government of Ukraine has established a National Recovery Council, which will develop its National Recovery Plan, to be announced at the Ukraine Recovery Conference in Lugano, Switzerland on 4-5 July. We are working with the Council to develop our support. We will be guided by Ukraine's priorities in harnessing the best of UK development, business and civil society capabilities in support of its recovery and reconstruction. The UK's total financial support for Ukraine so far totals \$3.6 billion, including military, humanitarian and fiscal support.

**HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE****■ Autism and Hyperactivity: Diagnosis****Mr Barry Sheerman:**[\[21089\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to help reduce the waiting list for individuals seeking to obtain a diagnosis for (a) autism and (b) ADHD.

**Gillian Keegan:**

In 2021/22 we invested £13 million to reduce autism diagnosis waiting times. This included £10.5 million to enable local systems to test different diagnostic pathways, explore ways to reduce waiting times and address backlogs caused by the pandemic. We invested £2.5 million to test and implement methods of reducing waiting times for children and young people, which will continue until March 2024. In addition, we are working with local authority children's social care, education services and charities to support neurodivergent children, including children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and their families, through the diagnostic process.

■ **Blood Tests: Halton**

**Derek Twigg:** [\[19572\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an estimate of the waiting time for patients requiring a blood test following a GP referral in Halton constituency in the latest period for which data is available.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The information is not collected in the format requested as data on waiting times for patients requiring a blood test following a general practitioner referral is not collected at constituency level.

■ **Breast Cancer: Bedfordshire**

**Rachel Hopkins:** [\[20334\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to reduce the waiting times to see a breast cancer specialist in (a) Luton South constituency, (b) Luton Borough Council area and (c) Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Clinical Commissioning Group.

**Edward Argar:**

Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Clinical Commissioning Group is working with local providers to amend the two week referral process to include further advice and guidance for breast pain to reduce unnecessary referrals. The breast service has been managing demand and capacity by providing additional sessions with existing staffing out of hours.

Additionally, the Bedford and Luton and Dunstable Hospitals have been awarded a share of the £160 million national accelerator initiative to introduce new technology to address backlogs and increase capacity for elective care. This will allow a further 36 patients to be treated each week at each hospital.

■ **Breast Cancer: Health Services**

**Kerry McCarthy:** [\[21123\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the (a) upcoming 10-year cancer plan for England and (b) long-term NHS workforce strategy, will include

specific steps to support the recruitment, training and educational needs of the breast imaging and diagnostic workforce.

**Maria Caulfield:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Richmond Park (Sarah Olney MP) on 20 June to Question [18007](#).

## ■ **Breast Cancer: Plastic Surgery**

**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:**

[\[17892\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much funding his Department has provided to help tackle waiting lists for breast reconstruction services since the start of the covid-19 outbreak.

**Caroline Nokes:**

[\[17923\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of (a) clinical commissioning groups and (b) integrated care systems that have (i) time limits, (ii) restrictions on balancing surgery, (iii) limits on the number of procedures and (iv) other local restrictions on breast reconstruction in place as of 14 June 2022.

**Maria Caulfield:**

Information on specific funding allocated for breast reconstruction services is not held in the format requested. However, to support the recovery of elective services, including breast reconstruction, we are providing more than £8 billion from 2022/23 to 2024/25, in addition to the £2 billion Elective Recovery Fund and £700 million Targeted Investment Fund made available in 2021/22.

No estimate has been made of the number of clinical commissioning groups and integrated care systems where local restrictions may be in place. The NHS Cancer Programme has reiterated that no local time limits should be applied to reconstructive surgery, particularly where reconstructive surgery has been delayed due to the pandemic. Cancer Alliances have been asked to ensure that wherever possible surgery with immediate breast reconstruction takes place and to seek opportunities to accelerate reconstruction for those women who have not yet undergone the procedure following previous breast surgery during the pandemic.

## ■ **Cancer: Medical Treatments**

**Damien Moore:**

[\[22507\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to (a) increase cancer treatment capacity and (b) reduce waiting times for that treatment.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The 'Delivery plan for tackling the COVID-19 backlog of elective care' states that by March 2023, the number of people waiting more than 62 days to start treatment from an urgent referral for cancer should return to pre-pandemic levels. The National

Health Service will ensure that 75% of patients who have been urgently referred by their general practitioner for suspected cancer will be diagnosed or have cancer ruled out within 28 days by March 2024.

The Department has committed an additional £8 billion from 2022/23 to 2024/25 for the recovery of elective services, including cancer treatments. This is in addition to the £2 billion Elective Recovery Fund and £700 million targeted Investment Fund made available to increase capacity and prioritise cancer services. The Department has also provided £20 million to Cancer Alliances to meet the needs of cancer patients.

## ■ Cancer: Radiotherapy

**Ian Paisley:** [\[16939\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he plans to take to increase radiotherapy cancer treatment (a) capacity and (b) access; what assessment he has made of the role of radiotherapy treatment services in (i) reducing waiting times and (ii) tackling the cancer treatment backlog; and if he will meet with leading radiotherapy professionals to discuss the backlog in cancer care and treatment.

**Maria Caulfield:**

In 2022/23, NHS England and NHS Improvement intend to undertake a capacity and demand review of external beam radiotherapy capacity, to support local systems to plan radiotherapy provision, including the replacement of equipment. NHS England and NHS Improvement have committed to review the payment arrangements for radiotherapy, to ensure that appropriate incentives are in place to encourage providers to increase access to new treatments and techniques and to upgrade and replace equipment.

New radiotherapy methods are being delivered to address current backlogs through targeted treatment in fewer hospital visits, minimising patient time in hospital. Radiotherapy activity is also included in the Elective Recovery Fund, which aims to support National Health Service providers increase capacity in elective services, including for cancer treatment.

On 18 May 2022, I met with the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Radiotherapy to discuss a range of issues, including the backlog in cancer care. The meeting included radiotherapy professionals.

## ■ Care Workers: Cost of Living

**Mr Toby Perkins:** [\[23272\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if his Department will take steps to (a) publish guidance and (b) bring forward legislative proposals to help tackle the rising costs for paid carers of attending home appointments.

**Gillian Keegan:**

We have no plans to bring forward legislative proposals. Under the Care Act 2014, local authorities have a duty to manage local care markets and should ensure that

fee levels are appropriate to provide the agreed quality of care, enable providers to effectively support care users and invest in staff development, innovation and improvement. The majority of care workers are employed by private sector providers who set their pay and terms and conditions, independent of central Government. Local authorities work with care providers to determine fee rates, which should take account of wage costs, based on local market conditions.

However, we have made an additional £3.7 billion available for councils for 2022/23, which includes £1 billion specifically for social care. In addition, we are committing £1.36 billion over three years to the Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund to support local authorities to move towards paying providers a fair cost of care. As a condition of receiving funding, local authorities will be required to submit an evidence-based cost of care exercise. This should accurately reflect local costs such as staff pay and travel time. We published guidance for the Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund to ensure greater consistency in understanding the local costs and risks to local markets.

**Mr Toby Perkins:**

[\[23273\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment his Department has made of the impact of rising fuel prices on carers who are required to attend home appointments.

**Gillian Keegan:**

No recent assessment has been made. The vast majority of care workers are employed by private sector providers which set terms and conditions independently of central Government. Local authorities work with care providers to determine fee rates, which should take account of employment costs, based on local market conditions. The Government continues to work closely with local authorities to understand the impact of emerging challenges, such as rising fuel costs.

## ■ Carers

**Yasmin Qureshi:**

[\[23252\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate his Department has made of the number of unpaid carers.

**Yasmin Qureshi:**

[\[23253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate his Department has made of the annual economic contribution of unpaid carers to the UK economy.

**Gillian Keegan:**

No specific estimate has been made. However, the 2011 Census reported that there were 6.5 million people of all ages providing unpaid care in the United Kingdom, of which 5.4 million were in England. The Office for National Statistics also estimated that the gross value added of unpaid care in the UK was £59.5 billion in 2016.

## ■ Cholesterol: Health Services

**Martyn Day:** [\[21238\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of trends in the level of (a) prevention, (b) diagnosis and (c) treatment of cholesterol; and whether he plans to address these issues in the forthcoming Health Disparities White Paper.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The Department is supporting CVDPREVENT, a new cardiovascular disease primary care audit in England. This national audit will measure trends in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of people with high cholesterol. Early analysis from the CVDPREVENT quality improvement tool shows no change in the percentage of patients in primary care in England with cardiovascular disease who were treated with cholesterol lowering drug therapy between March 2020 and September 2021. Further trends on cholesterol diagnosis and prevention will be available from 2023. The specific policy content of the health disparities white paper will be confirmed in due course.

## ■ Chronic Illnesses: Health Services

**Feryal Clark:** [\[21327\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what his planned timetable is for publishing the white paper on health disparities; and whether that white paper will include a focus on tackling regional variations in access to care, services and treatment for people with long-term health conditions.

**Maggie Throup:**

While the forthcoming health disparities white paper will review the factors which influence health disparities, the specific policy content and further details on the timings of publication will be available in due course.

## ■ Coronavirus: Vaccination

**Sir Christopher Chope:** [\[14410\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the Government has a target for the proportion of children aged 5-15 years whom it wishes to be vaccinated against covid-19; and if he will publish a cost benefit analysis of Government policy in this area.

**Maggie Throup:**

*[Holding answer 13 June 2022]:* No formal target has been set. This non-urgent offer has been informed by the advice of the independent Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) on the approach to the COVID-19 vaccination of children. In its advice, the JCVI considered that a formal cost-benefit analysis was not feasible. The JCVI's statement on the vaccination of five to 11 year olds is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/jcvi-update-on-advice-for-covid-19-vaccination-of-children-aged-5-to-11/jcvi-statement-on-vaccination-of-children-aged-5-to-11-years-old>

The JCVI's statement of November 2021, which includes the provision of second doses for 12 to 15 year olds and first and second doses for five to 11 year olds is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-vaccine-response-to-the-omicron-variant-jcvi-advice/jcvi-advice-on-the-uk-vaccine-response-to-the-omicron-variant>

**Sir Christopher Chope:**

**[15173]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when the list of benefits and risks of vaccination against covid-19 published on the NHS website was last (a) reviewed and (b) updated; and what the evidential basis is for clotting problems being the only extremely rare risk identified.

**Maggie Throup:**

*[Holding answer 14 June 2022]:* The information on COVID-19 vaccines side effects and safety on the National Health Service website was last reviewed on 28 April 2022. This information is currently reviewed every six months or as new evidence emerges. The last update was made on 15 February 2022 to amend a link.

The Summary of Product Characteristics and patient information leaflets for COVID-19 vaccines list the risks associated with these products and where possible provides the frequency at which these events are expected to occur. This ranges from common - affecting more than in one in 10 people - to very rare - affecting less than one in 10,000. The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency's weekly COVID-19 vaccines Adverse Drug Reaction report estimates that the overall incidence rate of blood clots occurring with lowered platelets is 15.8 per million for first doses of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine, which is referred to as 'extremely rare'. There are other adverse reactions considered to be extremely rare which are associated with the AstraZeneca vaccine, including transverse myelitis, immune thrombocytopenia and capillary leak syndrome.

**Sir Christopher Chope:**

**[22338]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 14 June 2022 to Question 15172, how many doses of the Astra Zeneca covid-19 vaccine were administered to patients in England in (a) January (b) February and (c) March 2022; and how many doses of that vaccine the NHS has in stock as of 21 June 2022.

**Maggie Throup:**

Data on the number of doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine administered in England is not held in the format requested. However, as of 8 June 2022, the Medicine and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency estimates that more than 49 million AstraZeneca vaccine doses had been administered in the United Kingdom since the COVID-19 vaccination programme began. We are unable to provide the information requested on stocks of the vaccine as this information is commercially sensitive.



**Alex Cunningham:**

[\[22426\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans his Department has to extend covid-19 vaccinations to children under five.

**Maggie Throup:**

There are currently no COVID-19 vaccines for children under the age of five years old currently approved for use in the United Kingdom. We will continue to monitor developments and if a vaccine is approved for use in the UK, we will seek the advice of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation.

## ■ Dental Services: Finance

**Feryal Clark:**

[\[18093\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what funding his Department will provide to support the proposed Centres of Dental Development.

**Maria Caulfield:**

Health Education England (HEE) published 'Advancing Dental Care Review' in September 2021. The Review introduced the concept of Centres for Dental Development to integrate dental education and training at all levels with service delivery models, particularly in localities where there is a shortage in provision of dental services. Working with NHS England and NHS Improvement, the creation of a Centre for Dental Development could provide a more timely and cost-effective solution than the creation of a new dental school.

HEE will work with the Department, NHS England and NHS Improvement and other stakeholders, including existing dental schools, to develop the concept of integrated Centres for Dental Development in areas in need of workforce development. HEE is working with regional commissioners where they have expressed interest in the scheme.

## ■ Disability: Children

**Lloyd Russell-Moyle:**

[\[21252\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure both parents are equally consulted when a disabled child's care is considered.

**Gillian Keegan:**

The NHS Constitution states that NHS services must reflect and should be co-ordinated for and tailored to the needs and preferences of patients, their families and carers. Patients, with their families and carers, where appropriate, will be involved in and consulted on all decisions about their care and treatment. The 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years: Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities', states that local authorities must ensure that children and their parents and young people are involved in discussions and decisions on individual support and about local provision. We are also proposing to introduce consistent standards, produced with children, young people and their



families, to ensure engagement in the decision-making process on the support received.

#### ■ **Disability: Respite Care**

**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:**

**[18917]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has guidance in place for families whose disabled relatives require a negative lateral flow test to access respite services but are unable to obtain the necessary testing sample due to the nature of their disability.

**Gillian Keegan:**

*[Holding answer 20 June 2022]:* The Department has published guidance on testing in adult social care settings, including respite services. Individuals accessing respite care through a care home should test before admission, to reduce the risk of bringing infection into the home and given the high-risk nature of these settings and vulnerabilities of residents. Based on public health advice, testing is not required if accessing care through other adult social care services, such as day care centres and domiciliary care.

For individuals who may be unable to test due to a disability, a risk assessment should be undertaken and a decision may determine whether it is in their best interests to be tested. In all instances, guidance on infection prevention and control measures should be followed in all adult social care services where individuals may access respite care to prevent transmission of COVID-19.

#### ■ **Domestic Abuse: Ethnic Groups**

**Feryal Clark:**

**[21329]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps the Government is taking to capture the lived experiences of Black and minority survivors of domestic abuse to inform health responses.

**Gillian Keegan:**

NHS England and NHS Improvement are collaborating with the Royal Colleges to create learning materials on domestic abuse, working with trusted peer advocacy services for culturally sensitive groups of victims and survivors, such as Karma Nirvana and Black Sisters. This is in addition to training for nurses and health visitors on domestic abuse and providing trauma care for patients, informed by representatives with lived experience. From March to June 2021, the Department sought views on women's health issues and women's experiences of the healthcare system in England through a call for evidence. The health impacts of violence against women and girls will be addressed within the forthcoming Women's Health Strategy, which we aim to publish in summer 2022.

## ■ Eating Disorders

**Zarah Sultana:** [\[21300\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of teaching on eating disorders in medical schools; and what steps his Department is taking to ensure doctors have the training, knowledge and skills required to identify and support people with an eating disorder.

**Gillian Keegan:**

*[Holding answer 23 June 2022]:* No specific assessment has been made. However, the Department has engaged with partners through the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman's Delivery Group, led by NHS England and NHS Improvement, to improve adult eating disorder services.

NHS England and NHS Improvement are working with Health Education England to develop and increase the specialist eating disorder workforce and improve the skills of staff in other health settings. This includes working with the General Medical Council to ensure eating disorders are included among outcome measures for newly qualified clinicians and with the Medical Schools Council to increase the coverage of eating disorders in undergraduate study. NHS England and NHS Improvement are also working with the Royal College of Psychiatrists to support the implementation of new guidance on medical emergencies in eating disorders to support healthcare professionals in a range of settings.

## ■ Eating Disorders: Hospital Beds

**Tim Loughton:** [\[16815\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many inpatient beds for patients with eating disorders were commissioned by the NHS in (a) NHS hospitals and (b) the independent sector in each of the last five years.

**Gillian Keegan:**

The information requested is not currently held in the format requested. While NHS England and NHS Improvement collect data on the number of inpatient beds commissioned for patients with eating disorders, this information has not been centrally validated.

## ■ Electronic Cigarettes

**Royston Smith:** [\[20272\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to make it his policy to recommend vaping as a substitute for smoking in the (a) Health Disparities White Paper or (b) Tobacco Control Plan for England.

**Maggie Throup:**

The Government's aim is to maximise the opportunities for smokers to switch to vaping whilst preventing non-smokers and young people from starting to vape. We

are considering the recommendations of the recent review led by Dr Javed Khan, which will inform the health disparities white paper and the Tobacco Control Plan.

**Andrew Lewer:** [\[21258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of trends in the take-up of vaping products since 2015.

**Maggie Throup:**

The Office for National Statistics' data shows that in England in 2020, 6.2% of those aged 16 years old and over or approximately 2.8 million people were current vape users, compared with 4.5% or 2 million users in 2015. In 2020, 17.4% of cigarette smokers were also current vape or dual users, compared with 14.3% in 2015 and 12% of ex-smokers were current vape users in 2020 compared with 8% in 2015. Approximately 1.1% of adults who had never smoked were current vape users in 2020, compared with 0.2% in 2015.

## ■ Endoscopy

**Jim Shannon:** [\[23744\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of using single use endoscopes in cases (a) of increased infection risk and (b) where reusable endoscopes are not readily available.

**Jim Shannon:** [\[23745\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if his Department will make an assessment of the impact of reprocessed endoscopes on level of risk for patients in critical care environments; and if he will make a statement.

**Jim Shannon:** [\[23746\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans his Department has to help ensure single-use endoscopes are available in critical care settings; and if he will make a statement.

**Edward Argar:**

During the pandemic, NHS England and NHS Improvement published a variety of guidance on the sterilisation and decontamination of reusable medical equipment and use of single-use equipment. The purchase and use of single-use equipment is determined by individual National Health Service trusts, which consider the facilities available, workforce, finances and the patient population to select the most appropriate medical equipment.

NHS England and NHS Improvement have reviewed the potential merits of single-use endoscopes and considered hospital acquired infections, patient safety and the prevalence of antibiotic resistant organisms in care environments. These discussions are ongoing to appropriately review all factors, including environmental sustainability and economic considerations. There are no plans to alter procedures in favour of using single-use endoscopes in any setting.

**■ Evusheld****Daisy Cooper:** [\[6923\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Answer of 20 April 2022 to Question 151279, on Evusheld, whether the UKHSA has reviewed studies published by the US Food and Drug Administration and European Medicines Agency on the effectiveness of Evusheld against the covid-19 omicron variant; and for what reason the UKHSA has decided to undertake duplicate studies on the effectiveness of that drug.

**Maggie Throup:**

The UK Health Security Agency has been commissioned by AstraZeneca to undertake specific testing on the efficacy of Evusheld and therefore has no plans to review external studies. UKHSA began the process of testing against the Omicron variant in March 2022. Following the completion of preliminary laboratory work, such testing lasts for approximately three to four weeks. The data gathered will be considered by expert clinical groups with other available information, which will inform any potential procurement decisions.

**■ Females: Health Services****Catherine West:** [\[23364\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when the strategy paper for the Women's Strategy for Health will be published.

**Maria Caulfield:**

We aim to publish the Women's Health Strategy for England in summer 2022.

**■ Food: Advertising****Yasmin Qureshi:** [\[15218\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to his Department's 14 May announcement entitled Government delays restrictions on multibuy deals and advertising on TV and online, whether (a) an impact assessment and (b) a public consultation will be conducted for the statutory instruments necessary to facilitate the delays to these policies, and if he will make a statement.

**Yasmin Qureshi:** [\[15219\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to his Department's announcement of 14 May 2022, Government delays restrictions on multibuy deals and advertising on TV and online, whether his Department plans to conduct (a) an impact assessment and (b) a public consultation for the statutory instrument required to confirm the delay to those policies; and if he will make a statement.

**Maggie Throup:**

*[Holding answer 15 June 2022]:* We will provide further information on how the delay to the legislation will be implemented in due course.

**Ben Bradley:**

[\[22506\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to his Department's press release, Government delays restrictions on multibuy deals and advertising on TV and online, published on 14 May 2022, when his Department plans to bring forward legislative proposals to delay the implementation of restrictions on the advertising of foods that are high in fat, sugar and salt.

**Maggie Throup:**

We will provide further information on how the delay to the legislation will be implemented in due course.

## ■ General Practitioners: Income

**Philip Davies:**

[\[15216\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the highest ten incomes for GP practices were in each of the last 5 years for which figures are available.

**Maria Caulfield:**

This information is not held in the format requested. However, NHS Digital publishes an annual summary of National Health Service payments to general practices. These payments relate to all categories of funding paid to general practices, such as payments for direct patient care, information technology, premises, waste disposal and dispensing. The data constitutes the payments made to the practice or the invoices processed during the reporting period. It excludes additional payments which may be provided by local authorities, accruals, prepayments, other accounting adjustments and payments for non-contractual work.

Tables showing NHS payments made to the practices with the highest ten incomes in each year from 2016/17 to 2020/21 is attached. The data for 2020/21 is shown in two tables, firstly excluding payments for COVID-19 vaccinations, support and expansion and the second including such payments.

### Attachments:

1. Table [FORMATTED TABLE FOR MINISTERIAL CLEARANCE 2022.06.14 PQ15216 table - final.docx]

## ■ Genito-urinary Medicine: Finance

**Andrew Gwynne:**

[\[21127\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 9 June 2022 to Question 13074, what assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of the local government public health grant to cover the costs of implementation of the upcoming sexual and reproductive health strategy.

**Maggie Throup:**

*[Holding answer 23 June 2022]:* We aim to publish an action plan to improve sexual and reproductive health (SRH) outcomes later this year, to complement the HIV Action Plan. We will consider actions to improve SRH health outcomes and

strengthen collaboration to deliver services which meet the needs of the population. We are also considering the availability of existing funding and how this can be utilised to deliver on priority actions, including funding made available through the Public Health Grant. The 2021 Spending Review confirmed that the Public Health Grant will increase in each of the next three years.

## ■ Genito-urinary Medicine: Local Government

**Feryal Clark:** [\[21324\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he plans to take to support local councils to implement the upcoming sexual and reproductive health strategy.

**Feryal Clark:** [\[21325\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the role of (a) NHS England, (b) integrated care systems and (c) NHS primary care services will be in the implementation of the upcoming sexual and reproductive health strategy.

**Feryal Clark:** [\[21326\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he plans to take to support commissioners in developing local responses to the forthcoming sexual and reproductive health strategy; and whether new funding will be provided as part of that support.

**Maggie Throup:**

We will set out plans to improve outcomes in sexual and reproductive health in an action plan later this year, which will complement the HIV Action Plan published in December 2021. It aims to strengthen collaboration across the system to deliver sexual and reproductive health services which meet the needs of the population. We continue to engage with stakeholders, including local authorities and commissioners, NHS England and NHS Improvement and integrated care systems in the development of the plan.

We have committed £20 million over the next three years to support the expansion of opt-out HIV testing in emergency departments in local authority areas with the highest prevalence. We have also invested £33 million in pre-exposure prophylaxis in the last two years. The Government has mandated local authorities to commission comprehensive open access sexual and reproductive health services through the Public Health Grant. The 2021 Spending Review confirmed that the Public Health Grant will increase in each of the next three years.

## ■ Health Professions: Domestic Abuse

**Feryal Clark:** [\[21330\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that medical professionals are adequately trained on supporting survivors of domestic abuse.

**Gillian Keegan:**

NHS England and NHS Improvement have written to medical professionals and staff to reiterate that there are educational resources on domestic abuse, sexual assault and abuse and on their duties in this area. A campaign to raise awareness of sexual assault referral centres was supported by communications and training, which was informed by those with lived experience. NHS England and NHS Improvement also announced the creation of two new clinical lead roles for domestic violence and sexual assault, to supplement existing support in the National Health Service and integrated care systems.

**Health Professions: Refugees****Rachael Maskell:**[\[23335\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he is taking steps to ensure that refugees who have suitable medical qualifications are provided with the opportunity to apply for vacancies in their medical profession.

**Edward Argar:**

Refugees with medical qualifications wishing to practise medicine in the United Kingdom must be registered by the General Medical Council (GMC). The Medical Support Workers (MSW) programme is designed for medically qualified doctors resident in the UK who do not have a current registration with the GMC. The MSW post offers an opportunity to use clinical skills in a supervised placement and gain experience working in the National Health Service. The MSW has been used to support for doctors from a refugee and displaced background.

**Health Professions: Regulation****Feryal Clark:**[\[21317\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when his Department plans to respond to the consultation entitled Regulating healthcare professionals, protecting the public; and whether that response will include detail on next steps for reform of regulators other than the General Medical Council.

**Edward Argar:**

Officials have been analysing the responses to the consultation and working with stakeholders on reforming the legal framework for the regulation of healthcare professionals in the United Kingdom. We will publish the response to the consultation in due course, which will set out further details, including the timing and sequencing of these reforms.

**Health Professions: Training****Alex Sobel:**[\[20305\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department is taking steps to ensure that training received by psychologists and NHS staff is (a) relevant to mental health issues and (b) represents a range of therapies.



**Gillian Keegan:**

The NHS Long Term Plan requires 27,000 additional mental health roles to be deployed in health and care services. Additional training has been commissioned to support this expansion and to raise awareness of mental health issues and the interventions required amongst the workforce. Training in a range of therapies is also supported by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's latest evidence and guidance.

■ **Health Services****Alex Norris:**[\[23391\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, who will be responsible for implementing the recommendations of General Sir Gordon Messenger's health and social care review entitled, Leadership for a collaborative and inclusive future, published in June 2022; what the timetable for implementation is; and what financial and other resources will be available for implementation.

**Edward Argar:**

An implementation plan will be developed through discussions with stakeholders in health and care, including a timetable for delivery. Appropriate governance and accountability arrangements will be established for a review implementation office, with a direct mandate from the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care. This will also include annual priorities and resourcing requirements, which will be met from existing budgets.

■ **Health Services: Infrastructure****Tom Hunt:**[\[22557\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential impact of the availability of steel on the health infrastructure plan; and what steps he is taking to tackle any issues arising from the availability of steel.

**Edward Argar:**

No specific assessment has been made. The Department is aware of pressures on the supply chain related to rising inflation and market capacity constraints and keeps this under review.

■ **Hormone Replacement Therapy****Grahame Morris:**[\[23281\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, for what reason Estradot HRT patches are available through private providers but not on NHS prescriptions.

**Maria Caulfield:**

We understand that all strengths of estradot hormone replacement therapy patches are currently available via National Health Service prescriptions, where clinically appropriate.



## ■ Hormone Replacement Therapy: Shortages

**Grahame Morris:** [\[23278\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to help ensure women experiencing menopausal symptoms do not have to change HRT products due to supply issues.

**Grahame Morris:** [\[23279\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the potential effect of using alternative HRT preparations on women experiencing menopausal symptoms, in the context of the shortage of certain HRT treatments.

**Maria Caulfield:**

While most hormone replacement therapy medicines (HRT) are available, we have appointed the Director General of the Vaccine Taskforce to lead a HRT taskforce to support the supply chain. Suppliers have secured additional stock of HRT products which are experiencing shortages and deliveries of further items have been expedited. We have issued Serious Shortage Protocols (SSPs) to limit dispensing to three months' supply to maintain the current distribution levels and allow alternative products to be dispensed, as necessary.

The Department sought clinical advice for the SSPs from experts, including clinicians from the British Menopause Society and the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists in devising the current arrangements. The substituted products included in the SSPs are licensed medicines which are considered clinically appropriate by clinicians, such as transdermal patches.

**Grahame Morris:** [\[23280\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make it his policy to reimburse women who are eligible for free prescriptions and who purchase hormone replacement therapy from private providers when there has been insufficient availability of those products through the NHS.

**Maria Caulfield:**

We have no plans to do so, as the Department has no responsibility for the cost of private prescriptions. There are over 70 hormone replacement therapy (HRT) products available in the United Kingdom and most remain in good supply. While a range of factors, including an increase in demand, has led to supply issues with a limited number of products, alternatives to those experiencing supply issues are available. General practitioners and pharmacist can advise those who are concerned about access to HRT products before seeking a private prescription.

## ■ Hospitals: Devon

**Daisy Cooper:** [\[14618\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has plans to visit (a) Derriford Hospital in Plymouth, (b) Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital, (c) North Devon District Hospital and (d) Torbay District Hospital.

**Edward Argar:**

*[Holding answer 13 June 2022]:* Ministers regularly consider visits to health and care settings across the country. Any plans to visit specific locations will be notified to hon. Members in advance.

■ **In-FACT****Feryal Clark:** [\[21315\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to have a further meeting with INFACT.

**Maria Caulfield:**

On 16 May 2022, I met with the founders of the Independent Fetal Anti-Convulsant Trust (INFACT) to discuss their experiences with sodium valproate and looking after children diagnosed with Fetal Valproate Syndrome.

We are currently considering the issues raised and will update Parliament in due course. Following this update, we will look to arrange a further meeting with INFACT.

■ **Learning Disability: Loneliness****Kim Leadbeater:** [\[22610\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has plans to tackle loneliness and isolation experienced by people with learning disabilities.

**Kim Leadbeater:** [\[22611\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure local authorities address isolation and loneliness among people with a learning disability.

**Marsha De Cordova:** [\[23401\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department is taking steps to help ensure that local authorities are tackling isolation and loneliness among people with a learning disability by re-opening day services.

**Gillian Keegan:**

During the pandemic we supported local councils and providers to continue to offer safe services. As social distancing measures have relaxed, the Department continues to work with local councils to monitor capacity and explore how the resources of day services and social activity can be used, including for people with a learning disability. In addition, we recently engaged with local authorities to identify the challenges in delivering day services for local communities and understand their long-term strategy to deliver these services.

During the pandemic, more than £34 million of the £750 million provided to the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector was allocated to measures to reduce loneliness. In addition, £1.6 million was provided to charities supporting

autistic people and people with a learning disability for activities such as virtual peer support and helpline capacity.

## ■ Liver Diseases

**Rachel Hopkins:** [\[22607\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps his Department has taken to help reduce stigma in respect of liver disease.

**Rachel Hopkins:** [\[22608\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to reduce liver disease mortality rates in areas of social deprivation.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The National Health Service 'Better Health' campaign aims to promote greater awareness of liver disease and its main causes. The former Public Health England published 'Better care for people with co-occurring mental health and alcohol/drug use conditions: A guide for commissioners and service providers' which addresses potential issues of stigma and mistrust and other barriers preventing patients from accessing treatment.

From 1 April 2022, NHS England has introduced a Commissioning for Quality and Innovation measure to incentivise providers to improve earlier detection of liver disease for alcohol dependent in-patients. In addition, £27 million has been invested to establish specialist alcohol care teams in the 25% of hospitals with the highest rates of alcohol dependence-related admissions.

## ■ Liver Diseases: Screening

**Rachel Hopkins:** [\[22609\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of introducing fibroscans in primary care to improve early diagnosis of liver disease.

**Maria Caulfield:**

While NHS England has undertaken some preliminary work to assess the introduction of fibroscan in primary care through community diagnostic centres, this is currently at a scoping stage.

## ■ Long Covid: Children

**Stephen Morgan:** [\[19672\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the proportion of children who suffer from long covid who are regarded as clinically vulnerable.

**Maria Caulfield:**

No estimate has been made as this information is not collected centrally.

**Members: Correspondence****Robert Largan:** [19023]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to respond to the correspondence of 31 January 2022 from the hon. Member for High Peak, reference RL32316.

**Edward Argar:**

We replied to the hon. Member on 24 June 2022.

**Mental Health Services: Children****Mr Barry Sheerman:** [21088]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of school age children in Huddersfield constituency who are awaiting a Child and adolescent mental health services assessment.

**Mr Barry Sheerman:** [21091]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish the data his Department holds on which regions have the (a) shortest and (b) longest average waiting list for individuals seeking a Child and adolescent mental health services assessment.

**Gillian Keegan:**

No specific estimate has been made and information on average waiting times is not held in the format requested, as there are currently no overall waiting time standards. However, waiting times data for specific mental health services is collected where a waiting time standard is in place. Data on access to psychological therapies, early intervention in psychosis and children and young people eating disorders is available at the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/nhs-mental-health-dashboard/>

In February 2022, NHS England and NHS Improvement published the outcome of the consultation on five new access and waiting time standards for mental health services. We are now working with NHS England and NHS Improvement on the next steps.

**Mental Health Services: Young People****Paula Barker:** [22589]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to increase provision of mental health services for young people.

**Gillian Keegan:**

We are investing at least £2.3 billion a year by 2023/24 to support an additional 345,000 children and young people to access National Health Service-funded mental health services. There are currently 287 mental health support teams supporting children experiencing anxiety, depression and other common mental health issues in approximately 4,700 schools and colleges. This will increase to over 500 teams,

providing services to approximately 35% of pupils by 2023/24. We have also launched a call for evidence to support the development of a new 10-year cross-Government plan for mental health and wellbeing in England, including children and young people's mental health.

#### ■ **Monkeypox: Vaccination**

**Lloyd Russell-Moyle:**

[\[18971\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 6 June 2022 to Question 6877 on Monkeypox: Vaccination, how many doses of (a) Imvanex and (b) other vaccines for monkeypox does the Government have as of 15 June 2022.

**Maggie Throup:**

*[Holding answer 22 June 2022]:* The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) has procured over 20,000 doses of smallpox vaccine Imvanex. As of 15 June, Imvanex is the only vaccine for monkeypox which has been procured.

#### ■ **NHS Trusts: Waiting Lists**

**Justin Madders:**

[\[22456\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent discussions he has had with NHS Trusts on waiting lists; and what support the Government has made available to help reduce waiting lists.

**Edward Argar:**

With NHS England and NHS Improvement, we have regular discussions with National Health Service trusts to discuss waiting lists for planned treatment. These discussions include assessing current progress in tackling backlogs, offering support and sharing advice to implement the 'Delivery plan for tackling the COVID-19 backlog of elective care'.

We have committed more than £8 billion over the next three years to increase elective activity and address waiting times for treatment. This is in addition to the £2 billion Elective Recovery Fund and £700 million Targeted Investment Fund.

#### ■ **NHS: Cornwall and Isles of Scilly**

**Derek Thomas:**

[\[18968\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the ability of NHS services in (a) Cornwall and (b) Scilly to recruit staff; and if he will make it his policy to introduce a salary supplement for NHS staff in these areas.

**Edward Argar:**

No formal assessment has been made. Local National Health Service trusts are responsible for managing staffing levels and recruiting the appropriate number of health professionals required to meet local service need. However, the local NHS and

Cornwall Council plan to launch a campaign in the autumn to encourage those aged 25 years old and under to work in the care sector, in addition to providing health and care staff with support for housing needs. Trusts have the flexibility to pay Recruitment and Retention Premia where there are challenges recruiting or retaining staff in specific roles. A Recruitment and Retention Premium is a supplementary payment which can be made up to a maximum of 30% of basic salary.

■ **NHS: Dentistry**

**Yasmin Qureshi:** [\[18862\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many registered NHS dentists there were in (a) 2010 and (b) 2022.

**Maria Caulfield:**

*[Holding answer 20 June 2022]:* In 2010/11, there were 22,799 dentists performing National Health Service activity. The data requested for 2022 is not yet held centrally.

■ **NHS: Long Covid**

**Mick Whitley:** [\[21269\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate his Department has made of the number of frontline NHS workers who have been diagnosed with long covid.

**Maria Caulfield:**

No specific estimate has been made. While the Office for National Statistics has estimated the proportion of people self-reporting the long term effects of COVID-19 by sector, including for healthcare, this does not specifically record front-line National Health Service staff.

■ **NHS: Staff**

**Feryal Clark:** [\[19734\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if his Department will make an assessment together with NHS England and Health Education England of the potential merits of instigating the publication of regular independent assessments of the level of healthcare staff needed to meet the demand on the healthcare system.

**Edward Argar:**

We have no specific plans to do so. However, section 41 of the Health and Care Act 2022 makes provision for increased transparency and accountability in the workforce planning process. In January 2022, the Department commissioned NHS England and NHS Improvement to develop a long-term workforce plan, including supply and demand projections. We intend to engage with a range of stakeholders in developing the plan and its conclusions will be available in due course.

## ■ Paramedical Staff: Prescriptions

**Mr Richard Holden:**

[\[22580\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if his Department will make an assessment of the potential merits of enabling paramedics with prescription training, including paramedic practitioners based in GP surgeries, to prescribe a limited number of drugs to alleviate pressure on the NHS.

**Edward Argar:**

There are existing systems in place to allow advanced paramedics to become independent prescribers. To become an independent prescriber, a paramedic must have a minimum of three years' patient-oriented experience and successfully completed an independent prescribing programme. Independent prescriber paramedics can prescribe any licensed medicine, except controlled drugs, for any condition within their competence, including in general practice.

## ■ Pharmacy: Equality

**Tim Farron:**

[\[22388\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on the potential impact of community pharmacies on equality of healthcare outcomes in England.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework 2019/24 sets out the role of community pharmacy in improving public health and prevention. All community pharmacies are now Healthy Living Pharmacies, providing healthy living advice and health promotion locally.

While we have had no specific discussions, community pharmacies are approximately two to three times more common in areas of deprivation. National prevention services, such as blood pressure checks, smoking cessation services following hospital discharge, treatment and advice for minor illnesses and medication support have been commissioned from community pharmacy in the last three years to improve health outcomes. Community pharmacies can be commissioned locally to deliver a range of health and prevention services, such as COVID-19 vaccinations.

## ■ Pharmacy: Regional Planning and Development

**Tim Farron:**

[\[22387\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what role he is planning for community pharmacies in delivering the Government's levelling up commitments.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework 2019/24 sets out the role of community pharmacy in improving public health and prevention. All community pharmacies are now Healthy Living Pharmacies, providing healthy living advice and health promotion locally.



While we have had no specific discussions, community pharmacies are approximately two to three times more common in areas of deprivation. National prevention services, such as blood pressure checks, smoking cessation services following hospital discharge, treatment and advice for minor illnesses and medication support have been commissioned from community pharmacy in the last three years to improve health outcomes. Community pharmacies can be commissioned locally to deliver a range of health and prevention services, such as COVID-19 vaccinations.

### ■ Physician Associates: Training

**Jessica Morden:**

[\[23239\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to ensure that access to accredited European Trauma Courses is available to practising physician associates for free.

**Edward Argar:**

The NHS Standard Contract states that providers of National Health Service-funded services must ensure all staff have the appropriate qualifications, experience, skills and competencies to perform the duties required. As such, continuous professional development, such as access to accredited European Trauma Courses for physician associates, is a matter for individual employers.

### ■ Primary Health Care: Staff

**Feryal Clark:**

[\[21331\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking steps to (a) ensure that there is a sufficient workforce in primary care and (b) promote the wellbeing of GPs and their staff, including ensuring they have adequate opportunities to rest in order to reduce the risk of burnout.

**Maria Caulfield:**

We are working with NHS England and NHS Improvement, Health Education England and the profession to increase the general practice workforce in England. In March 2022, there were an additional 1,462 full-time equivalent doctors in general practice, compared to March 2019. Since 2019, over 18,000 additional staff have been recruited into Primary Care Networks and practices in a range of roles, such as clinical pharmacists. In 2021/22, 4,000 trainees accepted a place for general practitioner (GP) training – an increase from 2,671 in 2014. GP trainees support fully qualified GPs, which can ease workloads and increase capacity.

We are also working with the National Health Service and the profession to support GPs and improve their working environment. In collaboration with the Royal College of General Practitioners, NHS England and Improvement have launched the 'Looking after you too' and 'Looking after your team' coaching support services. These provide access to mental health services to all primary care workers, managers and leaders employed or contracted to deliver services on behalf of the NHS. This in addition to NHS Practitioner Health, a service for doctors and dentists in England with mental



illness and addiction problems, who are working or planning to return to clinical practice.

## ■ **Suicide: Travellers**

**Cat Smith:**

[\[21221\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the Government's suicide prevention strategy considers the needs of the gypsy, Roma and traveller communities.

**Gillian Keegan:**

While the 2012 Suicide Prevention Strategy does not make specific reference to the the gypsy, traveller and Roma (GTR) communities, the 'Preventing suicide in England: Fifth progress report of the cross-government outcomes strategy to save lives' refers to the needs of these communities. This encourages local areas to reflect the specific requirements of the population in suicide prevention plans, including GTR communities where relevant.

The Department and NHS England and NHS Improvement also encourage local services and organisations to engage with the voluntary sector on best practice in supporting specific communities. We will publish a new, long-term plan for suicide prevention later this year.

## ■ **Surgical Mesh Implants**

**Feryal Clark:**

[\[21319\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department plans to create a database for people who have permanently implanted medical devices, including details on the type of device.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The Independent Medicines and Medical Devices Safety Review recommended that "a central patient-identifiable database should be created by collecting key details of the implantation of all devices at the time of the operation. This can then be linked to specifically created registers to research and audit the outcomes both in terms of the device safety and patient reported outcomes measures". The Government accepted this recommendation.

In 2021/22, we worked with partners in the healthcare system to scope, test and cost methods of achieving a United Kingdom-wide medical device information system. This explored establishing national systems, expanding clinical registries and approaches to electronically tracking implanted medical devices at the point of care. We aim to publish an update on the implementation of the Review's recommendations, including work on a medical device information system, in summer 2022.

**Feryal Clark:**

[\[21320\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of a retrospective audit of mesh implants to everyone who had one implanted in 2010 as called for in the Cumberlege Review.

**Maria Caulfield:**

We accepted the Independent Medicines and Medical Devices Safety Review's recommendation to undertake a selective retrospective audit of a defined cohort of women who have undergone mesh procedures. NHS Digital is currently completing an audit of all pelvic floor surgery completed in 2010, to generate a historical baseline of outcomes by procedure type and support further research and analysis. We aim to publish the results of the audit later this year.

## ■ Telephone Systems: Health Hazards

**Mr Laurence Robertson:**

[\[22340\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the potential health impact of the PSTN switch-off on people suffering from Electro-Hypersensitivity; and if he will make a statement.

**Maggie Throup:**

No specific assessment has been made. The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) advises that international guidelines on limiting exposure to electromagnetic fields should be complied with to ensure there are no consequences for public health. Research has been conducted to investigate whether certain people are particularly sensitive to exposures to electromagnetic fields from mobile phones, leading to symptoms which affect their health.

The UKHSA advises that electromagnetic fields below recommended guideline levels do not cause symptoms and cannot be detected by individuals, even those who consider themselves more susceptible to electromagnetic fields. This advice is based on reviews of scientific evidence, including a review undertaken by the independent expert Advisory Group on Non-ionising Radiation published in 2012. The UKHSA will continue to monitor the evidence as it emerges.

## ■ Tobacco

**Royston Smith:**

[\[20273\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans the Government has to conduct pre-implementation consultation with relevant stakeholders on the (a) Health Disparities White Paper and (b) new Tobacco Control Plan for England.

**Maggie Throup:**

We will publish the health disparities white paper later this year and the specific content will be confirmed in due course. We will undertake pre-implementation engagement or consultations where appropriate. In advance of the Tobacco Control Plan, the Government is considering the recommendations of the recent review led

by Dr Javed Khan. This includes consideration of how policies will be implemented, including through pre-implementation consultations.

■ **Travel: Cross Border Cooperation**

**Neale Hanvey:** [\[20318\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will introduce a set of performance measures to track the effectiveness of the specific measures deployed to manage cross border travel during the covid-19 pandemic.

**Neale Hanvey:** [\[20325\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to track the cost of implementing the cross-border travel measures in response to covid-19.

**Maggie Throup:**

The Government reviewed scientific advice and evidence and lessons learned from the border response to adapt the approach and target measures where needed. The UK Health Security Agency is currently developing border contingency measures, which could be implemented should a variant of concern emerge. As part of this contingency planning, Departments are considering which data will be required to ensure the response can be monitored and adapted as required. The costs of implementing health measures at the border were considered at Departmental level and were monitored through standard budget management and governance procedures.

■ **Travel: Quarantine**

**Neale Hanvey:** [\[20322\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the amount fraudulently claimed in refunds by people who stayed in the managed quarantine service.

**Maggie Throup:**

An estimated £18 million has been fraudulently claimed in refunds through the Managed Quarantine Service. All appropriate debts have been passed to the Department's debt recovery partner, Qualco, for collection.

■ **Vaccine Damage Payment Scheme**

**Sir Christopher Chope:** [\[22335\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many claims for payments under the Vaccine Damage Payment Scheme were (a) assessed and (b) concluded by the Government contractor Crawford and Company in the weeks beginning (i) 6 June and (i) 13 June 2022.

**Maggie Throup:**

Following the commencement of medical assessments in the week of 23 May 2022, 22 claims were sent for assessment in the week commencing 6 June, and 20 claims

were sent in the week commencing 13 June. We are unable to provide the information in the format requested for claims concluded, as this could lead to the identification of individuals. However, as of 22 June 2022, nine claims have been concluded.

■ **Voluntary Scheme for Branded Medicines Pricing and Access**

**Anne Marie Morris:**

**[22439]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the five highest health gain categories are in respect of the Voluntary scheme for branded medicines pricing and access, published in December 2018.

**Edward Argar:**

The Voluntary Scheme for Branded Medicines Pricing and Access is an agreement between the Department, NHS England, the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry and manufacturers or suppliers of branded health service medicines which have joined the Scheme. The Voluntary Scheme includes an objective of reaching the upper quartile of uptake, in relation to comparator countries, for the five highest health gain categories during the first half of the Voluntary Scheme. The five categories of medicines identified by NHS England to deliver high health gain are:

- Cystic fibrosis (CFTR modulators, ivacaftor, lumacaftor/ ivacaftor and tezacaftor/ ivacaftor);
- Severe asthma (biologics);
- Smoking cessation with varenicline;
- Atrial fibrillation and thromboembolism (anticoagulants); and
- Hepatitis C (antiretrovirals).

**HOME OFFICE**

■ **Asylum: Beaconside**

**Theo Clarke:**

**[19020]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will reconsider the Government's proposal to relocate approximately 500 single male asylum seekers to Beaconside in Stafford.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 22 June 2022]:* Due to the unprecedented demand to accommodate asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute, we have had to use temporary accommodation such as hotels and other large-scale sites to manage demands on the asylum estate. We are committed to working with local authorities to move to a fairer distribution of asylum seekers and bring an end to the use of hotels as contingency accommodation.

The Home Office has therefore announced all local authority areas in England, Scotland and Wales will be expected to participate in a new system of full dispersal to allow us to move away from hotels to less expensive and more suitable accommodation. We have also announced funding of approximately £3,500 per bedspace procured in this financial year to recognise the pressures of accommodating asylum seekers on Local Authority areas.

The Beaconsfield has been identified as a potential new site for Initial Accommodation as the current site in the West Midlands is due to close shortly. Our accommodation provider, Serco, are proceeding with the consultation on planning and once this is concluded we will convene a Multi-Agency Forum to discuss operations on site. The Multi-Agency forum will be made up of Home Office officials, along with the accommodation provider and representatives from Stafford County Council, the police service, NHS, and Public Health along with others from the voluntary sector. These meetings are an opportunity for all members to discuss any ongoing issues and to share best practice.

Ministers have also met with the Hon Member for Stafford who has expressed her concerns about and opposition to the proposal.

## ■ **Body Searches: Children**

**Zarah Sultana:**

**[22570]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking in response to the finding by BBC Radio 4's File on 4 programme that an estimated 13,000 children have been strip-searched by police since 2017; what assessment she has made of the appropriateness of the use of strip-searching by police; and if her Department will undertake a review of strip-searches of children by police.

**Kit Malthouse:**

Strip search is one of the most intrusive powers available to the police and its use should not be a routine occurrence. The Government is clear that any use of strip search should be carried out in accordance with the law and with full regard for the dignity and welfare of the individual being searched – particularly if the individual being searched is a child.

The Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) Codes of Practice govern how the police should undertake a strip search. The College of Policing's Authorised Professional Practice (APP) on Stop and Search provides further guidance for the police on the use of strip search. We expect officers to follow the law and the best practice guidance set by the College of Policing in its APP.

To provide more transparency on this issue the Home Office have recently introduced a data collection on strip searches to the Annual Data Requirement. Police forces will be providing this data for 2021/22 on a voluntary basis, and it is due for publication towards the end of 2022. The data collection will include details on the age, sex and ethnicity of persons strip searched by the police in England and Wales.

■ **British Nationality: Applications**

**Holly Lynch:** [\[20270\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average processing time is for British citizenship by naturalisation applications.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Secretary of State's Home Department publishes data on naturalisation applications made and completed every quarter on the Gov.uk website. The most recent data set was published on 26 May 2022 and can be found here:

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

■ **Fire and Rescue Services: Finance**

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[19634\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make a comparative assessment of the adequacy of the funding allocated to (a) North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service and (b) all other fire and rescue authorities in 2022-23, in the context of their different (i) population sizes and (ii) geographical spread.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[19635\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the adequacy of funding levels for fire and rescue services (a) in 2022-23 and (b) anticipated over the next three years, in the context of the range of services they provide.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[19636\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the adequacy of the funding of North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (a) in 2022-23 and (b) anticipated over the next three years, in the context of its (i) geography and (ii) population.

**Kit Malthouse:**

*[Holding answer 21 June 2022]:* On 7 February, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities published the Final Local Government Finance Settlement for 2022-23. Overall fire and rescue authorities will receive around £2.5 billion in 2022-23.

Fire and rescue services including North Yorkshire FRS have the resources they need to do their important work. In 2022-23, North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority has a core spending power of £33.5m, an increase of £1.4m (4.5%) compared to 2021-22.

The Government is committed to ensuring that funding allocations for fire and rescue authorities are based on an up-to-date assessment of their needs and resources. The Department is in regular contact with fire and rescue authorities to ensure we remain informed of their financial circumstances and will continue to keep their funding needs under review.

## ■ Hate Crime

**Stella Creasy:**

[\[22422\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Protocol on the Law Commission, for what reason she has not published a response to the Law Commission report entitled Hate crime laws: Final report, HC 942, within six months of its publication.

**Rachel Maclean:**

We are grateful to the Law Commission for its detailed report.

The Government is carefully considering its recommendations and a full Government response to the Law Commission report will be published shortly.

## ■ HM Passport Office: Disability Aids

**Grahame Morris:**

[\[23282\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 21 June 2022 to Question 19609 on HM Passport Office: Disability Aids, if she will investigate (a) case reference PEX3540953689 and (b) other incidents where HM Passport Office staff (i) refuse to engage with the BT Text Relay Service and (ii) do not respond to emails sent by constituents and hon. Members to the Interview Hub Technical Support email address.

**Kevin Foster:**

Her Majesty's Passport Office is committed to supporting its customers who have a disability, which includes accepting callers via the BT Text Relay service.

The Interview Hub Technical Support mailbox is for queries relating to pre-booked passport interviews only. All other customer enquiries should be directed to the Passport Adviceline, on 0300 222 000.

Queries from honourable Members on behalf of their constituents should be directed to the dedicated email address.

We do not comment publicly on individual cases.

## ■ HM Passport Office: Secondment

**Yvette Cooper:**

[\[22354\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Civil Service staff have been seconded to the Passport Office to resolve application backlogs; and how much those secondments have cost the public purse.

**Kevin Foster:**

Her Majesty's Passport Office routinely uses flexible resource from HMRC to support with peaks in passport demand. In May 2022, 82 full-time equivalents from HMRC were supporting passport services.

Staffing costs, including the use of flexible resources from other government departments, are met by passport fee income.



**■ Home Office: Correspondence****Jessica Morden:** **[22376]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many new enquiries her Department's MP Urgent Enquiries inbox handled in each month in from January 2021 to May 2022; what steps her Department is taking to manage the (a) performance and (b) case management of those teams; what steps she is taking to oversee the performance of the Urgent Enquiry inbox; and if she will make a statement.

**Kevin Foster:**

There are multiple ways for Members to raise queries with the MP Account Management Team (MPAM) including submitting via the MP Urgent Enquiries inbox. Whilst the department collates detailed information regarding Member's queries this cannot be broken down by the specific inbox used to raise a query.

Performance against target has been impacted by a significant increase in the volume of correspondence received, including the unprecedented amount of correspondence about the situation in Afghanistan and more recently in Ukraine.

The Department continues to prioritise enquiries related to Ukraine and recognises it has not been able to meet service standard in other cases. Actions have been taken to clear backlogs and drive-up performance. MPs can also escalate urgent and compassionate cases via the team at Portcullis House.

The Department continues to recruit additional resources and has recently been loaned staff from non-operational areas to assist in clearing the backlogs. A detailed recovery plan to support a return to an acceptable service standard is being prepared.

Data about intake and performance in answering Hon. Members correspondence are published quarterly with the latest Quarter available at:

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

**■ Homes for Ukraine Scheme****Daisy Cooper:** **[23424]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 21 June 2022 to Question 15764 and with reference to reports of a data loss in the Home Office IT systems, whether she can confirm that all applications submitted between 18 and 25 March 2022 have now been received by the Home Office; and whether she has made an assessment of whether applications submitted between 18 and 25 March (a) took substantially longer than others received in the (i) preceding and (ii) following week and (b) had to be resubmitted by refugees in order to progress their visa application.

**Kevin Foster:**

There has been no loss of data on Home Office systems for applications made between 18 and 25 March 2022.



## ■ Immigration Controls: Airports

**Yvette Cooper:**

[22355]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what was the average waiting time at UK airport border control in each of the last twelve months.

**Damian Hinds:**

Resource and staffing requirements at every port are continually reviewed by Border Force who work closely with port operators to ensure resources are deployed flexibly as and when they are required.

Performance against our passenger wait time SLA can be found in Border Force Transparency data available at:

Border Force transparency data: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/border-force-transparency-data-q4-2021>

## ■ Immigration: EU Nationals

**Drew Hendry:**

[21231]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is undertaking to ensure that Border Force staff provide airlines with accurate information when they are contacted on the use of National Identification documents by people with Settled Status travelling to the EU.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 23 June 2022]:* Documentary requirements for passengers seeking to travel from the UK are a matter for the destination country, and passengers should ensure they meet those requirements. The Home Office does not routinely engage with carriers in relation to documentary requirements for outbound travel as we are not responsible for or set the rules related to this.

GOV.UK does, however, provide advice for British citizens planning to travel to the EU. This advice can be viewed here: [Visiting the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein: Checks for all types of travel - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

## ■ Immigration: Windrush Generation

**Angela Crawley:**

[21232]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish the report commissioned by her Department entitled, The Historical Roots of the Windrush Scandal; and if she will make a statement on that report.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 23 June 2022]:* The Historical Roots of the Windrush Scandal report was commissioned by the Home Office to form part of an internal learning resource to improve understanding of the historical development of immigration policy, in response to Recommendation 6 of the Windrush Lessons Learned Review by Wendy Williams.

The report was written by a historian who was independent from the Home Office and does not represent government policy. The views included in the report are those of the author.

We have already made good progress against Wendy Williams' recommendations. She highlighted many achievements, including the work we have put into becoming a more compassionate and open organisation. Yet we know there is more to do. Many people suffered terrible injustices at the hands of successive Governments, so we will continue working hard to deliver a Home Office worthy of every community we serve.

## ■ Ismail Abedi

**Kenny MacAskill:** **[19703]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reason police allowed Ismail Abedi to leave the country and not give evidence to the Manchester Arena inquiry in October 2021.

**Damian Hinds:**

The Manchester Arena Inquiry is a statutory independent Inquiry and decisions as to how to deliver its terms of reference are a matter for the Chair.

The Inquiry heard evidence on what steps had been taken to ensure Ismail Abedi appeared at the Inquiry on 21 October. The transcript for the hearing is published in full: [https://files.manchesterarenainquiry.org.uk/live/uploads/2021/10/21201337/MAI-Day-165\\_Redacted.pdf](https://files.manchesterarenainquiry.org.uk/live/uploads/2021/10/21201337/MAI-Day-165_Redacted.pdf)

Greater Manchester Police provided evidence to the Inquiry on Ismail Abedi's departure from the UK which is published on the Manchester Arena Inquiry website: <https://files.manchesterarenainquiry.org.uk/live/uploads/2021/12/21144111/INQ042319.pdf>

## ■ Knives: Crime

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:** **[20223]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans she has to tackle knife crime and serious violence in Bournemouth East constituency.

**Kit Malthouse:**

Tackling knife crime and serious violence is a priority for this Government and we are supporting the police by recruiting an additional 20,000 police officers by March 2023.

As of 31 March 2022, Dorset Police has recruited 121 additional uplift officers against a combined year 1 and 2 allocation of 99 officers. The force has been allocated 67 additional uplift officers in the final year of Uplift.

Police funding is also increasing and on 2 February 2022, the Government published a total police funding settlement of up to £16.9 billion in 2022/23. Dorset Police's funding will be up to £159.1m in 2022/23, an increase of up to £8m when compared to 2021/22.

The Government has also made £130m available this financial year (22/23) to tackle serious violence, including murder and knife crime. This includes:

£64m for Violence Reduction Units (VRUs) which bring together local partners in the 20 areas most affected by serious violence, to tackle the drivers of violence in their area. VRUs are delivering a range of early intervention and prevention programmes to divert people away from a life of crime. They have reached over 260,000 vulnerable young people in their second year alone.

Our £30m 'Grip' programme operates in these same 20 areas as VRUs and is helping to drive down violence by using a highly data-driven process to identify violence hotspots – often to individual street level – and target operational activity in those areas. In 2020, a 90-day trial of this approach in Southend resulted in an overall fall in violence in the hotspots of around 30% over the period of the trial.

The combination of these two programmes has prevented an estimated 49,000 violent offences in their first two years of activity.

We are also providing £200m over 10 years for the Youth Endowment Fund, to test and evaluate what works to ensure those young people most at risk are given the opportunity to turn away from violence and lead positive lives.

#### ■ **Members: Correspondence**

**John Penrose:** [\[21149\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to reply to the letters from the hon. Member for Weston-super-Mare of 18 May and 30 May on behalf of his constituent, Ms Fiona Wilson, on passport applications.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Home Office responded to the correspondence on 21 June 2022.

**Darren Jones:** [\[23383\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she will respond to the correspondences from the hon. Member for Bristol North West on Wednesday 18 May 2022.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Minister for Safe and Legal Migration responded on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2022

**David Linden:** [\[23386\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department plans to respond to the correspondence of 25 April 2022, sent again by email on 31 May 2022, from the hon. Member for Glasgow East, reference DL11006.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Home Office responded to the correspondence on 24 June 2022.

**■ Offences against Children: Rotherham**

**Sarah Champion:** [\[22440\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the total cost was of the Independent Office for Police Conduct investigation into South Yorkshire Police response to child sexual exploitation cases, referred to as Operation Linden.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The Independent Office of Police Conduct (IOPC) published its report on Operation Linden on 22 June 2022. They have not yet compiled the total cost of the 91 investigations comprising this report.

The Director General of the IOPC will write to Sarah Champion MP in due course once the total cost is determined, and the Home Office will see that a copy of the letter is placed in the House library.

**■ Offenders: Deportation**

**Mr Mark Harper:** [\[22366\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many attempted deportations by her Department of foreign national offenders have been successfully challenged in each year over the last 10 years.

**Mr Mark Harper:** [\[22367\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of attempted deportations of foreign national offenders by her Department have been successfully challenged on Article 8 ECHR grounds in each year over the last 10 years.

**Mr Mark Harper:** [\[22368\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many challenges of deportations of foreign national offenders by her Department have been successful for offenders with sentences of (a) less than one year custodial sentence, (b) one to four years custodial sentence and (c) more than four years custodial sentence in each year over the last 10 years.

**Mr Mark Harper:** [\[22369\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of challenges to deportations of foreign national offenders by her Department have been successful in each year over the last 10 years.

**Tom Pursglove:**

The British public should be in no doubt of this Government's determination to remove criminals to protect both their victims and to make our streets safer and is fully committed to discharging the obligation under the UK Borders Act 2007, which is that a non-British citizen convicted of an offence in the United Kingdom and sentenced to 12 months or more imprisonment, and to whom an exception does not apply, be deported from the UK. All FNOs are provided an opportunity to make submissions against their deportation which are fully considered and determined

upon before deportation, including, where applicable, via the Courts. We have recently brought forward the Nationality and Borders Act to help end the cycle of last-minute claims and appeals that can delay removals

The Ministry of Justice routinely publishes data relating to all appeals lodged with the First-tier Tribunal Immigration and Asylum Chamber (FTTIAC). The latest statistical quarterly release can be found here:

[Tribunal Statistics Quarterly: January to March 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/tribunal-statistics-quarterly-january-to-march-2022)

Additionally, the Home Office published a one-off statistical note release on 22 February 2022, which relates to human rights appeals brought by foreign national offenders (FNOs) and specifically those allowed on human rights grounds at the First-tier Tribunal. The data includes information management between April 2008 and June 2021.

[Statistical note: FNO appeals lodged and allowed on human rights grounds, 2008 to 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-note/fno-appeals-lodged-and-allowed-on-human-rights-grounds-2008-to-2021)

Published research shows that most FNOs who left detention in 2017, having claimed asylum while in immigration detention, did not have their claim upheld - only 2% of asylum applicants were granted leave to remain at the initial decision, whereas 92% were not and 5% are awaiting a decision.

[Issues raised by people facing return in immigration detention - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-note/issues-raised-by-people-facing-return-in-immigration-detention)

These figures reveal a system open to abuse and are clear evidence of the need for reform. That is why the Nationality and Borders Act makes provisions to streamline the appeals process by introducing an expanded one stop process aimed at reducing the extent to which people can frustrate removals through sequential or unmeritorious claims, appeals or legal action.

Further information can be found in the [New Plan for Immigration: policy statement \(accessible\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/policy-statements/new-plan-for-immigration-policy-statement) and the factsheet [Nationality and Borders Bill: factsheet - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/factsheets/nationality-and-borders-bill-factsheet)

## ■ Overseas Students: English Language

**Tim Loughton:**

**[23214]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she plans to take towards students affected by the TOEIC fraud cases in light of the judgement handed down from the Upper Tribunal in respect of RK and DK, reference [2022] UKUT 00112.

**Kevin Foster:**

On 25 March 2022, the Presidential Panel of the Upper Tribunal, concluded in their determination that: *"It is amply sufficient to prove the matter on the balance of probabilities, which is the correct legal standard... we do not consider that the evidential burden on the respondent in these cases was discharged by only a narrow margin (as in SM and Qadir v SSHD)"*.

In view of this, we do not believe there is a need to make any major change in our approach to ETS cases.

We believe the changes the Home Office has made since 2019 have already brought significant redress this includes grant leave to many who might have otherwise been refused.

The Department will now look to update the casework guidance in light of RK and DK to ensure applicants are signposted to their right to obtain the voice recording of their TOEIC test from ETS. We believe, in light of the Upper Tribunal's findings, this to be fairest and most objective way in which an individual can challenge the allegation before them.

## ■ Police: Recruitment

**Rob Roberts:**

**[22578]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what progress she has made on recruiting new police officers; and what the breakdown of operational officer numbers was for each of the past seven years in (a) the UK and (b) North Wales.

**Kit Malthouse:**

As part of the Police Officer Uplift Programme, the Home Office publishes a quarterly update on the number of officers (in headcount terms) in England and Wales, broken down by Police Force Area (PFA). Data are available here: [Police Officer uplift statistics - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-officer-uplift-statistics). The Home Office collects and publishes information on officers in England and Wales only.

The latest statistics show that as at March 2022 police forces in England and Wales have recruited 13,576 additional officers as part of the Police Uplift Programme. In North Wales 164 additional officers have been recruited.

While the 'Police officer uplift' statistical bulletin provides a timely update on overall officer numbers, the Home Office also collects and publishes data on the size and composition of the police workforce in England and Wales on a biannual basis in the '[Police workforce, England and Wales](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-england-and-wales)' statistical bulletin. These biannual statistics remain the key measure of the size of the police workforce and provide information on both a headcount and a full-time equivalent (FTE) basis.

Information on the total number of officers in England and Wales in each financial year since 2003 can be found in table H3 of the data tables which accompany the latest publication:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1060642/police-workforce-mar21-tables-second-edition.ods.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1060642/police-workforce-mar21-tables-second-edition.ods.ods)

Information on the number and proportion of officers performing frontline roles (both visible operational frontline and non-visible frontline) by financial year is published in table F5.

Both these tables are presented in full-time equivalent terms and should therefore not be directly compared with the 'Police officer uplift' statistics, which are published in headcount terms.

## ■ Radicalism: Greater Manchester

**Kenny MacAskill:**

[\[19700\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre's 2010 report into extremism in Manchester.

**Damian Hinds:**

*[Holding answer 21 June 2022]:* A summary of the relevant report was provided to the Manchester Arena Inquiry. This followed a thorough process overseen by the Inquiry Chair and his legal team as to what content could be disclosed without damaging national security.

Regrettably disclosing the report would cause damage to national security.

## ■ Ramadan Abedi and Salman Abedi

**Kenny MacAskill:**

[\[19704\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of Ramadan and Salman Abedi's relationship to the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group.

**Damian Hinds:**

In line with long-standing Home Office policy, it would not be appropriate to comment on individual cases.

The first volume of the Chair's findings of the Manchester Arena Inquiry was published in June 2021, with volumes 2 and 3 scheduled for publication later in 2022. Further information can be found on the Inquiry's website: [manchesterarenainquiry.org.uk](http://manchesterarenainquiry.org.uk)

## ■ Refugees: Afghanistan

**Imran Hussain:**

[\[20261\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if her Department will make a scheme similar to the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme (Homes for Ukraine) available to Afghan refugees.

**Kevin Foster:**

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer provided to question 9052 on 9 June 2022.

## ■ Refugees: Ukraine

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

[\[20226\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to support people fleeing war in Ukraine.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Home Office has introduced specific visa routes for those affected by the conflict in Ukraine to come to or remain in the UK. Details can be found on Gov.uk by following this link:



Immigration Rules - Immigration Rules Appendix Ukraine Scheme - Guidance - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

We have issued over 130,000 visas to date.

## ■ **Salman Abedi**

**Kenny MacAskil:** [\[19702\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on how many occasions Salman Abedi was present at port stops conducted by police on members of the Abedi family from 2010 to 2017.

**Damian Hinds:**

There are a wide range of reasons that police may stop individuals travelling through ports. Under Schedule 7 to the Terrorism Act 2000, Counter-Terrorism Police officers can stop and examine members of the public travelling through ports to determine their involvement in terrorist activity. The Home Office does not routinely comment on individual cases, and decisions on who to examine under Schedule 7 are made independently of government by the police.

I would refer the Honourable Member to the first volume of the Chair's findings of the Manchester Arena Inquiry, which was published in June 2021. Volumes 2 and 3 of the findings are scheduled for publication later in 2022, and further information can be found on the Inquiry's website: [manchesterarenainquiry.org.uk](http://manchesterarenainquiry.org.uk)

## ■ **Seasonal Workers: Ukraine**

**Paul Blomfield:** [\[21175\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reason Ukrainian nationals entering the UK on seasonal worker visas after 18 March 2022 are not eligible to have their visa extended in line with Ukrainians in the UK on other types of visas; and whether she has plans to expand the eligibility window for the extension scheme.

**Kevin Foster:**

Since 18 March 2022 both the Ukraine Family Scheme and the Homes For Ukraine have been available, for free, to all Ukrainian nationals and their families wishing to come to the UK for up to three years.

Any Ukrainian national choosing to arrive in the UK by any other route (including as seasonal workers) after this date is therefore expected to comply with the conditions of the leave they chose to apply for. If they subsequently wish to stay longer, they can apply for permission to stay on any existing routes they qualify for, the Ukraine Family Scheme (if they qualify), or leave the UK and apply to return under the Homes For Ukraine Scheme.



## ■ Sexual Harassment: Public Places

**Mr Virendra Sharma:** [\[21154\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans her Department has to make public sexual harassment a criminal offence.

**Mr Virendra Sharma:** [\[21155\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Answer of 26 April 2022 to Question 156340 on Sexual Harassment: Public Places, what her timeline is for the planned public consultation on whether there should be a criminal offence of public sexual harassment.

**Mr Virendra Sharma:** [\[21156\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Answer of 26 April 2022 to Question 156340 on Sexual Harassment: Public Places, what plans she has to collect survivor and victim testimony as part of the proposed public consultation on public sexual harassment.

**Rachel Maclean:**

*[Holding answer 23 June 2022]:* Sexual harassment in public places is appalling, and this Government is committed to tackling it. Women and girls have the right to both be and feel safe on our streets.

As set out in the Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy, published last July, and whose Call for Evidence was informed by over 180,000 responses, the vast majority of them from the public, we have been looking carefully at where there may be gaps in existing law and how a specific offence for public sexual harassment could address those.

As a result of this work, we will by the summer recess begin a consultation on whether there should be a new offence of public sexual harassment. We will seek to ensure that a representative range of voices is included in the responses to the consultation.

## ■ UK Border Force: Medals

**Steve McCabe:** [\[21081\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has made an assessment of the potential merits of recognising Border Force officers through awards of the Platinum Jubilee Medal.

**Damian Hinds:**

It was agreed across government that the criteria and eligibility for the Platinum Jubilee Medal would remain the same as for the Diamond Jubilee Medal, which Border Force does not fall under.

A Long Service and Good Conduct Medal approved by HM The Queen will be launched this year for both Border Force and Immigration Enforcement, to recognise the valuable contribution made by our staff.

## ■ Visas: Afghanistan

**Imran Hussain:** [\[20260\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with her counterparts in foreign governments on allowing UK visa applications for Afghan nationals to be completed in neighbouring countries.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 23 June 2022]:* This government is committed to providing protection for vulnerable and at-risk people fleeing Afghanistan and is taking a leading role in the international response. Since the end of Op PITTING, we have brought c.4,000 Afghans to the UK from a neighbouring country.

The UK is working with international partners, including non-governmental organisations and other countries, to secure safe routes out of Afghanistan as soon as they become available, starting with those in most need. We also intend to establish a diplomatic presence in Kabul as soon as the security and political situation in Afghanistan allows. We are coordinating this effort with allies.

Biometrics must be provided before entry clearance is granted, to confirm identity and complete performance of national security checks.

There is currently no option to enrol biometrics in Afghanistan. Yet Afghans who have already reached a third country and are able to get to a Visa Application Centre to enrol their biometrics can make an application to resettle in the UK under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy, or to come to the UK through our wider economic and family routes, in the usual way.

**Fabian Hamilton:** [\[23234\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to provide visas to Afghan journalists who have worked for the BBC.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Government responded swiftly to the fast-moving and challenging events in Afghanistan, including supporting the largest and fastest evacuation in recent history. We helped over 15,000 people to safety from Afghanistan in August 2021 and we continue to do all we can to enable those who are eligible to relocate to the UK.

There have been approximately 100 Afghan journalists who have been evacuated and brought to safety since 1 August 2021.

## ■ Visas: Applications

**Drew Hendry:** [\[20267\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent steps her Department has taken to help increase the response times for Visa application enquiries.

**Kevin Foster:**

We continue to work with our service provider to review their performance to ensure service standards are maintained, this includes increasing the number of staff operating the customer helpline.

It is envisaged this will enable the service standard to be met in the coming weeks.

**Yvette Cooper:**[\[22352\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average waiting time is for (a) Skilled Worker visas, (b) study visas, (c) family visas, and (d) visitor visas.

**Yvette Cooper:**[\[22353\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of applicants for (a) Skilled Worker visas, (b) study visas, (c) family visas, and (d) visitor visas wait more than 100 days for a decision on their application.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Home Office is currently prioritising Ukraine Visa Schemes applications in response to the humanitarian crisis caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. We are communicating directly with customers to explain applications for study, work and family visas are taking longer to process at this time.

Current average processing times:

Standard visitor visas - 6 weeks

Student visas - 4 weeks

Work visas - 6 weeks.

Spouse visas – up to 24 weeks

As the number of outstanding applications from Ukraine has reduced significantly decision makers are being returned to their normal work, with a focus on reducing processing times for visit and work visas being the initial priority.

Data is not published on the number of applicants which wait more than 100 days for a decision on their application. The transparency data does, however, include a range of processing data and the latest data can be found at: [Migration transparency data - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/migration-transparency-data)

**JUSTICE****■ Community Orders****Dame Diana Johnson:**[\[20234\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of community sentences at reducing reoffending rates.

**Kit Malthouse:**

This Government is committed to tackling the causes of reoffending to keep our communities safe by addressing the complex issues that lead to offending, while also strengthening the supervision of offenders in the community. Since 2009/10, the proven reoffending rate for adults serving a sentence in the community (i.e. a community order or suspended sentence order) has fallen by 7.2 percentage points (from 36.2% in 2009/10 to 29.0% in 2019/20). Over the same time period, the overall reoffending rate has fallen from 31% to 26%.

Sentencing in individual cases is a matter for our independent courts. Community sentences can and should be tailored to address the individual needs, as well as to punish offenders and provide reparation to the community. Evidence suggests that community sentences, in certain circumstances, are more effective in reducing reoffending than short custodial sentences.

In September 2020 we published the Sentencing White Paper which set out our plans for more robust and effective community sentencing. We have delivered many of these reforms in the Police, Crime, Sentencing, and Courts (PCSC) Act 2022. This includes piloting Problem-Solving Courts (PSCs) which will trial innovative incentives and sanctions to improve compliance with court orders, reduce reoffending, and support rehabilitation. The PCSC Act also enables closer supervision of certain offenders, and the option for more robust and flexible use of electronically monitored curfews. The rollout of the Alcohol Abstinence and Monitoring Requirement last year provides an option to directly tackle alcohol related offending, imposing an alcohol ban for up to 120 days; on 97% of the days monitored the ban was complied with.

**■ Coronavirus: Disease Control****Justin Madders:****[22454]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many (a) prosecutions and (b) convictions there were for covid-19 related offences in England and Wales in 2021.

**James Cartlidge:**

The Ministry of Justice has published information on prosecutions and convictions for covid-19 related offences, in England and Wales, up to December 2021, in the 'Outcomes by Offence' data tool, available here:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1076459/outcomes-by-offence-tool-2021-v2.xlsx](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1076459/outcomes-by-offence-tool-2021-v2.xlsx).

In the "Prosecutions and Convictions" worksheet, use the *Home Office offence code* filter to select the following offences:

- 16857 - Failure to comply with screening restriction/requirement (coronavirus)
- 16858 - Operator of Port fails to comply with direction under Coronavirus Act 2020
- 16859 - Offences by potentially infectious persons (coronavirus)
- 16860 - Breach of emergency period restrictions (coronavirus)
- 16861 - Offences in relation to events and gatherings (coronavirus)

Figures for prosecutions and convictions populate rows 24 and 25 respectively.

## ■ Courts: Pilot Schemes

**Ellie Reeves:**

[\[20300\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what progress his Department has made on the policy details of the Problem Solving Court pilot.

**Kit Malthouse:**

We have created the necessary legislative provisions to enable Problem-solving Court (PSC) pilots within the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts (PCSC) Act 2022. We have committed to up to five pilots to test this new and innovative approach with offenders with substance misuse issues, female offenders, and domestic abuse perpetrators.

The Problem-Solving Court pilots will be available to offenders who fit certain criteria to be specified in regulations and who can be diverted into a Community Order or Suspended Sentence Order with intensive rehabilitative requirements to meet criminogenic needs alongside punitive requirements.

We are considering a range of locations to ensure that the pilots are situated in the best possible areas that provide the broadest range of support services to help manage offenders in the community. We will be implementing the pilots over the course of the Spending Review.

## ■ Crime: Victims

**Dame Diana Johnson:**

[\[20332\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to support victims of crime.

**Tom Pursglove:**

Supporting victims of crime is a priority for this Government. We know that victim support services are crucial for victims to rebuild and recover from the impact of crime. We are increasing funding for these services to £192 million by 2024/25, an uplift of 92% on core budgets in 2020/21 and more than quadruple the level in 2009/10. We have committed £154 million of this budget per annum on a multi-year basis, for the next three years (2022/23 to 2024/25 inclusive), allowing victim support services to build capacity and strengthen resilience.

We also recently published a draft Victims Bill, along with a wider package of measures, that will amplify victims' voices in the criminal justice process, improve the support they receive, and strengthen oversight of criminal justice agencies. Measures include:

- Sending a clear signal about what victims can and should expect from the criminal justice system by placing the Victims' Code into law.

- Increasing transparency and oversight of criminal justice agencies' services to victims, so that we can identify problems, drive up standards and give the public confidence.
- Enabling improvements in the quality and consistency of support services for victims, by improving how organisations work together to commission support services to better meet the needs of victims and increasing awareness of Independent Sexual Violence Advisers and Independent Domestic Violence Advisers. We are also increasing the number of ISVAs and IDVAs we fund by 43% - from 700 to more than 1,000 by 2024/25.

We continue to deliver the Rape Review action plan to more than double the number of adult rape cases reaching court by the end of this parliament. In 2021, the number of convictions for rape offences was 67% higher than in 2020. We are:

- Introducing a single source of 24/7 support for victims of rape and sexual abuse later this year.
- Rolling out of a new investigatory model focusing on the suspect's behaviour, Operation Soteria, which currently operates across five police forces and will be rolled out nationally by June 2023.
- Expanding pre-recorded cross-examination (Section 28) for rape victims across England and Wales, which is currently available in almost half of all Crown Courts.
- Launching a pilot of enhanced specialist sexual violence support in Crown Courts in Leeds, Newcastle, and Snaresbrook in London, to support rape victims to stay engaged in the process and get the justice they deserve.
- Publishing the second local Criminal Justice System (CJS) Delivery Data Dashboard (formally called CJS scorecards) which bring together data from across the system to increase transparency, understanding of the justice system, and support collaboration.

## ■ Crimes of Violence and Sexual Offences: Victims

**Dame Diana Johnson:**

[\[20236\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent assessment he has made of the impact of the court backlog on the wellbeing of victims of (a) sexual offences and (b) violent offences.

**Victoria Atkins:**

We recognise the impact the pandemic has had on timeliness in the Crown Court and the adverse impact this can have on victims. The Government is committed to continuing to work to reduce waiting times for victims, witnesses and other court users.

The outstanding caseload in the Crown Court has reduced from around 60,700 cases in June 2021 to around 58,300 cases at the end of April 2022.

Thanks to measures we are taking, by the end of March 2023, we expect to get through 20% more Crown Court cases than we did pre-Covid. It is encouraging that latest data shows the average number of days for adult rape from CPS charge to the case being completed continued to fall, down by over 5 weeks, or 38 days (8.3 percent) since the peak in June 2021 – from 457 days, to 419 in October to December 2021.

On 16 June, we announced a pilot of enhanced specialist sexual violence support in the Crown Court. These court centres will be enabled with the technology to allow victims to give pre-recorded evidence, with court staff who have received trauma-informed training. Victims will also have access to Independent Sexual Violence Advisers – or ISVAs – to give them expert support and help guide them through the process.

We are also expanding pre-recorded cross-examination (Section 28) rollout to all Crown Court locations. this vital measure is now available in almost half of all Crown Court locations (37 locations) so victims don't have to endure the glare of a live trial.

We are increasing MoJ funding for victims' services to £192 million by 2024/25, more than quadruple the level in 2009/10, with £154 million of this committed for victim support on a multi-year basis. This will allow us to increase the number of Independent Sexual and Domestic Violence Advisers by 300 to 1,000 and introduce new key services like the 24/7 support for victims of rape and sexual violence.

To allow for more cases to be heard more quickly, we have extended 30 Nightingale courtrooms beyond the end of March 2022 and removed the limit on the number of sitting days the Crown Court can sit this financial year.

The listing of cases is a judicial function and judges continue to work to prioritise cases involving vulnerable complainants and witnesses, such as serious sex cases.

## ■ Criminal Proceedings

**Dame Diana Johnson:**

**[20235]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department is taking to improve the timeliness of processing criminal court cases.

**James Cartlidge:**

The Government is committed to supporting recovery and improving timeliness across the court system. Over the next three financial years, we are investing an extra £477 million for the Criminal Justice System to help improve waiting times for victims of crime and reduce the Crown Court backlog to an estimated 53,000 cases by March 2025.

The outstanding caseload in the Crown Court has reduced from around 60,700 cases in June 2021 to around 58,300 cases at the end of April 2022.

By the end of March 2023, we expect to get through 20% more Crown Court cases than we did pre-Covid (117,000 in 2022/23 compared to 97,000 in 2019/20).



We have expanded the capacity of the Crown Court so that we are able to hear more cases. We have extended 30 Nightingale courtrooms beyond the end of March 2022, including 22 Crown 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 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.

We are expanding our plans for judicial recruitment to secure enough capacity to sit at the required levels in 2022/2023 and beyond.

We have published the Criminal Justice Delivery Data Dashboard which brings together local and national data from across the system on key priority areas to increase transparency, increase understanding of the justice system and support collaboration, particularly at a local level.

The dashboard measures progress against priority areas such as improving timeliness, increasing victim engagement and improving the quality of justice. For the adult rape dashboard, we also measure progress against the Rape Review ambition to more than double the number of adult rape cases reaching the court by the end of Parliament.

We are also implementing our Court Reform programme, which aims to make our court processes more efficient, meaning we can get through more cases in fewer sitting days.

#### ■ Crown Court: Wheelchairs

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[21140\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many and what proportion of crown courts in (a) each of the 14 Crown Prosecution Service areas and (b) England and Wales as a whole have full wheelchair access as at 1 January 2022.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[21141\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many and what proportion of crown courts in (a) each of the 14 Crown Prosecution Service areas and (b) England and Wales as a whole have wheelchair parking facilities as at 1 January 2022.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[21142\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many and what proportion of crown courts in (a) each of the 14 Crown Prosecution Service areas and (b) England and Wales as a whole have hearing loops as of 1 January 2022.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[21143\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many and what proportion of crown courts in (a) each of the 14 Crown Prosecution Service areas and (b) England and Wales as a whole have welcome assistance dogs as at 1 January 2022.



**Emily Thornberry:**

**[21144]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many people with (a) visual, (b) hearing and (c) hidden impairments have (i) requested and (ii) organised a pre-court visit in England and Wales in the 12 months to 1 January 2022.

**James Cartlidge:**

HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS) does not hold information on full wheelchair access and parking facilities at Crown Court locations as at 1 January 2022 and does not record information on these centrally. This information as at June 2022 is being collected and I will write to you to provide this when it is available.

HMCTS gives an indication of available facilities, including wheelchair access and parking facilities, on the Find a Court or Tribunal website at [www.find-court-tribunal.service.gov.uk](http://www.find-court-tribunal.service.gov.uk). The information on this website is routinely updated but may not cover everything that can be done to help someone with a disability coming to court. If any Crown Court user has a disability that means they cannot access court information or services, they are encouraged to contact the court involved by phone, in person or in writing. HMCTS will provide any reasonable adjustment to help and support users with disabilities to use court services. Courts may be able to make reasonable adjustments to help users attend a court which does not explicitly have wheelchair access or wheelchair parking facilities indicated on the website.

At least 69 of 87 Crown Court locations are recorded nationally as having hearing loops on site by HMCTS Facilities Management contract provider as at June 2022. Those which do not have hearing loops on site may still have facilities available or be able to make reasonable adjustments to help users who need hearing equipment. Users are encouraged to contact the court involved to discuss what they need to help them attend court and access services. This information is recorded by HMCTS operational region rather than Crown Prosecution Service Areas, as follows:

HMCTS REGION	CROWN COURT LOCATIONS	HEARING LOOP CONFIRMED PRESENT
London	10	10 (100%)
Midlands	18	12 (67%)
North East/Scotland	11	11 (100%)
North West	10	9 (90%)
South East	21	11 (52%)
South West	13	11 (85%)
Wales	6	5 (83%)
Total	89	69 (83%)

Data relates to the permanent estate only, and does not include Nightingale Courts or other temporary venues.

HMCTS most recently carried out an internal facilities audit in 2019 and is currently reviewing the next opportunity to revisit the facilities audit whilst continuing to ensure facilities for persons with disabilities attending court are monitored to meet their needs.

HMCTS does not centrally record instances where a Crown Court user attends court with an assistance dog, but assistance dogs are welcome in all Crown Court buildings. Users should never be told they cannot bring assistance dogs in our buildings, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

HMCTS is committed to ensuring vulnerable people, including users with disabilities can access the justice system and updated its Vulnerability Action Plan in April 2022. This can be viewed at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/hmcts-vulnerability-action-plan](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hmcts-vulnerability-action-plan).

Pre-trial visits in the Crown Court are conducted by Victim Support in London and the Citizens Advice Witness Service outside of London. Pre-court visits in other court and tribunal jurisdictions may be available to users on request depending on the jurisdiction. HMCTS does not hold records on how many visits have been requested and provided. Anyone who has questions or concerns about going to court is again encouraged to contact the court or any other advisory service available to them to discuss what to expect on the day.

## ■ Knives: Crime

**Rob Roberts:**

**[22579]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average time taken for a person charged with knife possession to have their first appearance before a magistrate is; and what that average length of time was in each of the last five years.

**James Cartlidge:**

We recognise the impact the pandemic has had on timeliness, and the Government is committed to continuing to work to reduce waiting times for victims, witnesses and other court users.

Over the next three financial years we are investing an extra £477 million for the Criminal Justice System to help improve waiting times for victims of crime.

We are investing £1 million in a programme of work to support the recruitment of new magistrates. Over the next three financial years we are aiming to recruit 4,000 new magistrates.

As a result of these measures, in the magistrates' court, the criminal caseload has fallen from 445,000 in July 2020 to 358,100 in April 2022.

The table below sets out timeliness of magistrates' courts cases for charge to first listing before a magistrate (known also as first hearing, or first appearance) for the offences of:

- Having an article with a blade or point in a public place
- Having an article with a blade or point on school premises
- Threaten with a blade or sharply pointed article on school premises
- Threaten with blade/sharply pointed article in a public place

CALENDAR YEAR	CHARGE OR LAYING OF INFORMATION TO FIRST LISTING (MEAN DAYS)	CHARGE OR LAYING OF INFORMATION TO FIRST LISTING (MEDIAN DAYS)
2017	19	16
2018	21	17
2019	23	17
2020	32	21
2021	35	20

#### Notes

1) Data excludes a small number of cases with identified data quality issues and breaches.

2) Only one offence is counted for each defendant in the case. If there is more than one offence per defendant that complete on the same day, a set of validation rules applies to select one offence only and these relate to the longest duration, seriousness and the lowest sequence number of the offence.

3) Data includes cases completed in the magistrates' courts during the specified time period, where no further action is required by the magistrates' courts.

4) Data includes cases that are sent to the Crown Court.

5) Following a technical issue a small amount of data (less than 1% of case disposals) was not included for a single day in September.

Further information on Magistrates' Courts Timeliness can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-court-statistics-quarterly-october-to-december-2021>.

#### ■ Law Commission

**Stella Creasy:**

**[22421]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make an assessment of his Department's compliance with the Protocol between the Lord Chancellor (on behalf of the Government) and the Law Commission, HC 499, published on 29 March 2010, in the context of the average time taken by the Government to respond to Law Commission reports in the last five years.

**James Cartlidge:**

The Protocol sets out the working agreement between Government and the Law Commission in respect of the Government responding to full and final published reports. An interim and final response should be provided as set out in the Protocol, but additional response time can be agreed with the Commission, if necessary.

However, the type of work commissioned by government can vary in length and will not always lead to a full report being produced, so it is not possible for the Ministry of Justice to state the average time it has taken for the Government to respond to each Law Commission report in the last five years.

**Prison Governors**

**Ellie Reeves:** [\[20302\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what progress his Department has made on the policy details for the new deal for prison governors set out in the Prisons Strategy white paper.

**Victoria Atkins:**

In the Prisons Strategy White Paper, we committed to delivering the 'New Deal' for governors based on clear expectations and accountability, but with greater freedom and autonomy to shape delivery in prisons. In April 2022, we introduced Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to drive improved outcomes by measuring progress with annually published performance ratings for each prison. At the end of June 2022, we will issue guidance to governors restating their existing local freedoms. We are committed to launching Earned Autonomy in early 2023 which will empower our highest performing operational leaders to innovate locally and improve outcomes.

**Prison Sentences: Females**

**Ellie Reeves:** [\[20299\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to stop women being sent to prison for non-violent crimes.

**Victoria Atkins:**

As set out in the 2018 Female Offender Strategy, the Government is committed to ensure more women are managed successfully in the community and that fewer women go to prison, particularly on short sentences.

We are investing tens of millions of pounds over the next three years into community services for women, drug rehabilitation and accommodation support, so fewer women end up in prison. We will open the first Residential Women's Centre (RWC), in Swansea, which will offer an intensive residential support package in the community for women at risk of short custodial sentences. Under powers in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, we will pilot Problem-Solving Courts targeting specific cohorts with underlying needs, including one pilot exclusively for female offenders, to provide robust community sentences as a more effective alternative to custody where appropriate.

In addition, we have launched a Pre-Sentence Report (PSR) pilot in 15 magistrates' courts to evaluate how higher quality and more timely PSRs can best inform sentencers' decisions in relation to female offenders (and other groups).

We will publish a Delivery Plan for the Female Offender Strategy later this summer. This will set out our ambitious cross-Government approach for the next three years.

## ■ Prisoners' Release: Temporary Accommodation

**Ellie Reeves:**

[\[20295\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if his Department will take steps to ensure that new temporary accommodation to support prison leavers at risk of homelessness will be situated in places that are not likely to increase the risk of further reoffending.

**Kit Malthouse:**

This Government is determined to continue driving down reoffending rates, to make our streets safer and reduce the £18bn annual cost of reoffending. The overall reoffending rate has already fallen from 31% in 2009/10 to 26% in 2019/20.

The provision of temporary accommodation for prison leavers is a key part of our work to further reduce reoffending - we know that offenders are around 50 per cent more likely to commit crimes again if released without somewhere to stay. The provision of more temporary accommodation for prison leavers forms part of our plans to spend £200m a year by 2024-25 to reduce reoffending.

As part of this, HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) has launched a service providing up to 12 weeks' basic accommodation and support for those leaving prison at risk of homelessness. Originally launched in 5 probation regions, the provision is being fully rolled out across England and Wales this year, supporting the thousands of prison leavers who leave prison each year who would otherwise lack stable accommodation. We launched the competition for new contracts on 18 May 2022.

In terms of the locations of new temporary accommodation, the provider of the accommodation must obtain HMPPS' approval for new accommodation before it can be used. Information received by the Authority from the police or local authority helps to inform the decision, and a Community Probation Practitioner will risk assess whether the accommodation is suitable for the offender. In this way, it is ensured that new temporary accommodation is in appropriate locations.

## ■ Prisoners: Ethnic Groups

**Ellie Reeves:**

[\[20285\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department is taking to improve outcomes for prisoners from ethnic minority backgrounds.

**Kit Malthouse:**

We want people to have confidence in a justice system that is fair and open, where no person suffers discrimination of any kind. The over-representation of ethnic

minorities in prisons, and in the justice system more widely, is a real concern and we continue to prioritise understanding and tackling any disparities they face.

Our commitment to tackling race and ethnic disparity is clear, as set out in the government's Inclusive Britain strategy (published in response to the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities). It laid out a clear and broad set of steps we are taking in relation to improving outcomes in criminal justice, and built on the extensive work undertaken in response to the 2017 Lammy Review, a detailed overview of which can be found in the *Tackling Racial Disparity* updates published in 2018 and 2020.

Our work to tackle disparities focuses on not just the initial actions committed to in response to the Lammy Review, such as significant efforts to ensure a more representative HMPPS workforce, but also builds on these steps, going further where we can. By way of example, we launched a Stewardship Fund of over £1.5m to better support grassroots, ethnic minority-led and specialist voluntary or community sector organisations. Through the provision of informed services to ethnic minority offenders, they help turn their lives around, reduce reoffending, and improve outcomes for them and wider society.

## ■ Prisoners: Females

**Ellie Reeves:** [\[20297\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the terms of reference are for the National Stakeholder Advisory Forum to improve support for pregnant women and young mothers.

**Ellie Reeves:** [\[20298\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what progress his Department is making on ensuring that each women's prison is a trauma-informed and responsive environment.

**Ellie Reeves:** [\[20301\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many Pregnancy, Mother and Baby Liaison Officers there are across the women's estate; and what training they have received.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The Prisons Strategy White Paper set out a new approach for women's prisons: one which is trauma responsive, recognises the distinct nature of women's experience in custody and provides the appropriate levels of support, particularly for pregnant women and those with young children.

So far, we have developed bespoke selection and assessment criteria for staff in women's prisons and started to roll out a bespoke model of staff training.

We have also funded a number of activities to support improvements in safety, including additional support for women with complex needs, specialist support for women who have experienced abuse and extra support during early days in custody.

In addition, we have announced the opening of a pilot Residential Women's Centre in Swansea to provide a community-based alternative to a short custodial sentence.

The Pregnancy, Mother and Baby Unit and Maternal Separation from Children up to the Age of Two in Women's Prisons Policy Framework (September 2021), committed to the introduction of the Pregnancy, Mother and Baby Liaison Officer across the women's estate. There are 13 Liaison Officers in place and 12 attended the national 'Managing Pregnant Women in Prison' course in March 2022. Additionally, we have introduced a National Pregnancy, Mother and Baby Liaison Officers Support Network.

We also committed to The National Stakeholder Advisory Forum on Pregnancy, Mother and Baby Units, and Maternal Separation from Children up to the Age of Two in Women's Prisons. This bi-annual event will bring together key stakeholders and individuals with lived experience ensuring a culture of reflective practice and informed policy development. The first event is scheduled for Autumn 2022 and the terms of reference will be shared with forum attendees in advance.

## ■ Prisons

**Ellie Reeves:**

[\[20288\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to improve conditions for those living and working in prisons.

**Victoria Atkins:**

We are investing £675m over the period 2022 to 2025 in capital projects across the prison estate to improve conditions for prisoners and staff, safeguard capacity, and improve sustainability. Over the same period we are also investing £3.8bn to make significant progress in delivering 20,000 prison places. These will provide modern, safe and decent accommodation and workplaces for prisoners and staff.

**Ellie Reeves:**

[\[20292\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the daily regime of prison in reducing reoffending.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The prison regime dictates the daily timetable of activity and enables all elements of rehabilitation work in prisons. The regime components (including the delivery of education, work and skills) are key, and the impact of these is what reduces reoffending.

As set out in the Prisons Strategy White Paper, we have committed to Future Regime Design that is focused on ensuring that time is well spent for all in prisons. This Government will invest £200 million a year by 2024/25 to improve prison leavers' access to accommodation, employment support and substance misuse treatment, and introduce further measures for early intervention to tackle youth offending.

Overall reoffending has been reduced from 31% in 2009/10 to 26% in 2019/20, and these measures will allow us to make further progress.



### ■ Prisons: Buildings

**Ellie Reeves:** [\[20289\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the viability of prisons that are over 100 years old to (a) provide a safe place for staff and prisoners, (b) adapt for digital services and (c) house appropriate educational opportunities.

**Victoria Atkins:**

Current refurbishment projects underway at HMP Liverpool and HMP Birmingham provide evidence of how Victorian era buildings can be upgraded to provide fit-for-purpose prison accommodation.

### ■ Prisons: Digital Technology

**Ellie Reeves:** [\[20286\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what his Department's timeline is for the work to improve digital access across the prison estate.

**Victoria Atkins:**

A key strategic objective of the 2021-2024 HMPPS *Digital, Data, and Technology Strategy* is to give the people in our care digital tools and technology to support their rehabilitation, including prisoner education and administration. Within that strategy, we have committed to making laptops available in prisoners' cells in up to 15 prisons through the In-Cell Technology programme by the end of October 2022. We have now completed deployments to 9 sites, with a further 4 to be completed by October, and we are also refreshing the devices and service in the two original in-cell prisons (Wayland and Berwyn) to ensure they remain secure and supportable. Furthermore, we have now enabled the rollout of the education software, Virtual Campus 2, on in-cell laptops, offering people in prison access to education services while in their cell.

We acknowledge the potential benefits this can bring to prisons, with initial feedback from prisons highlighting the time saved for staff and the benefits to prisoners' wellbeing, including reducing levels of stress and anxiety. Consequently, we aim to continue our work on this programme and continue rollout to more of the prison estate in the coming years.

### ■ Prisons: Discipline

**Ellie Reeves:** [\[20294\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that the fast-track adjudications process does not have disproportionate impacts on protected groups.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The Prisons Strategy White Paper set out our ambition to introduce a fast-track adjudications system with rehabilitative interventions for lower-level offences.



We will complete a full impact and equalities assessment for this policy, and we will take the appropriate steps to ensure that prisoners with protected characteristics are not disproportionately negatively impacted by the changes.

## ■ Prisons: Drugs

**Ellie Reeves:** [\[20290\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how the £25 million for disrupting the supply of drugs to prison will be allocated; and what the evidential basis is for that policy.

**Ellie Reeves:** [\[20293\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, which prisons will be installed with (a) high-specification drugs trace detection, (b) mobile phone blocking technology and (c) an intelligence management system.

**Victoria Atkins:**

In March 2022, we completed the £100 million Security Investment Programme, aimed at reducing crime in prisons, including reducing the conveyance of illicit items such as drugs and mobile phones. This included 75 X-ray body scanners which now cover the entire closed male estate. Since installation began in July 2020 approximately 20,000 positive scans have been recorded.

HMPPS uses a range of data and intelligence to understand key threats to prison security, which informs our approach to counter measures to tackle them. This additional £25 million investment package has been designed to restrict drug supply into prisons via the gate and post, for example by increasing the number of drug trace detection equipment from 125 to 160, and installing x-ray baggage scanners at 42 high priority sites; enhancing our mobile blocking technology to prevent the illicit mobile phone communications that we know facilitates the illicit economy both within and outside of the prison walls; and providing the entire prison estate with a new intelligence management system so we can understand and respond to the security threats we face.

For security reasons, we do not disclose the precise locations of our equipment. Such information could be used by prisoners, including serious and organised criminals to subvert and bypass our countermeasures.

**Ellie Reeves:** [\[20291\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what plans he has to deliver drug treatment to prisoners.

**Victoria Atkins:**

In England, the NHS is responsible for commissioning healthcare services in all prisons including integrated substance misuse services. The Ministry of Justice works with NHS England, the Department of Health and Social Care and the Welsh Government, to ensure all prisoners access treatment that meets their needs with a focus on abstinence-based recovery to support a meaningful recovery from drug dependency.

The Ministry of Justice is investing £120m over the next three years to get more offenders engaged in treatment. With this investment, we will enhance testing regimes in prison, expand the use of Drug Recovery Wings where prisoners commit to remain drug-free and undergo regular voluntary drug tests, support prisoners to engage with community treatment ahead of their release and increase the use of intensive drug rehabilitation requirements for those on community sentences.

Prisoners will be supported to use their time in prison to become free from drugs, and we will establish a key performance measure to monitor all prisons' progress in ensuring that recovery is the focus and share local good practice around the estate.

## ■ Prisons: Safety

**Ellie Reeves:** [\[20284\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he plans to take to provide a safer and more secure custodial environment, as described in the Prisons Strategy White Paper – Response to Consultation.

**Victoria Atkins:**

This Government is investing £37 million to deliver improvements to prison safety announced in the Prisons Strategy White Paper. This includes making key changes to the physical environment, introducing specialist support, developing bespoke interventions and testing new technology.

In March, we completed our £100 million Security Investment Programme including 75 X-ray body scanners which now cover the entire closed male estate. We have also secured a further £25 million of funding for prison security. This will enable us to tackle efforts to undermine prison stability, such as drug smuggling, through increased drug trace detection units and x-ray baggage scanners at 42 priority sites.

The recruitment and retention of staff is integral to better outcomes in prisons, including making prisons safer and more secure. From October 2016 to March 2022, the number of band 3-5 prison officers increased by over 4,000. Alongside our recruitment and retention strategy, we are also creating a more resilient estate by both building additional prison places and undertaking refurbishments; improving prisoner access to healthcare; and investing £120 million in tackling substance misuse over the next three years to get more offenders engaged in treatment all of which will support safer, more secure prisons.

## ■ Prisons: Staff

**Ellie Reeves:** [\[20283\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Prisons Strategy White Paper–Response to Consultation Questions, published in June 2022, what funding his Department plans to allocate for the staff retention package, including on professional supervision for officers and training for staff.

**Victoria Atkins:**

Having experienced staff in our prisons is vital to ensuring prisons remain safe, secure and decent and we have introduced a number of initiatives since the publication of the Prison Strategy White Paper (PSWP).

In late 2021 we launched a retention tool kit to help Governors to tackle the main drivers of attrition in their prisons. We are using the data from this and enhanced exit interviews to better understand why employees leave.

Since April 2022, we have invested in several new initiatives, costing an additional £17 million, to improve the experience of our new joiners and increase retention. These include a new peer-to-peer learning scheme, the introduction of mentors for new prison officers, a supervision pilot in two prisons, and new leadership training in prisons with the highest attrition.

Through the PSWP, we also committed to the development of a suite of learning modules to support the needs of our diverse prison population. Funding for this activity is delivered through a number of budgets across the Department utilising both existing and new funding.

**■ Prisons: Video Conferencing****Ellie Reeves:**[\[20287\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will increase the current entitlement of prisoners to make video calls.

**Victoria Atkins:**

We remain committed in continuing to offer social video calls, as we have clear evidence that these, alongside face-to-face visits, telephone calls, voicemail and email, help maintain contact with families and significant others. Maintaining such ties is not only important for the well-being of prisoners but has also been shown to reduce reoffending.

At present, we are operating this offer in accordance with our interim policy which enables one free 30-minute call per prisoner, per month. Additional calls are also available at the discretion of Governors.

A longer-term policy is being developed to support our commitment to sustaining social video calling and we are considering options in line with our commitments in the Prison Strategy White Paper.

**■ Robbery: Criminal Proceedings****Steve Reed:**[\[23302\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many robbery cases were (a) received and (b) disposed of at every (i) magistrates court and (ii) crown court in England and Wales in each of the last five years for which data is available.

**Steve Reed:** [\[23303\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many theft cases were (a) received and (b) disposed of at every (i) magistrates court and (ii) crown court in England and Wales in each of the last five years for which data is available.

**Steve Reed:** [\[23304\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many fraud cases were (a) received and (b) disposed of at every (i) magistrates court and (ii) crown court in England and Wales in each of the last five years for which data is available.

**Steve Reed:** [\[23305\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many rape cases were (a) received and (b) disposed of at every (i) magistrates court and (ii) crown court in England and Wales in each of the last five years for which data is available.

**Steve Reed:** [\[23306\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many sexual offence cases were (a) received and (b) disposed of at every (i) magistrates court and (ii) crown court in England and Wales in each of the last five years for which data is available.

**James Cartlidge:**

We recognise the impact the pandemic has had on timeliness, and the Government is committed to continuing to work to reduce waiting times for victims, witnesses and other court users.

Over the next three financial years we are investing an extra £477 million for the Criminal Justice System to help improve waiting times for victims of crime.

We have removed the limit on sitting days in the Crown Court for the second year in a row. This means that the courts will continue working at full capacity, delivering swifter justice for victims and reducing the backlog of cases. We are also expanding our plans for judicial recruitment to secure enough capacity to sit at the required levels in 2022/2023 and beyond. We 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.

In the magistrates' court, the criminal caseload has fallen from 445,000 in July 2020 to 358,100 in April 2022. The outstanding caseload in the Crown Court has reduced from around 60,700 cases in June 2021 to around 58,300 cases at the end of April 2022.

Receipts and disposals by offence group and by Crown Court is already published in the '[Crown Court cases received, disposed and outstanding tool](#)'. The tool provides quarterly data from 2014 to 2021 by Crown Court and selected offence groups and can be adjusted to establish annual figures.

The tool doesn't include 'All rape' in the list of offence groups so a table (Table 1 attached) has been provided for PQ 23305.

Magistrates courts' information relating to receipts, disposals and outstanding cases is not available by offence type. Identifying the selected offence groups for this PQ would therefore represent disproportionate costs.

**Attachments:**

1. 23305\_table [2022-06-27 23305.xlsx]

## LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

### ■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]

**Sarah Olney:**

**[900730]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps he is taking to support commercial tenants for the purposes of transforming town centres.

**Neil O'Brien:**

Regenerating our town centres is essential to levelling up the country. That is why Government is -

- Providing support to 152 local areas via the High Streets Task Force.
- Investing over £800 million through the Future High Streets Fund.
- Introducing measures to tackle empty properties through high-street rental auctions.
- Reviewing Commercial Leasehold legislation and the landlord and tenant relationship.
- At the 2021 Autumn Budget the Chancellor announced a new relief worth almost £1.7 billion for eligible retail, hospitality, and leisure businesses in England to support local high streets as they adapt and recover.
- And has recently consulted about an Online Sales Tax.

### ■ Beach Huts: Property Transfer

**Sir Christopher Chope:**

**[22339]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, pursuant to the Answer of 16 June 2022 to Question 16828 on Beach Huts: Property Transfer, if he will publish the (a) policy objectives and (b) intent and spirit underpinning the Government's extension of the freedoms provided; and what the process is for him to be notified of any indication that authorities are not using the direction as planned.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

From April 2022, the Government has extended the flexibility for authorities to use capital receipts to fund transformation projects that produce long-term savings or reduce the costs of service delivery until 2023-24

It is for local authorities to make sure that they apply the flexibility correctly and have regard to the Guidance on Flexible Use of Capital Receipts. The guidance is clear

that the flexibility is to allow authorities to use the proceeds from the sale of assets to fund transformation and release savings. Authorities must appropriately comply with the rules and guidance, and adherence should be subject to internal scrutiny and review by auditors

The Government is now carefully considering whether amendments are needed to the direction and guidance to make sure the freedoms are used in the spirit and intent with which they are provided.

## ■ Buildings: Insulation

**Hilary Benn:**

[20212]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether Kingspan Greenguard polystyrene insulation has been certified as safe to use in the construction of buildings.

**Stuart Andrew:**

Under the existing regulatory framework for construction products, there is no obligation on 'economic operators' (manufacturers, importers and distributors) to certify that a product is safe to be used in the construction of buildings.

It is our intention to address this safety gap and make sure that all construction products available on the UK market fall under a regulatory regime. The Building Safety Act creates powers to make regulations to require products to be safe before they are placed on the UK market. It will also bring the regulation of products identified as being safety critical in line with arrangements for products that are covered by the existing regulatory regime. These new regulations will be underpinned by a strengthened market surveillance and enforcement regime.

All building works must comply with the requirements of the Building Regulations 2010 not limited to, but including, safety related performance requirements.

## ■ Community Ownership Fund and Levelling Up Fund

**James Grundy:**

[900732]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the potential impact on local communities of the projects funded through the latest tranche of awards from the (a) Levelling Up Fund and (b) Community Ownership Fund.

**Sara Britcliffe:**

[900736]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the potential impact on local communities of the projects funded through the latest tranche of awards from the (a) Levelling Up Fund and (b) Community Ownership Fund.

**Michael Gove:**

The Levelling Up Fund considers the impact of projects in local communities, by looking at how strongly each bid aligns and supports local need.

The Community Ownership Fund considers the impact of projects in local communities by assessing how an asset under community ownership will deliver benefits to a local community and bolster pride of place.

## ■ Cost of Living

**Carol Monaghan:**

[\[900733\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what recent assessment he has made of the potential effect of the levelling up agenda on the cost of living.

**Michael Gove:**

The Government is committed to uniting and levelling up all parts of the UK which for too long have been left behind. We recognise the impact on household incomes during a time where global inflation pressures are being felt - but it is only by working together that we can deliver on supporting those most in need and ensure all parts of the UK benefit from the Governments levelling up agenda.

## ■ First Time Buyers

**Mohammad Yasin:**

[\[900728\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps he is taking to support first-time buyers onto the housing ladder.

**Michael Gove:**

The Government is committed to supporting first time buyers into home ownership.

On 9<sup>th</sup> June the Prime Minister announced new measures including a review looking into reforming the mortgage market, removing disincentives to home ownership in the welfare system; and working to extend the right to buy to housing association tenants.

## ■ Garden Communities

**Peter Gibson:**

[\[900731\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what progress his Department has made on supporting garden communities.

**Stuart Andrew:**

This Government is committed to supporting the development of locally-led garden communities. In May this year, I announced a package of £15 million to support 43 garden communities from Cornwall to Carlisle. This brings the total support since the launch of the programme in 2014 to over £69.4 million.



**■ High Rise Flats: Fire Prevention**

**Sarah Olney:** [\[22495\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, under what circumstances vendors need an EWS1 certificate; and whether those circumstances have been accepted by mortgage lenders.

**Stuart Andrew:**

The EWS1 process was designed, and is owned, by industry and is used as a valuation tool. The requirement for and use of the EWS1 form is determined by the lending policies of banks and building societies.

**■ Homes for Ukraine Scheme**

**Anne Marie Morris:** [\[18910\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how long a Ukrainian national in resident in the UK under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme can return to Ukraine for before the payment to the UK sponsor of that person ceases.

**Eddie Hughes:**

*[Holding answer 20 June 2022]:* Lead sponsors are eligible to claim the £350 “thank you” payment for a full month if their guests were residing at their accommodation for at least half of the month before they left. Payments are paid monthly in arrears and paused payments can resume within the remaining 12 month period of sponsorship when guests return to live with their sponsor.

**■ Homes for Ukraine Scheme: Children**

**Kirsten Oswald:** [\[22443\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, pursuant to the Answer of 21 June 2022 Question 5468 on Homes for Ukraine Scheme: Children, what assessment the Government has made of the potential merits of awarding visas to minors travelling to the UK from Ukraine with the consent of parents who are remaining in Ukraine to contribute to its defence against the Russian invasion.

**Kirsten Oswald:** [\[22444\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, pursuant to the Answer of 21 June 2022 to Question 5468 on Homes for Ukraine Scheme: Children, what assessment the Government has made of the potential merits of awarding visas to minors travelling to the UK with the consent of parents who are remaining in Ukraine as a result of caring responsibilities.

**Eddie Hughes:**

I refer the Hon Member to the statement made by my Rt Hon Friend, the Secretary of State ([HCWS123](#)) on 22 June 2022.



## ■ Homes for Ukraine Scheme: Payments

**Kate Green:**

[R] [\[22425\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how many £350 optional thank you payments have been made under the Homes for Ukraine scheme; and what the average time taken is for a thank you payment to be made.

**Eddie Hughes:**

Data relating to these payments will be made available in due course.

## ■ Leasehold: Reform

**Matt Western:**

[\[900729\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what legislative steps he is taking to progress leasehold reform.

**Eddie Hughes:**

This Government is committed to creating a fair and just housing system that works for everyone.

We have already made great strides with the Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Act 2022, which will come into force from 30 June. The leasehold measures in our Building Safety Act will come into force tomorrow meaning that for the first time, qualifying leaseholders in buildings above 11 metres or with at least five storeys will be legally protected from extortionate building safety costs.

In the next Parliamentary Session, we will legislate to reform the leasehold and commonhold systems, helping millions of households genuinely to own their own home.

## ■ Pest Control: Birds

**Rosie Duffield:**

[\[22503\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will review legislation on netting on buildings to deter birds.

**Stuart Andrew:**

All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and developers must consider the impact on local wildlife and take precautionary action to protect habitats, following Natural England guidelines. As set out in a letter from the late former Secretary of State, Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, to developers in 2019, bird netting should be kept to a minimum and used only to help protect birds during development.

Anti-bird netting can be appropriate where there is a duty to ensure that pest species are prevented from multiplying and doing damage on public health grounds or to protect a heritage asset for instance. If care is taken to avoid cruelty through accidental trapping of a bird, we support local authorities and others who put up nets or spike arrays where necessary in the public interest.

## ■ Planning: Reform

**Emma Hardy:**

[\[900735\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what progress he has made on reforming the planning system.

**Stuart Andrew:**

We introduced the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill to the House on 11 May this year.

This sets out a wide-ranging set of changes to put communities more in control of planning decisions which affect them and drive better outcomes on the things communities care most about: the design of development, infrastructure delivery, the environment and their local neighbourhoods.

## ■ Recreation Spaces

**Stuart Anderson:**

[\[20306\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what plans he has to support the creation of new (a) pocket parks and (b) other recreational spaces.

**Neil O'Brien:**

The Levelling Up White Paper is clear that green infrastructure is a key component to levelling up, as so many levelling up goals are connected to green places that local people can be proud of.

Which is why my department has partnered with DEFRA to deliver the £9 million Levelling Up Parks Fund to support over 100 new or significantly refurbished green spaces across the UK. This is not another round of funding the Pocket Parks programme. This scheme will be far broader; it will support councils through revenue and capital funding and will focus on the regeneration of green space as part of our Levelling Up agenda. In England, grants will be given to, and administered by, local authorities who will be notified of their eligibility when the Fund launches.

My department has also set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. The NPPF is clear that open space should not be built on unless there is clear evidence it is no longer required, or equivalent or better provision is secured. Communities can designate land for Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans, ensuring green areas of particular importance to them are protected. My department have also set out in the National Design Guide that well-designed places have a hierarchy of spaces that range from large and strategic to small and local spaces, including parks, squares, greens and pocket parks. The National Model Design Code sets out that design codes can specify levels of green infrastructure provision and guidance on design within new development, and cover everything from country parks to green roofs and street trees.

## ■ Regional Planning and Development: Greater London

**James Murray:**

[\[22571\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment has he made of the potential effect of clauses 82 to 91 and schedule 7 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill on (a) how the Mayor of London should (i) consult, (ii) draft, (iii) publish and (iv) gain approval for and (b) his role in relation to the London Plan.

**James Murray:**

[\[22572\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment has he made of the potential effect of clauses 82 to 91 and schedule 7 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill on the powers that would be (a) gained and (b) lost by the (i) Secretary of State and (ii) Mayor of London.

**James Murray:**

[\[22573\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he make it his policy to publish a list of any (a) discussions and (b) correspondence his Department has with the Mayor of London on the potential impact of clauses 82 to 91 and schedule 7 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.

**James Murray:**

[\[22574\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will make it his policy to publish details of any (a) consultation and (b) consultation responses his Department undertakes relating to the proposed changes to the London Plan as set out in clauses 82 to 91 and schedule 7 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.

**Stuart Andrew:**

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill will not affect how the Mayor consults on the London Plan, gains approval for it or either the Mayor's or the Secretary of State's role in relation to it. London Plan policies would, in future, need to avoid conflict with National Development Management Policies - which the Bill empowers the Secretary of State to prepare - and be of strategic importance to more than one borough. The requirement to assist with plan making will apply to prescribed bodies in relation to the London Plan and the Mayor would gain the power to prepare supplementary plans on design matters.

These, and more minor changes, are explained in the Explanatory Notes to the Bill. There have not been discussions or correspondence with the Mayor, nor consultation, on the clauses referred to prior to the Bill's publication, but my officials have had informal discussions with GLA officers following publication of the Bill.

**NORTHERN IRELAND****■ Northern Ireland Office: Consultants**

**Wendy Chamberlain:** [23420]

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how much his Department spent on external consultants in each of the last five years.

**Conor Burns:**

The amount spent on consultants for the last five years by the Northern Ireland Office is set out in the Department's Annual Report and Accounts:

**2017-18** - £79,600

**2018-19** - £640,800

**2019-20** - £845,600

**2020-21** - £270,500

The amount for 2021-22 will be included in the Department's forthcoming Annual Report and Accounts.

**PRIME MINISTER****■ Independent Adviser on Ministers' Interests**

**Caroline Lucas:** [23263]

To ask the Prime Minister, pursuant to the Answer of 21 June 2022 to Question 19605 on Lord Geidt, what criteria he uses for deciding when to request the advice of the Independent Adviser on Ministers' Interests on matters relating to the national interest.

**Boris Johnson:**

From time to time, issues may arise relating to the national interest, and in these cases it is helpful to obtain advice on how those issues may be best addressed to avoid or mitigate potential conflicts under the Ministerial Code.

I also refer the Hon. Member to the Terms of Reference on the Independent Adviser (as of May 2022), which sets out the Adviser's role in providing confidential advice to the Prime Minister. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/terms-of-reference-for-the-independent-adviser-on-ministers-interests--2/terms-of-reference-independent-adviser-on-ministers-interests>

**■ Prime Minister: Disclosure of Information**

**Angela Rayner:** [23307]

To ask the Prime Minister, if he will publish the minutes of the meeting detailed in his transparency publication on 7 June 2022 entitled Financial Services Roundtable to discuss global competitiveness, levelling up and net zero.

**Steve Barclay:**

I have been asked to reply, further to the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition at Prime Minister's Questions on 22 June.

A read-out of the meeting was published at the time and is available on the gov.uk website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-call-with-financial-services-leaders-7-june-2021>

Contrary to the incorrect claims made by the Leader of the Opposition, I would note that there are no plans to remove the bankers' bonus cap. This remains in place and is the responsibility of the Prudential Regulation Authority.

**SCOTLAND**■ **Scotland Office: Consultants****Wendy Chamberlain:**[\[23422\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, how much his Department spent on external consultants in each of the last five years.

**Mr Alister Jack:**

My Department has not incurred any expenditure on external consultants in any of the last five years.

**TRANSPORT**■ **Acceleration Unit****Stephen Hammond:**[\[22380\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will provide Parliament with a report on the work of his Department's Acceleration Unit.

**Andrew Stephenson:**

The Acceleration Unit performs valuable work at the Department for Transport. DfT oversight and leadership on Project Speed and the secretariat of the Northern Transport Acceleration Council have both been transferred to the Acceleration Unit. The Acceleration Unit also has oversight of the departmental contribution to cross-Whitehall activity in relation to acceleration, particularly work on reforming the planning system, utilities, and how DfT can use improved governance to efficiently deliver projects.

**Stephen Hammond:**[\[22381\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many projects the Acceleration Unit has advised on since it was established; and if he will make an estimate of the (a) time and (b) monetary savings secured on projects due to advice from the Acceleration Unit.

**Andrew Stephenson:**

The time and cost savings generated through the work of the Acceleration Unit can be complex to disaggregate and some of the information is commercially sensitive.

**Stephen Hammond:** [\[22382\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much it cost to operate the Acceleration Unit in each year since 2020.

**Andrew Stephenson:**

The costs for the Acceleration Unit are met out of existing Civil Service staffing budgets.

■ **Aircraft and Ships: Russia****Matt Vickers:** [\[22600\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he has taken with the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs to sanction and detain Russian aircraft and sea vessels.

**Robert Courts:**

The Government has introduced an unprecedented level of sanctions on Russia to maximise economic pressure on Putin's regime. This includes far reaching transport sanctions that prohibit any aircraft or ship owned, controlled, registered, flagged, chartered or operated by a designated person or those connected with Russia from arriving, overflying or landing in the UK. To date, at least 28 vessels have knowingly been disrupted by these sanctions, and we have detained 3 aircraft and 1 superyacht.

■ **ATOL****Paul Maynard:** [\[21163\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he plans to publish the consultation on reform of ATOL.

**Robert Courts:**

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) carried out an initial consultation on ATOL Reform in 2021, which explored ways to improve the financial resilience of ATOL holders with better protection of consumer money. The CAA published their summary of responses to the consultation on 25 May 2022. We are working closely with the CAA and expect further consultation on firm proposals later this year.

■ **Aviation****Mr Tobias Ellwood:** [\[22364\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure that the aviation sector is (a) innovative and (b) sustainable.

**Robert Courts:**

The Government's vision is for the UK to be a world leader in innovative aviation technology that has a transformative effect on the movement of people and goods. The Government is providing £125m, matched by £175m from industry, of support for Innovate UK's Future Flight Challenge. The Challenge seeks to support the demonstration in the UK of Unmanned, Advanced Air Mobility and sub-regional electric and hydrogen air services.

The Government is also supporting a variety of innovative technology, fuel and market-based measures to address aviation emissions and ensure that the sector is sustainable and achieves net zero by 2050.

In July 2021, we published the Jet Zero Consultation which sets out our vision for the aviation sector to reach net zero by 2050, focussing on the rapid development of technologies in a way that maintains the benefits of air travel and maximises the opportunities that decarbonisation can bring for the UK. We are carefully considering consultation responses, alongside wider government policy and the very latest technological developments in the development of the final Jet Zero Strategy, which we are aiming to publish later this year.

Over the next three years, we are providing £685m funding to the Aerospace Technology Institute Programme to support the development of new and zero-carbon emission aircraft technology, and £180m funding to accelerate the commercialisation of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) plants and fuel testing in the UK.

**■ Aviation: Compensation****Damien Moore:****[22508]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department has taken to ensure that airline customers receive (a) fair and (b) considered compensation for cancelled flights.

**Robert Courts:**

There is already a framework of legislation in place to protect consumer's rights when travelling by air, including when and what compensation is due in the event of cancellations. It is of vital importance that passengers know their rights. Airlines and the Civil Aviation Authority already provide to passengers on what to do if something goes wrong with their flight. To further support this, we are developing an Aviation Passenger Charter, alongside industry and consumer groups, to further support passengers to understand their rights, responsibilities and reasonable expectations when travelling by air, from booking to if something goes wrong, including flight cancellations.

We also recently consulted on a range of consumer policy reforms, including additional powers for the Civil Aviation Authority to enforce consumer rights, mandatory alternative dispute resolution for all airlines operating in the UK, to enable individuals to seek redress. We are currently reviewing all responses and will set out next steps in due course.

Air passenger rights remains a key priority for Government, which we recently reaffirmed in the Flightpath to the Future publication, which commits to ensuring consumers are protected and have the confidence to fly. We will continue to work with the Civil Aviation Authority to ensure consumer laws are being adhered to and consumers protected.

■ **Department for Transport: Consultants**

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:** [22363]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much his Department spent on consultancy fees in each year since 2017.

**Andrew Stephenson:**

Expenditure figures are available in the Department's Annual Report and Accounts, which are available online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dft-annual-reports-and-accounts>.

We are in the process of producing the Department's Annual Report which will be published in July, this will include our audited consultancy spend for 2021-22.

**Wendy Chamberlain:** [23412]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much his Department spent on external consultants in each of the last five years.

**Andrew Stephenson:**

Expenditure figures are available from the Department's Annual Report and Accounts, which are available online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dft-annual-reports-and-accounts>.

We are in the process of producing the Department's Annual Report which will be published in July, this will include our audited consultancy spend for 2021-22.

■ **Department for Transport: Media**

**Emily Thornberry:** [21136]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 14 June to Question 13678 on Department for Transport: Media, whether all payments over £25,000 made by his Department to Manning Gottlieb OMD from 7 November 2018 to 21 May 2022 related to expenditure took place under the Media Buying framework agreement RM6003.

**Andrew Stephenson:**

Yes, all payments over £25,000 made to Manning Gottlieb OMD from 7 November 2018 to 21 May 2022 related to expenditure that took place under the Media Buying framework agreement RM6003.



## ■ Electric Vehicles: Charging Points

**Sarah Olney:**

[\[23367\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make an estimate of the average cost of charging an electric vehicle through a (a) public and (b) private electric vehicle charging point.

**Trudy Harrison:**

The average cost of charging at public chargepoints is generally higher than at private chargepoints. Some energy suppliers offer off-peak tariffs which EV drivers can use for private charging at home. For example, Octopus Energy offer a tariff which has an off-peak price of 7.5p/kWh and a peak price of 35.1p/kWh. Public charging costs can vary heavily depending on battery size and charger speed, network and location. Cornwall Insight has found charging costs in May varied from 26p/kWh-89p/kWh.

Through our EV Infrastructure Strategy we set out our vision that people will have access to affordable and fairly priced public charging, so that those without off-street parking at home can switch to an EV without facing disproportionate charging costs. Competition between chargepoint operators will keep prices down and quality of service high. EVs benefit from a huge advantage in running costs – as low as around 2p per mile for off-peak electricity compared to 20p per mile for petrol or diesel vehicles. The cost of running an EV remains competitive compared to petrol/diesel equivalents - irrespective of charging type.

## ■ Electric Vehicles: Infrastructure

**Matt Vickers:**

[\[22595\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to improve electric vehicle infrastructure in the UK.

**Trudy Harrison:**

Government has committed over £1.6 billion to support charging infrastructure at homes, on the street, in workplaces, destinations and along major roads. We have published a landmark electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure strategy setting out our plans to accelerate the rollout of a world-class charging network across the UK. Our strategy sets out our vision and commitments to make EV charging cheaper and more convenient than refuelling at a petrol station.

In addition, we have announced new regulations for public chargepoints to improve confidence in the charging network and make the user experience truly seamless. Drivers will benefit from simplified payment methods as well as the ability to compare prices and access real-time information about chargepoints. We will ensure there is a 99% reliability rate at rapid chargepoints. We will be introducing payment roaming to support the electrification of fleets. Chargepoints will need to have open data so that they are easy to find using maps and apps. We will lay legislation later this year.

## ■ Electric Vehicles: North West

**Damien Moore:**

**[22509]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to improve electric vehicle infrastructure in the North West.

**Trudy Harrison:**

Government has committed over £1.6 billion to support charging infrastructure at homes, on the street, in workplaces, destinations and along major roads. We have published a landmark electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure strategy setting out our plans to accelerate the rollout of a world-class charging network across the UK. Our strategy sets out our vision and commitments to make EV charging cheaper and more convenient than refuelling at a petrol station.

In addition, we have announced new regulations for public chargepoints to improve confidence in the charging network and make the user experience truly seamless. Drivers will benefit from simplified payment methods as well as the ability to compare prices and access real-time information about chargepoints. We will ensure there is a 99% reliability rate at rapid chargepoints. We will be introducing payment roaming to support the electrification of fleets. Chargepoints will need to have open data so that they are easy to find using maps and apps. We will lay legislation later this year.

To ensure that the transition to electric vehicles takes place in every part of the country, we are pledging at least £500m to support local chargepoint provision. As part of this, the Local EV Infrastructure (LEVI) fund will provide approximately £400m of capital and £50m of resource funding to support local authorities to work with industry and transform the availability of charging for drivers without off-street parking. We have launched a £10 million pilot as a springboard for the development of the full fund.

This year, £20 million is available through the on-street residential chargepoint scheme to all UK local authorities to provide public chargepoints to their residents without access to private parking.

Local authorities have a key role to play as they are best placed to consider local needs. We encourage local authorities to apply for funding to provide chargers for their residents.

## ■ Hydrogen Fuelling Stations

**Mr Barry Sheerman:**

**[22348]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he plans to take steps to encourage the building of publicly accessible hydrogen refuelling stations.

**Trudy Harrison:**

Support for the deployment of hydrogen refueling infrastructure is linked to specific investments and research and development programmes, such as the refueling infrastructure to support the deployment of 124 hydrogen fuel cell buses in the West Midlands through our Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas scheme and our pioneering

£200m zero emission road freight HGV demonstrators, which will demonstrate hydrogen fuel cell HGVs on UK roads.

#### ■ **Railway Stations: Visual Impairment**

**Sir Greg Knight:**

[\[22359\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans he has to increase tactile paving at railway stations to improve safety for visually impaired passengers; and if he will make a statement.

**Wendy Morton:**

We remain fully committed to fitting tactile surfaces on platforms across all mainline stations in Great Britain. Network Rail received an initial £10 million to install tactile paving at priority stations. We are committed to installing tactiles at the remaining stations as soon as possible.

#### ■ **Railways: Finance**

**Ben Bradley:**

[\[21260\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make it his policy to include a Coventry, Leicester and Nottingham connectivity project in the forthcoming Rail Network Enhancement Pipeline.

**Wendy Morton:**

Although unable to discuss individual projects at this time the Government is focusing our investment on rail infrastructure in the Midlands and the North.

**Alex Norris:**

[\[23390\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he plans to publish the Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline.

**Wendy Morton:**

We remain committed to publishing the RNEP update, which has been delayed by the need to take account of the impacts of the pandemic and the Spending Review. We want to provide as much clarity and certainty as possible on rail enhancements and will set out our plans shortly.

#### ■ **Railways: Freight**

**Alex Norris:**

[\[23389\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make an assessment of the potential impact of proposed improvements to rail connectivity between Coventry, Leicester and Nottingham on rail freight.

**Wendy Morton:**

Midlands Connect produced an SOBC for this scheme in May 2021, which refers to potential uses that this proposal could have for rail freight.

**■ Railways: Midlands****Alex Norris:** [\[23387\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has made an assessment of the potential impact of reinstating direct services on the Coventry-Leicester-Nottingham rail corridor on the number of passengers travelling by train along that corridor.

**Wendy Morton:**

Although unable to discuss individual projects at this time the Government is now focusing our investment on rail infrastructure in the Midlands and the North. This will help deliver on the Government's ambition to grow and level up the economy and provide equality of opportunity.

We remain committed to publishing the RNEP update, which has been delayed by the need to take account of the impacts of the pandemic and the Spending Review. We want to provide as much clarity and certainty as possible on rail enhancements and will set out our plans shortly.

**Alex Norris:** [\[23388\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to help reduce journey times by rail between Coventry, Leicester and Nottingham.

**Wendy Morton:**

The Government has committed to the largest ever single investment in Britain's railways with the £96bn Integrated Rail Plan for the North and Midlands. We will construct a new high speed line from the West Midlands to the East Midlands which will directly serve Nottingham and Derby and allow interchange at East Midlands Parkway.

In addition, we will complete electrification of the Midland Main Line, including Leicester whilst progressing options for Midlands Rail Hub, focusing on improving links across the Midlands, including Hereford, Worcester and Coventry.

We remain committed to publishing the RNEP update, which has been delayed by the need to take account of the impacts of the pandemic and the Spending Review. We want to provide as much clarity and certainty as possible on rail enhancements and will set out our plans shortly.

**■ Railways: Pay****Stephen Hammond:** [\[22384\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make an estimate of the average salary of (a) train guards, (b) train drivers and (c) signalling staff as of 21 June 2022.

**Wendy Morton:**

Rail staff salaries are managed and set by the individual Train Operating Companies and Network Rail in line with their annual budgets.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) report that in 2021 median gross annual pay for train and tram drivers in the UK was approximately £59,000. The ONS does not

specifically report on the pay of train guards and signalling staff but do publish pay estimates of wider groupings of which they are a part. Rail Travel Assistants (including train guards) had average gross median pay of circa £33,000 in 2021. The equivalent for Rail Transport Operatives (including signalling staff) was circa £49,000.

## ■ Railways: Strikes

**Stephen Hammond:**

[22383]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on the potential impact of the rail strikes on the economy.

**Wendy Morton:**

The Government regrets that the trade unions have chosen to go ahead with the strikes. These strikes are impacting local businesses and the ability of the general public to get to school, hospital and work.

The Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR) has estimated the cost to the economy of the three days of strike action to be at least £91 million.

The Secretary of State is frequently updating Cabinet about the impact of the strikes. The Government and rail industry, including Network Rail, have worked together and continue to work together to ensure plans are in place to minimise disruption allowing for freight and passenger services to remain operational where possible. The Civil Contingencies Secretariat is also convening ministers daily during the strike period to assess operational response and impact.

## ■ Spaceflight

**Matt Vickers:**

[22597]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he has taken to support the launch of rockets and satellites from the UK.

**Trudy Harrison:**

The Government has bold spaceflight ambitions that we outlined in the [National Space Strategy](#) including achieving Europe's first small satellite launch from the UK this year.

The Department for Transport has put in place the Space Industry Act 2018, the Space Industry Regulations 2021 and is funding the costs of the Civil Aviation Authority, which has been appointed as the spaceflight regulator. Our modern legal framework is internationally competitive - ensuring that new spaceflight activities regulated under these provisions are safe and provide the right opportunities for industry to support innovation and growth in the UK Space Sector.

## ■ Supply Chains

**Matt Vickers:**

[22598]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to support UK supply chains.

**Trudy Harrison:**

Supporting supply chains is a top priority for the Government. In response to recent supply chain pressures, we have introduced 33 measures to address HGV driver shortages which are having a positive effect. At a longer-term strategic level, the Future of Freight Plan was published on 15 June which sets out how the Government will adopt a multi-modal approach to freight to support efficient, resilient and sustainable supply chains. Government is also supporting the industry-led Generation Logistics campaign to attract new talent to the logistics sector.

**Travel: Compensation****Julian Sturdy:**[\[22420\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if his Department will take steps to help simplify the process for claiming compensation for (a) flight cancellations and (b) the cost of alternative travel arrangements.

**Robert Courts:**

There is already a framework of legislation in place to protect consumer's rights when travelling by air, including in the event of cancellations. It is of vital importance that passengers know their rights. Airlines and the Civil Aviation Authority already provide to passengers on what to do if something goes wrong with their flight. To further support this, we are developing an Aviation Passenger Charter, alongside industry and consumer groups, to further support passengers to understand their rights, responsibilities and reasonable expectations when travelling by air, from booking to if something goes wrong.

We also recently consulted on a range of consumer policy reforms, including additional powers for the Civil Aviation Authority to enforce consumer rights, and mandatory alternative dispute resolution for all airlines operating in the UK, to enable individuals to seek redress. We are currently reviewing all responses and will set out next steps in due course.

Air passenger rights remains a key priority for Government, which we recently reaffirmed in the Flightpath to the Future publication, which commits to ensuring consumers are protected and have the confidence to fly. We will continue to work with the Civil Aviation Authority to ensure consumer laws are being adhered to and consumers protected.

**TREASURY****Car Allowances****Sir Alan Campbell:**[\[21098\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of further support for (a) care staff and (b) other people who rely on their car for work in the form of a mileage uplift.

**Helen Whately:**

Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (AMAPs) are used by employers to reimburse an employee's expenses for business mileage in their private vehicle.

AMAPs are intended to create administrative simplicity and certainty by using an average rate, which reflects vehicle running costs including fuel, servicing and depreciation. Fuel is therefore only one component, constituting around a third of total costs included within the rate.

Ultimately it is for employers to determine the rate at which they reimburse their employees. Therefore, the AMAP rate is advisory and employers can choose to pay more or less than the advisory rate. Employees who receive less than the AMAP rate can claim tax relief on the difference. Employees who receive more will not be taxed on the difference if they can provide evidence of the expenditure.

Most domiciliary care staff are employed by private providers who decide their mileage reimbursement rate.

Like all taxes and allowances, the Government keeps the AMAP rate under review.

**Martyn Day:**[\[21239\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 16 June 2022 to Question 15313 on Advisory Fuel Rates (AFR), what assessment he has made of the merits of reviewing the AFR more frequently than once a quarter, given that on 13 June 2022, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy recorded average fuel prices of 182.53 pence per litre for petrol, and 190.43 pence per litre for diesel, prices which are higher than the current AFR of 165.1 pence per litre for petrol, and 179.7 pence per litre for diesel.

**Helen Whately:**

AFRs need to be calculated in advance of their publication on GOV.UK. This means that the AFRs published on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2022 (165.1 pence per litre for petrol, and 179.7 pence per litre for diesel) were calculated using BEIS data from 16<sup>th</sup> May 2022. The next publication of AFRs is due on 1<sup>st</sup> September.

AFRs are an administrative easement and increasing the frequency of review would create administrative burdens for employers as well as HMRC.

AFR rates are not mandatory, and employers and employees can agree to use different rates to reflect scenarios in which a car is more fuel efficient or where the cost of business travel is higher.

**Owen Thompson:**[\[23354\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of reviewing the levels of Approved Mileage Allowance Payments at more regular intervals in light of recent increases to fuel prices.

**Helen Whately:**

The Government sets the Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (AMAPs) rates to minimise administrative burdens. AMAPs aim to reflect running costs including fuel,



servicing and depreciation. Depreciation is estimated to constitute the most significant proportion of the AMAPs. Fuel costs only contribute to a fraction of AMAP rates and not the total rate.

Employers are not required to use the AMAPs. Instead, they can agree to reimburse the actual cost incurred, where individuals can provide evidence of the expenditure, without an Income Tax or National Insurance charge arising.

Alternatively, they can choose to pay a different mileage rate that is higher or lower than AMAPs. If an employee is paid less than the approved amount, they are allowed to claim Mileage Allowance Relief (MAR) from HMRC. However, if the payment exceeds the amount due under AMAPs, and this results in a profit for the individual, they will be liable to pay Income Tax and National Insurance contributions on the difference.

As with all taxes and allowances, the Government keeps AMAP rates under review and any changes are considered by the Chancellor.

#### ■ **Cars: Liquefied Petroleum Gas**

**Mr Richard Holden:**

[\[21314\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the evidential basis is for his fiscal policy on liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cars; and if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of reviewing that policy in order to incentivise the use of LPG cars.

**Helen Whately:**

The government uses the tax system to encourage the purchase of cars with low carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions. Vehicles powered by Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) benefit from a reduced rate of fuel duty in comparison to the main road fuel rate. Budget 2018 extended the current duty differential until 2032, subject to review in 2024.

The temporary fuel duty cut announced at Spring Statement 2022 reduced rates for LPG proportionately to the 5p reduction for petrol and diesel to maintain the relative differential.

From 1 March 2001, cars powered by LPG, including those converted following first registration, receive a £10 discount on their annual VED payment.

#### ■ **Charging Points: VAT**

**Sarah Olney:**

[\[23366\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Answer of 19 May 2022 to Question 1304 on Electric Vehicles: Charging Points and the Answer of 16 May 2022 to Question 2301 on Charging Points: VAT, how much revenue was collected through VAT on public electric vehicle charging points in each of the last three years.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The information requested is not available. HMRC does not hold information on VAT revenue from specific products or services. Businesses are not required to provide



figures at a product level on their VAT returns, as this would impose an excessive administrative burden.

## ■ Council Tax: Valuation

**Mr Richard Holden:**

[22581]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many and what proportion of properties are in Council Tax bands A to D in each (a) local authority and (b) constituency as of 21 June 2022.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The Valuation Office Agency publishes annual statistics on the number of domestic properties in each Council Tax Band, by Local Authority area. The latest publication can be found at: [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/council-tax-stock-of-properties-2022](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/council-tax-stock-of-properties-2022).

Table 1.0 shows the number of properties by Council Tax band and Local Authority for each year from 1993 to 2022. Table 2.0 shows the number of properties by Council Tax band and Westminster Parliamentary Constituencies for 2022.

The current publication displays statistics up to 31 March 2022. The next publication for figures up to 31 March 2023 will be published next year.

## ■ Cryptocurrencies

**Matt Vickers:**

[22601]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what progress he has made towards making the UK an attractive place for cryptocurrency companies to operate.

**John Glen:**

The Government set out at Fintech Week our firm ambition to make Britain a global hub for cryptoasset technology and investment. The Government wants to ensure firms can invest, innovate and scale up in this country. And the Government has announced a number of reforms which will see the regulation and aspects of tax treatment of cryptoassets evolve – our clear message to cryptoasset firms is that the UK is open for business.

These include committing to consult on a future regulatory regime later this year; legislating to bring stablecoins into payments regulation; setting up a ministerial-chaired Cryptoasset Engagement Group, bringing together key figures in industry; working with the Royal Mint to create a Non-Fungible Token; and exploring ways of enhancing the competitiveness of the UK tax system to encourage further development of the cryptoasset market in the UK.

## ■ Cryptocurrencies: Regulation

**Damien Moore:**

[22515]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he plans to introduce regulation on (a) cryptocurrencies and (b) other decentralised financial assets in the UK.

**John Glen:**

The UK is committed to creating a regulatory environment in which firms can innovate, while crucially maintaining financial stability and regulatory standards so that people can use new technologies both reliably and safely.

The Government has already taken forward a series of regulatory measures to protect consumers, manage market integrity risks and support innovation. Since 2020 the FCA has been the anti-money laundering supervisor for cryptoasset firms. In January 2022 the Government confirmed the intention to bring certain cryptoassets into the scope of the Financial Promotion Order to ensure that cryptoasset promotions are fair, clear, and not misleading.

On April 4 the Government published its response to its 2021 consultation on the UK's regulatory approach to stablecoins. It also included a call for evidence on the use of Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT) in financial markets. The legislation to bring stablecoins, where used as a means of payment, within the regulatory perimeter is expected to be part of the forthcoming Financial Services and Markets Bill announced in the Queen's Speech on 10 May. The Bill will be introduced later in the session when parliamentary time allows.

Further, the Government considers that some cryptoassets may already fall within the relevant UK legal frameworks. However, this also depends on the structure of the token and nature of the activities concerned.

At Fintech Week 2022, the Government announced its commitment to consult on a world-leading regime for a broader set of cryptoasset activities this year.

**■ Economic Growth: West Midlands****Stuart Anderson:****[23408]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to drive economic growth in the Black Country.

**Helen Whately:**

The Government published its Levelling Up White Paper in February, which sets out our missions as part of a decade long masterplan to see the potential of every corner of the United Kingdom fulfilled.

Through the Levelling Up Fund, designed to invest in infrastructure that improves everyday life across the UK, Wolverhampton will receive £20m to develop its City Learning Quarter, delivering 10,000 qualifications over ten years. Wolverhampton, Dudley, Sandwell and Walsall will receive a combined total of over £35m directly from the recently launched £2.6bn UK Shared Prosperity Fund, building pride in place, investing in businesses and improving life chances across the UK. Wolverhampton, Walsall and Dudley will also receive a combined total of £71m through the Towns Fund, which ensures that local areas can grow their economies, create and sustain local jobs whilst also carving out new opportunities to reshape the look and feel of their area.

## ■ Energy: Taxation

**Rachel Reeves:**

[\[22407\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference Draft legislation: Energy (Oil and Gas) Profits Levy Bill published on 21 June 2022 by his Department, what his timescale is for publishing a Tax Information and Impact Note for the Energy Profits Levy.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The legislation for the Energy Profits Levy will be formally introduced in Parliament shortly, and the Government will publish a Tax Information and Impact Note alongside its introduction.

## ■ Financial Services: Competition

**Matt Vickers:**

[\[22602\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to support the financial services sector to increase its competitiveness.

**John Glen:**

In his Mansion House statement in July 2021, the Chancellor set out the Government's vision for an open, competitive, green, and technologically advanced financial services sector.

A sweeping set of reforms to sharpen the UK's competitive advantage in financial services is already underway. As set out in the Queen's Speech on 10 May, the upcoming Financial Services and Markets Bill will deliver on these commitments by implementing the outcomes of the Future Regulatory Framework (FRF) Review as well as a series of important initiatives underpinning the Government's ambitious vision for the financial services sector.

## ■ Fuels: Excise Duties

**Yasmin Qureshi:**

[\[23254\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his Department has made an assessment of the (a) potential merits and (b) impact of a 15p reduction in fuel duty.

**Helen Whately:**

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

This is the largest cash-terms cut across all fuel duty rates at once, ever, and is only the second time in 20 years that main rates of petrol and diesel have been cut. This cut represents savings for households and businesses worth around £2.4 billion in 2022-23.

All taxes, including fuel duty, remain under review.

## ■ Fuels: Prices

**Virginia Crosbie:**

[\[23451\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to reduce fuel costs for essential services and industries; and if he will bring forward a fuel duty rebate for essential services and industries to help reduce costs in supply chains.

**Helen Whately:**

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

This is the largest cash-terms cut across all fuel duty rates at once, ever, and is only the second time in 20 years that main rates of petrol and diesel have been cut. This cut represents savings for households and businesses worth around £2.4 billion in 2022-23.

All taxes, including fuel duty, remain under review.

## ■ Individual Savings Accounts: Cost of Living

**Mr Richard Holden:**

[\[21309\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of reducing the withdrawal cost on Lifetime ISAs to 20 per cent in response to cost of living increases.

**John Glen:**

The Lifetime ISA (LISA) was designed as a long-term savings product to encourage people to save for either a first home or for later life by providing a generous 25% government bonus on up to £4,000 of contributions each year. Money held in a LISA, including the government bonus, can be withdrawn from the age of 60 or at an earlier stage if used as a deposit for the account holder's first home worth up to a maximum of £450,000. All other withdrawals are subject to a 25% government charge made to reflect the account's specific intention.

The Government has no current plans to reduce the LISA withdrawal charge to 20%. This would mean that the LISA would provide greater benefits than a current account or traditional savings account and undermine its positioning as a long-term savings vehicle. There are a range of other savings products allowing for immediate access of savings, including cash ISAs.

The government keeps all aspects of savings tax policy under review in the context of future fiscal events.

However, to support millions of households across the UK who are struggling to make their incomes stretch to cover the rising cost of living, the government is providing over £15bn of additional support, targeted particularly on those with the greatest need. This package builds on the over £22bn announced previously, with government support for the cost of living now totalling over £37bn this year.

## ■ Inflation

**Paula Barker:**

[\[22591\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has plans to mitigate the impact of a potential rise in inflation to 11 per cent, as forecast by the Bank of England.

**John Glen:**

The Government recognises the impact that high inflation has on households and has taken significant action to support all families. The Government is providing over £15bn of additional support, building on the over £22bn announced previously, with government support for the cost of living now totalling over £37bn this year.

The Government has the tools and resolve to reduce inflation through three tools – independent monetary policy, fiscal responsibility and supply side reform. Monetary policy is the responsibility of the independent Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Bank of England. Historically, the MPC have met the inflation target and inflation has averaged exactly 2% since independence. The Government retains full confidence in the Bank of England to take the necessary action to get inflation back on target and ensure inflation expectations remain anchored.

## ■ Infrastructure: Investment

**Stephen Hammond:**

[\[22386\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made for the implications of his policies of the Institution of Civil Engineer's recommendation that the National Infrastructure Strategy should be placed on a statutory footing to provide more clarity and guidance on where the UK Infrastructure Bank should focus.

**John Glen:**

The government is committed to the approach to infrastructure that was set out in the National Infrastructure Strategy (NIS) in November 2020. This addresses the long-term issues that have held back investment in and delivery of UK infrastructure, and ensures a coherent cross-sectoral approach to decision-making. Given this clarity, there are no plans to legislate for the NIS.

The Chancellor wrote to the UK Infrastructure Bank (UKIB) on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2022 to set out his strategic priorities for the Bank. The Chancellor's first non-statutory strategic steer provided further details on the Bank's objectives and scope. This letter has been published and is available on gov.uk. The Bank's first strategic plan was published on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022, and is in line with the NIS and the Chancellor's strategic steer, setting out the Bank's focus and its plans for the next twelve months. The Government is currently legislating to place the UKIB on a statutory footing, in order to complete the Bank's set-up as an operationally independent institution and to enshrine its objectives and activities in law.

## ■ Interest Rates

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

[\[22487\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to help ensure that banks are passing on the interest rate increase to their customers.

**John Glen:**

The pricing of financial products is a commercial decision for firms and the Government does not seek to intervene in such decisions.

The independent Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Bank of England makes monetary policy decisions independently of the Government. Therefore, the Government does not comment on the conduct or effectiveness of monetary policy. The MPC sets the base rate of interest, which is known as Bank Rate. This is the rate of interest the Bank of England will pay on reserves held with them by commercial banks. MPC decisions over Bank Rate guide commercial banks' decisions over retail interest rates, i.e. interest rates they charge on loans and pay on deposits. However, retail banks also make commercial judgements that influence the degree of pass-through from changes in Bank Rate into retail interest rates, with conditions in financial markets and in the banking sector also influencing interest rates paid on deposits or charged for lending.

## ■ Motor Vehicles: Hydrogen

**Mr Barry Sheerman:**

[\[22349\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he plans to take steps to provide financial incentives for the use of hydrogen powered commercial vehicles.

**Helen Whately:**

The Department for Transport, as the lead for the roll out of zero emission vehicles, continues to work closely with colleagues in BEIS on the government's support for the use of hydrogen for transport to deliver the plans set out in the recent Energy Security Strategy. This includes recent announcements of investment such as the £200m for the government's zero emission road freight HGV demonstrator programme and funding 124 hydrogen fuel cell buses and accompanying refuelling infrastructure through our Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas scheme. A number of hydrogen related projects were also funded as part of the Clean Maritime Demonstration Competition, which forms part of the Research and Development undertaken by the UK Shipping Office for Reducing Emissions (UK SHORE).

The government also uses the tax system to encourage the purchase of cars with low carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions. Road vehicles powered by hydrogen as fuel in an internal combustion engine benefit from a reduced rate of fuel duty in comparison to the main road fuel rate. Budget 2018 extended the current duty differential until 2032, subject to review in 2024. Hydrogen that is used other than to fuel an internal combustion engine, for example in a fuel cell to generate electricity which charges a battery used to supply power to an electric motor, it is not currently liable to fuel duty.

All taxes are kept under review.

## ■ Public Sector Debt

**Paula Barker:**

[22593]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to reduce the national debt; and what assessment he has made of the potential implications for the economy of the size of the national debt.

**John Glen:**

Thanks to responsible decisions taken by this Government, the public finances are back on a sustainable path, with debt on track to fall from 2022-23 and decrease to 83.1% of GDP by the end of the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) March 2022 forecast. High debt leaves the UK's public finances vulnerable to shocks. It is important to rebuild fiscal space in order to safeguard against future threats and allow the Government to support the economy as and when it is needed. The Government aims to achieve a falling trajectory for debt given this heightened level of risk, as well as evidence suggesting debt trajectories are important to macroeconomic performance.

## ■ Social Security Benefits and Social Services: Cost of Living

**Mr Mark Harper:**

[R] [23237]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to his oral statement of 26 May 2022 on Economy Update, Official report, column 451, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of state for (a) Work and Pensions and (b) Health and Social Care on the impact of the cost of living payment on benefit entitlement and social care.

**Mr Simon Clarke:**

The Government understands the challenge of global inflationary pressures on the cost of living.

That is why we are providing over £15bn of additional support targeted particularly on those with the greatest need. This package builds on the over £22bn announced previously, with government support for the cost of living now totalling over £37bn this year.

The Government is supporting over 8 million households across the UK in receipt of means tested benefits with a one-off Cost of Living Payment of £650, paid in two instalments. In addition to this, the government is supporting disabled people with the particular extra costs they will face, with 6 million people who receive non-means tested disability benefits receiving a one-off disability Cost of Living Payment of £150. Over eight million pensioner households will receive an extra one-off £300 this year to help them cover the rising cost of energy this winter.

These payments will be disregarded for tax and benefit purposes, so will not affect claimants' benefit entitlements.



The Department of Health and Social Care is currently undertaking work to determine the interaction between the new cost of living payments and financial assessments for care costs.

### ■ Tobacco: Smuggling

**Damien Moore:**

[22511]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure that illicit cigarettes do not make their way into the UK.

**Helen Whately:**

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and Border Force have a comprehensive joint strategy, [Tackling illicit tobacco: From leaf to light](#), to tackle illicit cigarettes. This has been highly effective in reducing the illicit cigarette trade from 22% in 2000-01 to 9% in 2020-21. Between 2015-16 and 2020-21, HMRC and Border Force have seized around 7.8 billion cigarettes destined for the UK. The UK is also a signatory to the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and works with overseas partners to tackle the supply of illicit cigarettes upstream.

## WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

### ■ Endometriosis

**Jim Shannon:**

[21185]

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, if she will hold discussions with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on (a) the impact on women of waiting times for the diagnosis of and (b) the potential merits of additional funding for the training of specialists in endometriosis.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

Equalities Ministers have regular discussions with other Ministers across government on a range of issues, including women's health.

We have invested £520 million to improve access to general practitioners (GPs) during the pandemic. This is in addition to £1.5 billion in 2020 to create an additional 50 million GP appointments by 2024, which will improve access for patients with endometriosis. The NHS has also published the Delivery Plan for Tackling the COVID-19 Backlog of Elective Care which sets out a clear vision for how the NHS will recover and expand elective services over the next three years.

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



## ■ Equality: Public Sector

**Afzal Khan:**

[23399]

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, whether she plans to make a commencement order under s 1 of the Equality Act 2010 on the public sector duty on socio-economic inequalities.

**Afzal Khan:**

[23400]

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, whether her Department has made an assessment of the potential impact of a commencement order under s1 of the Equality Act 2010 on the public sector duty on socio-economic inequalities.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

The Government has no plans to commence Section 1 of the Equality Act 2010 in England. We have made clear on numerous occasions that this duty would be ineffectual. As merely a “due regard” duty, it requires no specific action from the public body concerned, and risks becoming a tick-box exercise, complied with to minimise the risk of litigation rather than to promote real change in society. The duty is also wrongly focussed on equalising socio-economic outcomes rather than opportunities.

The Government’s preferred approach is to progress specific policies and practical actions that will deliver real change. Our agenda set out in the White Paper ‘Levelling Up the United Kingdom’ is key to this and we are promoting social mobility and tackling inequality through a range of initiatives – for example in education, through reforms to the welfare system, by giving greater developmental devolution in England and rebalancing the economy through schemes such as the Towns Fund.

## ■ Government Departments: Ethnic Groups

**Wera Hobhouse:**

[23368]

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what discussions she is having with her Cabinet colleagues on ensuring that ethnic minority communities are able to choose the terminology used by the Government to indicate their community.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

On 17 March 2022 I published ‘Inclusive Britain’. It includes an action for the Cabinet Office Race Disparity Unit to lead work to engage with people from different ethnic groups to better understand the language and terminology with which they identify.

This work, which is being delivered in partnership with the Office for National Statistics, is underway and I will report back to Parliament on progress with this, and the other 73 actions in Inclusive Britain, in March 2023.

**WORK AND PENSIONS****■ Children: Maintenance**

**Tony Lloyd:** [\[21096\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether there is a statutory basis for the Child Support Agency to write off debt; and whether that Agency can reinstate debts it has written off.

**Guy Opperman:**

In 2012, powers were introduced which allowed the Child Maintenance Service (CMS) to write off Child Support Agency (CSA) and CMS debt in specific scenarios where it would be unfair or inappropriate to enforce liability.

Further powers were then introduced in 2018 which allowed remaining cases on the CSA to be closed following the collection or write off, of historic arrears, as part of the closure of the scheme. The debt must meet certain criteria relating to the amounts owed and the effective date of the maintenance calculation to be considered for write off.

The CMS can reinstate debt that has been written off in very specific and exceptional cases, for example, if the debt was written off in error.

**Mr Laurence Robertson:** [\[22341\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps she is taking to ensure that a means test on the income of both parties is taken into account when determining the levels of child maintenance payments; and if she will make a statement.

**Guy Opperman:**

Child maintenance liabilities are calculated based on the taxable income and assets of the paying parent and represent an amount of money that is broadly commensurate with the amount a paying parent would spend on the child if they were still living with them, irrespective of the receiving parent's income or assets as they are the child's primary carer.

Applying a means test to both parents would result in complexity in the calculation process which would delay getting money to children.

**■ Department for Work and Pensions: Correspondence**

**Jessica Morden:** [\[22377\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many new enquiries her Department's MP Urgent Enquiries inbox handled in each month in from January 2021 to May 2022; what steps her Department is taking to manage the (a) performance and (b) case management of those teams; what steps she is taking to oversee the performance of the Urgent Enquiry inbox; and if she will make a statement.

**Guy Opperman:**

DWP does not operate a single inbox dedicated to urgent enquiries from MPs.

We offer a range of ways for MPs to contact DWP, with some product lines operating dedicated email addresses where MPs can contact us. This is in addition to dedicated telephone hotlines for MPs within Disability Services, Retirement Services and Child Maintenance. MPs can also contact the Ministerial Correspondence Team by email, telephone or in writing.

We also triage incoming correspondence to identify urgent queries, so we can take action to address these issues quickly and support our customers.

We recognise the importance of MP enquiries and the important role MPs play in supporting their constituents. Information about how MPs and their staff can best contact us is published on the Parliamentary website and this information is regularly updated. Individual product lines also conduct regular engagement with MPs, including bespoke sessions with MPs and their support teams.

Information relating to the numbers of enquiries received by the DWP email addresses which receive MP contact is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

Emails received from MPs about operational issues are managed as part of DWP's correspondence teams. We closely monitor the performance of these teams and regularly review the resource allocated to this work and where process improvements can be made.

## ■ Discretionary Housing Payments

**Kate Hollern:**

[\[21206\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the percentage change to Discretionary Housing Payments funding to local authorities in England and Wales will be as a result of the most recent flat rate reduction in allocation.

**David Rutley:**

Overall Discretionary Housing Payments funding is £100m in 2022/23, which is 29% less than the £140m that was available in 2020/21.

In addition to the central government contribution, English and Welsh Local Authorities can top up DHP funding up to a maximum of two and a half times this figure using their own funds.

Since 2011, the Government has provided almost £1.5 billion in DHPs to LAs to help support claimants who require further financial assistance with housing costs. In addition, the Government has made a further £2 billion available over the next three years to tackle and help prevent homelessness and rough sleeping.

## ■ Employment: Disability

**Rob Roberts:**

[\[22577\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps her Department has taken in this Parliament to help disabled people get into work and close the disability employment gap.

**Chloe Smith:**

A range of DWP initiatives are supporting disabled people and people with health conditions to live independent lives and start, stay and succeed in work. These include the Work and Health Programme, the Intensive Personalised Employment Support programme, Access to Work, Disability Confident, and support in partnership with the health system, including Employment Advice in NHS Improving Access to Psychological Therapy services.

Over the next three years we will invest £1.3bn in employment support for disabled people and people with health conditions.

In 2017 the Government set a goal to see one million more disabled people in employment between 2017 and 2027. The latest figures released for Q1 2022 show that between Q1 2017 and Q1 2022 the number of disabled people in employment increased by 1.3m – meaning the goal has been met after only five years.

The disability employment gap was 28.2 percentage points in Q1 2022. This is a decrease of 0.2 percentage points on the year, a decrease of 0.5 percentage points since Q1 2020 and an overall decrease of 5.6 percentage points since the same quarter in 2014.

**■ Food Banks: Domestic Visits****Wendy Chamberlain:**[\[15386\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, on what date she last visited a foodbank.

**David Rutley:**

As Minister, I have engaged through visits and meetings with a wide range of food security charities and projects, and will continue to do so.

**■ Long Covid****Mick Whitley:**[\[21271\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when she will make a decision on the potential classification of long covid as an occupational disease.

**Chloe Smith:**

When deciding whether to prescribe new diseases or making any changes to the appropriate prescriptions under the Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit Scheme, Ministers are guided by the recommendations of the Industrial Injuries Advisory Council ("IIAC"), which is independent of Government. IIAC is investigating whether long-COVID can be prescribed as an occupational disease for the purposes of IIDB.

We will carefully consider any recommendations that IIAC may make with regards to COVID19 and the list of prescribed diseases.

## ■ Personal Independence Payment

**Mr Toby Perkins:** [\[23275\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the average backdated payment is for a Personal Independence claimant once they have gone through the full application, assessment and appeals processes.

**Chloe Smith:**

The information requested is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

## ■ Personal Independence Payment: Medical Examinations

**Mr Toby Perkins:** [\[23274\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the average waiting time is between prospective claimants applying for Personal Independent Payments and being assessed.

**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](#).

**Mr Toby Perkins:** [\[23276\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps her Department is taking to reduce the waiting times for personal independent payment medical assessments.

**Chloe Smith:**

The Personal Independence Payment (PIP) assessment is not a medical assessment as it does not require the Health Professional (HP) to diagnose a condition and to recommend treatment options. Instead, it requires the HP to look at the impact the condition or impairment has on an individuals' daily life.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is committed to assessing people as quickly as possible, in order that they receive the benefit and support they are entitled to in a timely manner. DWP has worked continuously with providers to drive improvements, to develop the PIP assessment process and how these impact on overall processing times. Telephone assessments were introduced at pace in 2020, when face-to-face assessments were suspended due to the pandemic, with video assessments introduced shortly after. These continue to be delivered alongside face-to-face and paper-based assessments.

Reducing processing times is a priority for the department, however under business-as-usual conditions, there may be referrals that take longer to progress. For example, an interpreter is required in a less common language, or a home visit to be arranged

in a remote location. In addition, some claimants also fail to attend assessments for numerous reasons, which requires the department to understand and decide if a new referral to the assessment provider is needed. In these circumstances the overall time from claim registration to the claimant having an assessment may be extended.

The department has recently reiterated its commitment to continuously improve our services in 'Shaping Future Support: The Health and Disability Green Paper'.

## ■ Personal Independence Payment: Standards

**Justin Madders:**

[22450]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the average waiting time is for an assessment for Personal Independence Payment from the point of the initial claim.

**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](#).

## ■ Poverty: Children

**Rob Roberts:**

[21308]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent steps her Department has taken to reduce the level of child poverty across the UK.

**David Rutley:**

*[Holding answer 23 June 2022]:* The latest available data on in-work poverty shows that in 2019/20, children in households where all adults were in work were around six times less likely to be in absolute poverty (before housing costs) than children in a household where nobody works. Compared with 2010, there are nearly 1 million fewer workless households and almost 540,000 fewer children living in workless households in the UK. Since 2010, there are also 200,000 fewer children in absolute poverty before housing costs.

This Government is committed to reducing child poverty and supporting low-income families, and believes work is the best route out of poverty. With a record 1.3 million vacancies across the UK, our focus is firmly on supporting people to move into and progress in work. This approach is based on clear evidence about the importance of parental employment - particularly where it is full-time – in substantially reducing the risks of child poverty and in improving long-term outcomes for families and children.

Our multi-billion-pound Plan for Jobs has protected, supported and created jobs across the country. This includes our Way to Work campaign, which between January 31 and June 21, we estimate has seen at least 485,000 unemployed Universal Credit claimants have moved into work.

## ■ Refugees: Ukraine

**Rachael Maskell:**

[22468]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what guidance her Department is providing to job centres on the difficulty of obtaining job references for Ukrainian refugees.

**Rachael Maskell:**

[22469]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will take steps to help remove requirements for Ukrainian refugees to provide references for previous employment when applying for a job.

**Mims Davies:**

DWP is aware of the challenges those fleeing Ukraine may face in providing references for previous employment.

Jobcentres do not place requirements on customers to provide references when applying for vacancies. However, to address the challenges Ukrainian citizens may face in providing references for previous employment, DWP are working with BEIS to encourage employers and sector regulators to consider adopting a pragmatic approach to requirements for job references and checkable work histories for Ukrainian evacuees.

**Rachael Maskell:**

[22480]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what (a) pension and (b) pension credit entitlements are pension-age refugees from Ukraine able to access in the UK.

**Guy Opperman:**

The UK State Pension is payable without regard to nationality to those who meet the qualifying conditions. Entitlement is based on an individual's National Insurance record.

In March 2022 DWP laid regulations which enabled those who were residing in Ukraine immediately before 1 January 2022, and who had fled in response to the Russian Invasion on 24 February 2022, to access Pension Credit, and other means-tested benefits from day one of their arrival in the UK. To be eligible for Pension Credit, people need to be over State Pension age and on a low income.

As well as help with daily living costs of up to £182.60 per week for single people and £278.70 for couples, Pension Credit also opens up access to other support, such as help with rent and council tax, heating bills, free NHS dental care and free TV licenses for the over-75s. The easiest way for Ukrainian nationals to apply for Pension Credit is by phone and the department has made translation services available to help new arrivals with their applications. The Freephone number: 0800 99 1234, is available Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm.

DWP staff are also delivering additional face-to-face assistance to those who need it, including advice on benefit eligibility and support with online applications.



**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[22483\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, for what reason Ukrainian refugees are required to attend the job centre weekly; what assessment she has made of the impact of the frequency of those visits on people's ability to pursue (a) English classes and (b) volunteering opportunities; and if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of less frequent visits.

**Mims Davies:**

Our Jobcentre teams are committed to ensuring all claimants receive the best possible support. Work Coaches will consider a claimant's circumstances and tailor support according to their individual needs. The frequency of interventions Work Coaches undertake with claimants, including Ukrainian evacuees, is determined by the individual circumstances of the claimant, the duration of their claim, and the level of support required at that particular time.

Staff complete claimant awareness training that covers a wide range of claimant circumstances and have access to information on services and support available in their local area for claimants who have complex needs, including referral to English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) if appropriate. Communications have been delivered to all sites to ensure our staff are aware of any specific support available for Ukrainian evacuees.

## ■ Social Security Benefits: Disability

**Rob Roberts:**

[\[22576\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether she has taken steps to reduce the number of assessments a disabled person is required to go through in order to access support when a significant change in their circumstances is unlikely.

**Chloe Smith:**

In 2018 we introduced updated PIP guidance which ensures that those people who receive the highest level of support, and where their needs are unlikely to change or may get worse, will receive an ongoing award with a light touch review at the ten-year point.

We have also made good progress in reducing repeat assessments. For example, through the Severe Conditions criteria, we have stopped repeat assessments for Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and Universal Credit for people with the most severe and lifelong conditions.

We also announced in the Green Paper last year that we will test a new Severe Disability Group (SDG) so that those with severe and lifelong conditions can benefit from a simplified process to access PIP, ESA and Universal Credit without needing to go through a face-to-face assessment or frequent reassessments. We will consider the test results once complete to influence thinking on the next stages of this work.

We have and will continue to look at our benefit processes and procedures to ensure that the overall claimant experience is what they rightly expect and deserve.

## ■ State Retirement Pensions: Canada

**Mr Virendra Sharma:**

**[22389]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what discussions she is having with her Canadian counterpart on uprating British State Pensions paid to people living in Canada.

**Guy Opperman:**

There are two separate social security arrangements in place between the UK and Canada, made in 1995 and 1998. The UK Government is not intending to change the social security relationship with Canada.

## ■ Unemployment: Bolton

**Yasmin Qureshi:**

**[23258]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent estimate she has made of the unemployment rates in (a) Bolton South East constituency and (b) the Borough of Bolton.

**Mims Davies:**

The information requested is published and available at:

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/default.asp>

Guidance for users can be found at:

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/home/newuser.asp>

## ■ Universal Credit

**Alison McGovern:**

**[18896]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what data her Department collects via the Universal Credit journal on claimants' skill (a) levels and (b) needs; and whether data collected is used to identify (i) potential barriers to work and (ii) the support, including training, needed to overcome those barriers.

**David Rutley:**

The Universal Credit journal is not intended to collect data on claimant's skills, levels and needs. It is a service used by claimants and staff to communicate and is one of several channels for claimants to notify of changes, ask for help or update the work coach on job search activities.

## ■ Universal Credit: Disqualification

**Alex Cunningham:**

**[22427]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will make an estimate of the number of children living in households subject to Universal Credit sanctions by parliamentary constituency in each month since January 2022.

**Mims Davies:**

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

**■ Universal Credit: Self-employed****Catherine West:**[\[23365\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether the Social Security (Additional Payments) Bill would give an entitlement to cost of living payments to self-employed Universal Credit claimants who do not receive a regular payment due to the minimum income floor.

**David Rutley:**

Claimants who had their UC award reduced to zero by the Minimum income floor and did not receive a UC payment during the qualifying period, will not be eligible for a cost-of-living payment.

For those that are not eligible for this support, or for families that still need additional support; the Government is providing an additional £500 million to help households, on top of what has been provided since October 2021, bringing total funding for this support to £1.5 billion. In England, this will take the form of an extension to the Household Support Fund backed by £421m and is administered by Local Authorities. Devolved administrations will receive £79 million through the Barnett formula.

**■ Universal Credit: Veterans****John Healey:**[\[21085\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 14 June 2022 to Question 11554 on Social Security Benefits: Armed Forces, how many of the 33,800 Universal Credit claimants who previously served in the armed forces are former (a) Commonwealth and (b) Gurkha personnel.

**David Rutley:**

*[Holding answer 23 June 2022]:* The information requested is not available as the department does not hold any information about the service in the armed forces.

The Department continues to look at what other opportunities might be available to better identify and record data on veterans on the Universal Credit system and has regular conversations with the Ministry of Defence (MOD). This is part of a much wider piece of work involving a number of Departments, including the MOD and the Office for Veterans' Affairs, to improve the collection and use of data relating to veterans.

**■ Way to Work Scheme****Virginia Crosbie:**[\[22605\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people have found employment as a result of the Way to Work campaign as of June 21 2022.

**Mims Davies:**

I refer the honourable Member to the answer given to [PQ19742](#).

## WRITTEN STATEMENTS

### HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

#### ■ Covid-19 Update

**Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (Sajid Javid):** [\[HCWS140\]](#)

As part of our continued commitment to open up travel, on 23 June the Government extended the International NHS COVID Pass letter service to allow children aged 5 to 11 years to get an International NHS COVID Pass following a positive NHS PCR test or equivalent within the past 180 days (recovery status). Prior to 23 June, children aged 5 to 11 could only access an International NHS COVID Pass if they had received a full primary course of COVID-19 vaccination.

Extending access to the International NHS COVID Pass to children aged 5 to 11 with recovery status will save families the cost of testing in countries where this is required for foreign travel and ensures that young children are able to provide proof of their COVID-19 status on par with the rest of the population. The UK has no Covid certification requirements and that this is to support outbound travel to a variety of countries that still have requirements.

A person with parental responsibility for the child (such as the parent or guardian) will be able to request the letter online via the NHS website or by calling 119. The letter will only be sent to the address on the child's GP record.

This service is now available for children aged 5 to 11 resident in England and Wales. A letter based on recovery status is not available in the Isle of Man. In Northern Ireland, parents or guardians of children aged 5 to 11 have been able to request a digital or printed Covid certificate on behalf of a dependent since January 2022. The COVIDCert NI app was updated in March 2022, to allow all those under 16 to upload the certificate (requested on their behalf) to display on the app. Anyone under 16 who tested positive for Covid through an NHS PCR test prior to 1 May is able to request a recovery certificate in Scotland by phoning the COVID Status Helpline on 0808 196 8565.

#### ■ Medical Devices Update

**Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (Sajid Javid):** [\[HCWS142\]](#)

Leaving the European Union has provided a unique opportunity for the United Kingdom to improve the medical device regulatory regime and exercise our new powers as a sovereign regulator, creating a world-leading regime that prioritises patient safety while supporting innovation within the UK MedTech sector. To deliver this ambition and gather views of patients, industry and the healthcare sector, the government published a consultation on the future UK medical device regulations ( [Consultation on the future regulation of medical devices in the United Kingdom - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) on 16 September 2021. We received 900 responses and I am grateful to all those who have taken the time to respond to the consultation.

Officials at the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) have analysed the consultation responses and have worked with officials within my Department and the Office of Life Sciences to develop the government response. The response outlines changes that will support innovation within the UK's life sciences sector and access to medical devices, for example through improving the regulation of novel and growing areas such as artificial intelligence and offering alternative routes to market. This will help to facilitate greater opportunities for small and medium enterprises to capture real world evidence to support the conformity assessment process with the proportionate regulatory oversight - an opportunity which has not existed previously.

The government is committed to cementing our status as a science superpower by making the UK the leading global hub for life sciences and the response to the public consultation outlines policies that will help to achieve this.

As part of this consultation, the MHRA received strong support for proposals that will improve patient safety and safeguard public health, for example, through modernising the scope and classification rules of medical devices to deliver improvements in the safety of all medical devices. It also raised points around identified inequities within clinical investigations. I appointed Dame Margaret Whitehead to conduct a review into the potential issues related to equity in the design and use of medical devices and I am pleased that the MHRA will look to address these points within the regulations and supplementary guidance to support this review.

The new transitional measures outlined in the response will be implemented to support continued access to safe medical devices to UK patients, whilst providing time for industry and the healthcare sector to prepare for the transition. In fact, the UK Government is committed to building the UK Conformity Assessed (UKCA) marking as a global exemplar, and it is vital that the necessary building blocks are in place to ensure that the UK market remains an attractive and favourable place to innovate and do business for the benefit of patients and carers. A phased transition into the new regime is critical to its success.

The government's response to the consultation will be published on GOV.UK today and I will deposit a copy of the response in the libraries of both Houses.

## ■ Mental Health Update

**Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (Sajid Javid):**

**[\[HCWS141\]](#)**

I have published the draft Mental Health Bill today for pre-legislative scrutiny and delivered an Oral Statement to the house.

The draft Bill will enable the Government to deliver on two manifesto commitments:

- to ensure that patients suffering from mental health conditions have greater control over their treatment and receive the dignity and respect they deserve; and,
- to make it easier for people with learning disabilities and autism to be discharged from hospital

It contains provisions to increase the autonomy and dignity of people who need inpatient support for their mental health, including people subject to the criminal justice system. These reforms are intended to benefit everyone who may be subject to the Mental Health Act, and to address the racial disparities associated with its use.

The draft Bill is also intended to limit the extent to which people with learning disability and autistic people may be made subject to the Mental Health Act, while ensuring adequate community care and support is available for people with these conditions.

The draft Bill heralds a major step change in the rights available to people who may be made subject to the Act. Furthermore, they represent a significant step forward in the Government's work to respond to the recommendations made by Sir Simon Wessely's Independent Review of the Act.

The draft Bill will cover England and Wales.

We look forward to working openly with the committee to ensure that this important Bill is developed with input from stakeholders and all interested parties. This is a once in a generation chance to develop the Mental Health Act to ensure the autonomy and dignity of people who need inpatient support for their mental health.

## LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

### ■ Contingent Liability arising from the EWS1 Professional Indemnity Insurance Scheme

**Minister of State for Housing (Stuart Andrew):**

**[HCWS143]**

On 10 February 2021, the department announced a Government-backed professional indemnity insurance (PII) scheme for competent fire safety professionals undertaking EWS1 assessments.

Today, I am very pleased to announce that under new arrangements, we will provide state-backing to a selected insurer who will be administering insurance policies to qualified professionals. The scheme will launch in September 2022, enabling competent professionals to access the indemnity cover they need to undertake external wall assessments.

To offer EWS1 professional indemnity insurance to competent assessors, my department must accept an unlimited contingent liability, with the Government Actuary's Department (GAD) making a best estimate of expected losses as c£100m.

The contingent liability being claimed is unlimited because there is no theoretical cap on the size of claims that could be made. However, the risk is limited by the number of buildings, and number of EWS1 assessments. To further mitigate this risk, we will only be offering professional indemnity insurance cover for accredited professionals who have the requisite training, expertise and knowledge to undertake the EWS1 assessment. In addition, completed EWS1 assessments will be subject to an audit process to ensure they are being completed accurately with due process being followed.



The cost of the scheme, including the expected losses, will be offset in full through premiums: EWS1 assessors will be required to purchase PII policies for any EWS1 assessments they complete, with the funds gathered being accumulated and subsequently used to pay out any insurance claims successfully made against the assessors. In this way, the scheme will operate as fiscally neutral for Government.

The Treasury has approved the proposal. My department will keep Parliament informed of any expected changes to this contingent liability on a regular basis.

A Departmental Minute has been laid in the House of Commons providing more detail on this contingent liability.

## TRANSPORT

### ■ Transport Update

**Secretary of State for Transport (Grant Shapps):**

**[\[HCWS138\]](#)**

Following my statement to the House on 25 February, I am updating the House on a short extension of the current Transport for London (TfL) funding settlement that was due to expire on 24 June 2022 by 19 days to 13<sup>th</sup> July. This has been agreed by the Mayor of London.

Since the start of the pandemic, we have supported the transport network in London with nearly £5bn funding through extraordinary funding settlements for Transport for London. We have recognised the reliance of London's transport network on fare revenue, and Government continues our commitment to mitigating loss of fare revenue because of the pandemic.

This extension to the current funding settlement is necessary in part due to the unsatisfactory progress made by TfL on its conditions, including pensions. Resolving these issues is an integral part of setting TfL on the path to financial sustainability, and Government stands ready to engage constructively to reach a resolution. This extension ensures that they receive due attention, as well as allowing time for both sides to consider a longer-term capital settlement.

Government is committed to supporting London's transport network as we have since the start of the pandemic, and is in discussions with TfL on a longer-term settlement. By rolling over the provisions of the existing agreement, the extension provides continued support to Transport for London and certainty to Londoners while we work with Transport for London on their emergency funding needs.

Support to Transport for London has always been on the condition that Transport for London reaches financial sustainability as soon as possible and with a target date of April 2023 and Government continues to press the Mayor of London and Transport for London to take the decisions needed to put the organisation on a sustainable footing. I will update the House at my earliest opportunity on the details of any longer-term capital settlement.

## TREASURY

## ■ Review of the UK's AML/CFT regulatory and supervisory regime

**The Economic Secretary to the Treasury (John Glen):**

**[[HCWS139](#)]**

On Friday 24 June I published a review of the UK's anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) regulatory and supervisory regime. This included statutory post-implementation reviews for *The Money Laundering, Terrorist Financing, and Transfer of Funds (Information of the Payer) Regulations 2017 (SI 2017/692)* and *The Oversight of Professional Body Anti-Money Laundering and Counter Terrorist Financing Supervision Regulations 2017 (SI 2017/1301)* and the review of the UK's AML/CFT regulatory and supervisory regime; a forward-looking report which includes the government's response to the call for evidence launched last year.

Taken together, these three documents make a thorough assessment of the UK's money laundering controls and outline areas of focus going forward, including commitment from the government to consult on some key proposals for change.

Tackling economic crime and illicit finance remains a priority for this government, to protect the UK economy and fight crime on a domestic and international level.

Alongside the review the government has continued to deliver progress across its economic crime agenda, including the Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Act 2022 which introduces key reforms to beneficial ownership registers and enhances the unexplained wealth orders and sanctions regimes. On 15 June, HM Treasury also laid the *Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2022* before Parliament under the draft affirmative procedure. This legislation makes some time-sensitive updates to the Money Laundering Regulations, which are required to ensure that the UK continues to meet international standards, whilst also strengthening and ensuring clarity on how the UK's anti-money laundering regime operates.

The review published on Friday proposes further areas of possible reform, most notably in how firms are supervised for anti-money laundering purposes where, despite progress since 2017, there is further to go to ensure that supervision is effective and consistent across all regulated firms. The review also commits to consult on some smaller changes to the Regulations, where black-and-white inherited EU rules prevent the UK from taking a more risk-based approach to prevention. This includes looking at the enhanced due diligence required for domestic politically exposed persons. If the risks around domestic PEPs are found to be sufficiently low, the government will consider changing the MLRs such that EDD and the additional requirements in Regulation 35 are not automatically required on domestic PEPs, but instead only triggered when there are other high-risk factors also present.

This review represents only part of the cross-cutting action that the government is taking to progress its economic crime agenda, including the second public-private Economic Crime Plan which is due to be published later this year and the upcoming Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Bill which will reform Companies House to further crack down on abuse of corporate structures.

The review is published on gov.uk : [Review of the UK's AML/CFT regulatory and supervisory regime - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/114444/Review_of_the_UKs_AML_CFT_regulatory_and_supervisory_regime_-_GOV.UK_(www.gov.uk).pdf)

The post-implementation reviews will also be published alongside the Regulations on Legislation.gov.uk.