



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 11 July 2022 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:33 P.M., 11 July 2022). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Carbon Emissions

Catherine West: [\[28904\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether Departmental funds allocated towards producing net zero carbon emissions by 2050 were returned unspent to the Exchequer in the last financial year.

Greg Hands:

Departmental underspend towards producing net zero carbon emissions by 2050 will be published in BEIS Annual Report & Accounts 2021-2022 later this year. The Department is not in a position to release underspent data yet, because the accounts are not finalised and audit is still ongoing.

■ Climate Change

Thangam Debbonaire: [\[28891\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the potential impact of the UK's ratification of the Energy Charter Treaty on climate change.

Greg Hands:

Contracting Parties to the Energy Charter Treaty have reached an Agreement in Principle on modernisation of the Treaty. The modernised Treaty recognises the urgent need to address climate change and align with the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement.

After adoption of the final text later this year, the modernised Treaty will come into force once the ratification requirements of the Treaty are met. When deciding whether to seek ratification of the modernised Treaty, the Government will consider its potential impact on all relevant Government objectives.

■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Public Expenditure

Catherine West: [\[28906\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much Departmental underspend in the last financial year has been used to help provide military assistance in Ukraine.

Greg Hands:

The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy did not use any underspend in the last financial year to provide military assistance to Ukraine.

Dr Alan Whitehead: [\[30969\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 29 June 2022 to Question 24527 on Department for Business, Energy and

Industrial Strategy: Staff, whether his Department allocated additional (a) financial or (b) staff resource for the delivery of the (i) Offshore Wind Sector, (ii) Nuclear Sector and (iii) North Sea Transition Deal.

Greg Hands:

The three sector deals were delivered from within pre-existing budgets and staff resources.

■ **Energy Bills Rebate**

Anne Marie Morris:

[\[31849\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he will take steps to ensure that people who pay for utilities via a site manager will be able to access the energy bills support scheme.

Greg Hands:

I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave the hon. Member for St Albans on 20th June 2022 to Question [18990](#).

■ **Energy Bills Rebate: Supported Housing**

Anne Marie Morris:

[\[31848\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on ensuring that people in supported accommodation who pay for utilities as part of their rent will receive the £400 payment through the Energy Bills Support Scheme.

Greg Hands:

Households without a domestic electricity supply contract are not eligible for the Scheme. The Government is exploring options for other ways in which they might receive similar support.

Landlords with a domestic electricity connection who charge 'all inclusive' rent, where a fixed cost for energy costs are included in their rental charges, should consider passing on the grant payments to tenants. Landlords who resell the electricity to their tenants based on energy usage may be required to comply with the maximum resale price rules.

Responses to the consultation are being analysed and the Government response will be published over the summer.

■ **Energy Supply**

Dr Alan Whitehead:

[\[30970\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department has received additional financial resources to support the delivery of the British Energy Security Strategy in the 2022-23 financial year.

Greg Hands:

The Department is delivering the British Energy Security Strategy within the financial resources allocated through the Spending Review 2021 settlement.

■ **Energy: Housing****Catherine West:**[\[28905\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much money was spent on retro-fitting homes to improve their energy efficiency between April 2021 and 2022.

Greg Hands:

Between April 2021 and April 2022, the Government spent around £800 million through domestic retrofitting schemes, prioritising the worst performing homes and those on low incomes to improve their energy efficiency. In addition, the Energy Company Obligation scheme, worth around £1 billion a year, supports the installation of energy efficiency and heating measures in people's homes in England, Scotland, and Wales, focused on low income and vulnerable households.

■ **Exports****Rachael Maskell:**[\[31153\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has had discussions with the Secretary of State for International Trade on the potential export opportunities presented by industrial clusters; and whether his Department is taking steps to develop such clusters.

Greg Hands:

The Government is working to position the UK to take advantage of the export opportunities presented by the development of low carbon technologies and services in industrial clusters and beyond. As outlined in the CCUS and Hydrogen Investor Roadmaps, these technologies represent an opportunity to develop world-leading UK supply chains. This will be facilitated by UK Export Finance, the UK's export credit agency, which has enhanced its support to attract investment and support exports in CCUS and hydrogen.

■ **Offshore Industry: North Sea****Mr Virendra Sharma:**[\[31061\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department plans to take steps to phase out North Sea oil and gas developments.

Greg Hands:

The UK still needs oil and gas for heating, cooking, transport and electricity generation during the energy transition. In meeting net zero, the UK's use of both these fuels is set to reduce significantly.

The production of natural gas from the UK Continental Shelf creates under half the greenhouse gas of imported Liquefied Natural Gas. Turning off the UK's domestic source of oil and gas now would put energy security and British jobs and industries at risk. Therefore, the North Sea Transition Authority plans to launch another licensing round this autumn, taking into account the forthcoming climate compatibility checkpoint.

■ Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme

Martyn Day: [\[31170\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if his Department will publish the recipients of support under the non-domestic Renewable Heat Incentive scheme.

Greg Hands:

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy does not intend to publish the list of participants in the non-domestic Renewable Heat Incentive scheme.

Dan Carden: [\[31214\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate his Department has made of the amount it has overpaid to Renewable Heat Incentive participants who have not complied with the regulations.

Greg Hands:

This information is published annually in the BEIS Annual Report and Accounts: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/beis-annual-report-and-accounts-2020-to-2021>.

Ofgem continue to take steps to reduce the rate of non-compliance and actively seek to recover payments when they discover they have been made in error.

Dan Carden: [\[31215\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Renewable Heat Incentive, what assessment he has made of the prevalence of participants who are (a) not complying with or (b) gaming the regulations; and what assessment he has made of impact of those actions of the effectiveness of that scheme.

Greg Hands:

Ofgem's 2020/21 audit programme indicates a non-compliance rate of 0.4% for non-domestic Renewable Heat Incentive participants and 4.5% for domestic.

The impact of non-compliance is published annually in the BEIS Annual Report and Accounts:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/beis-annual-report-and-accounts-2020-to-2021>.

Reforms have been implemented to tackle gaming as it arises. The Government is confident that the prevalence and impact of gaming is low.

■ Small Businesses: Energy**Chi Onwurah:** [\[31834\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department has put protections in place for small businesses subject to disconnected energy supply without notice by British Gas.

Greg Hands:

This is a commercial matter. The Government does not have a legal mandate to intervene in private contracts between suppliers and a business customer.

CABINET OFFICE**■ Business: Procurement****Sir Stephen Timms:** [\[30985\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the Procurement Bill on procurement opportunities for ethnic minority business owners.

Mr Jacob Rees-Mogg:

The Procurement Bill contains proposals to simplify the procurement process and make it easier for all companies to bid rather than specific groups. The changes that are proposed are designed in particular to benefit businesses of all sizes throughout the whole economy, including ethnic minority businesses; this includes measures that will reduce barriers to entry including establishing a single transparency platform so that bidders only have to submit their core credentials once, and making reforms to procurement frameworks so that suppliers are not locked out.

■ Government Property Agency**Chris Stephens:** [\[R\] \[31145\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will place in the Library a copy of the presentation slides on the Government Property Agency's Workplace Services Transformation Programme that was delivered to the PCS Union in a meeting with the Government Property Agency on 13 June 2021.

Mr Jacob Rees-Mogg:

Please find a copy of the presentation attached.

Attachments:

1. PCS Union engagement session [WSTP PCS Union engagement session 13.06.22 v1.0r.pptx (1).pdf]

■ Government Property Agency: Contracts

Chris Stephens: [R] [31146]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Government Property Agency has made a delivery model assessment in respect of retendering facilities management contracts in 2022.

Mr Jacob Rees-Mogg:

The GPA can confirm that the Workplace Transformation Programme (WSTP) Supply Chain Project (SCP) which has been initiated to Procure and deliver the Workplace Service contracts in 2022 has completed a Delivery Model Assessment (DMA).

■ Information Commissioner

Dan Carden: [31916]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what has been the cost to the public purse of appealing the Information Commissioner's Decision Notice of 18th December 2019, reference FS50772671.

Michael Ellis:

I refer the hon. Member to his previous Parliamentary Question answered on 8 March [PQ133263](#).

The government does not comment on the costs of ongoing litigation and will publish the costs after the conclusion of the case.

■ Living Wage

James Murray: [31235]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate he has made of the number of (a) direct employees, (b) contractors and (c) agency workers in his Department and relevant agencies and public bodies who receive a wage below the (i) UK real living wage outside of Greater London and (ii) London living wage inside of Greater London as determined by the Living Wage Foundation.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

In April 2022, the statutory National Living Wage was increased to £9.50 per hour. By 2024, the Government have committed that the National Living Wage will reach 66% of median UK earnings.

As of 07/07/2022, the total number of direct employees in the Cabinet Office earning below the Real Living Wage rate of £9.90 per hour was 0 and for the London Living Wage rate of £11.05 per hour was 0.

We are unable to provide details on Contractors and Agency workers' pay as they are not employees of the departments in which they work, nor of the Civil Service.

Members' Interests**Dan Carden:** [\[31912\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to the Committee on Standards and Public Life's report on MPs' Outside Interests and the Committee on Standards' report entitled, New Code of Conduct and Guide to the Rules: promoting appropriate values, attitudes and behaviour in Parliament, published on 24 May 2022, if the Government will take steps to implement the recommendations in those reports on the rules on (a) paid advocacy and (b) the provision of advice on parliamentary affairs.

Michael Ellis:

The Government is carefully considering the Committee on Standards' report, the Committee's draft Procedural Protocol and covering report. The Government will be responding in full to the report and its various recommendations. The Code of Conduct for MPs rightly remains a matter for Parliament and any changes must be taken forward on a cross-party basis, in order to ensure a standards system that is robust, fair and has the backing of the public and MPs.

DEFENCE**Air Force: Training****Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[29917\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many aircrew are enrolled in Royal Air Force training.

Leo Docherty:

The question has been interpreted as the number of Royal Air Force (RAF) student aircrew in Phase 2 training in the Military Flying Training System.

As of the 4 July 2022 the RAF have 516 student aircrew in Phase 2 training.

Army: Data Protection**John Healey:** [\[29874\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when (a) he and (b) in his Department first learned of a data breach of the Army's social media accounts on 3 July 2022.

Leo Docherty:

The Ministry of Defence first learned of the Army's Twitter and Youtube accounts being compromised just after 5pm on 3 July. The Secretary of State for Defence was informed that same evening.

■ Australia: AWACS

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[31034\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the significance of interoperability with Royal Australian Air Force in respect of the E-7A Wedgetail.

Jeremy Quin:

Australia has deep historic ties to both the UK and the RAF and a close intelligence sharing relationship as part of the Five Eyes partnership.

RAF personnel are already training alongside their Royal Australian Air Force E-7 colleagues, benefitting from our close ally's experience with the aircraft prior to its introduction into UK service.

■ Belarus and Russia: Contracts

John Healey:

[\[30993\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to Procurement Policy Note 01/22: contracts with suppliers from Russia and Belarus, published by the Cabinet Office on 28 March 2022, whether his Department has undertaken a review of its contracts to identify potential links to Russian firms.

John Healey:

[\[30995\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many contracts his Department has cancelled since February 2022 due to links between those contracts and (a) Russian and (b) Belarusian businesses.

Jeremy Quin:

The Ministry of Defence has conducted a review of its direct contracts, in accordance with Procurement Policy Note 01/22 and found no contracts with suppliers from Russia or Belarus. As a result, no direct contracts have been cancelled.

To date we have also found no evidence of sub-contracts being placed with Russian or Belarussian entities but this we continue to monitor.

The recently acquired Sheffield Forgemasters International Limited is, as a public corporation, outside the scope of PPN 01/22. However, it has served notice on an energy contract it held with the European arm of Gazprom.

■ F-35 Aircraft: Training

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[31033\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the F-35B will be fully integrated into the Gladiator synthetic training environment.

Jeremy Quin:

The RAF is on track to integrate a Lightning synthetic training capability into Gladiator by the end of financial year 2022-23. This will be followed by integration of the

Lightning Full Mission Simulator once existing US Security requirements have been met.

■ Fleet Air Arm: Early Warning Systems

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[29919\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what concept studies have started to replace the ASACS role within the Fleet Air Arm.

Jeremy Quin:

The Royal Navy is undertaking two related concept studies to inform future Airborne Early Warning (AEW) requirements and considering more widely the requirement for an Airborne Command capability.

The Defence and Security Accelerator (DASA) 'Look Out!' Challenge is investigating sensor payloads for AEW, and the Maritime Uncrewed Air Systems Programme is investigating sensor host platforms.

■ Fleet Solid Support Ships: Procurement

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[31043\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether a UK prime contractor must be involved in order for Fleet Solid Support ship procurement collaboration bids to be accepted.

Jeremy Quin:

I refer the right hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 29 June 2022 to Question number 24549.

Attachments:

1. Fleet Solid Support Ships [UIN 24549.docx]

■ Hercules Aircraft

Mr Tobias Ellwood: [\[29942\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of retaining the Hercules aircraft system.

Jeremy Quin:

The Integrated Review determined the future composition of the Air Mobility Force, and as a result on current plans Hercules Out of Service Date is 2023. The RAF is currently implementing that decision.

■ Members: Correspondence

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[28870\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he will respond to the correspondence of 15 March 2022 to the Minister for Armed Forces from the hon. Member for North Durham.

Leo Docherty:

I responded to the right hon. Member today. Please accept my apologies for the delay.

Merlin Helicopters: Early Warning Systems**Mr Kevan Jones:**[\[29913\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the current Total Departmental Expenditure Limit budget is for Crowsnest.

Jeremy Quin:

The current Total Departmental Expenditure Limit budget for the CROWSNEST programme is £40.85 million.

Ministry of Defence: Pay**Pat McFadden:**[\[29984\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many (a) direct employees, (b) contractors, and (c) agency workers who work in their Department and relevant agencies and public bodies, receive a wage below that of either (i) the UK Real Living Wage outside of Greater London, or (ii) the London Living Wage inside of Greater London, as determined by the Living Wage Foundation.

Leo Docherty:

The information requested about contractors and agency workers is not held. It is taking time to collate the required information to answer the hon. Members Question about direct employees. I will write to him when the information is available, and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of The House.

Ministry of Defence: Public Expenditure**Jamie Stone:**[\[30098\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether he expects day-to-day departmental spending to fall in real terms by the end of the 2022-23 Parliament.

Jeremy Quin:

The Department received a revised settlement of RDEL following the Spending Review 21 last autumn, which noted the cost pressures on the Department as a result of changes in the economic forecast.

The department has measures in place to limit the impacts including the forward purchase of foreign exchange, firm price contracts and purchase of long-lead items. The potential effects of the current levels of inflation on our pay and programmes remain under continuous review.

■ Multi Role Ocean Surveillance Ship: Procurement**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[31036\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the MROSS surveillance ship will be in service by 2024.

Jeremy Quin:

The new Multi Role Ocean Surveillance (MROS) programme is in its concept and assessment phase. Options for the procurement strategy and the project schedule are under development, but no firm decisions have yet been made.

No precise date has yet been set for the entry into service of the MROS Ship.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[31037\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the contract for the multi-role ocean surveillance ship is planned to ensure workshare for UK yards.

Jeremy Quin:

The new Multi Role Ocean Surveillance programme is in its concept and assessment phase. The procurement strategy and the project schedule are under development and no firm decisions have yet been made. Nor has a decision been taken regarding the allocation of work to deliver the programme but planning is underway to ensure Government intent is met.

■ Russia: Defence Equipment**John Healey:** [\[29875\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will make an estimate of the amount of equipment manufactured and produced in the UK in use by the Russian armed forces in Ukraine.

Jeremy Quin:

It is not possible to provide an estimate of the amount of UK manufactured components that may have been incorporated into Russian military equipment. UK restrictions on the export of military and dual use goods make procurement by Russia more difficult. The UK continues to enforce its export controls.

■ Russia: Fuels**John Healey:** [\[30994\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether fuel supplied by Russia is being used in fulfilment of contracts held by his Department.

Jeremy Quin:

Our fuel suppliers have confirmed that, to the best of their knowledge, fuel procured for the Ministry of Defence since April 2022 is not sourced from Russian suppliers. However, if any fuel is subsequently found to come from Russian suppliers, the Department will take immediate action to switch to an alternative.

■ Service Prosecuting Authority: Expenditure

John Healey: [\[31716\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the annual budget for the Service Prosecution Authority was in each year since 2010.

John Healey: [\[31717\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many staff there have been in the Service Prosecution Authority in each year since 2010.

Leo Docherty:

Information from the Service Prosecuting Authority (SPA) is provided in the table below:

FINANCIAL YEAR	ANNUAL BUDGET	STRENGTH
2022-23	£4,701,337	50
2021-22	£4,795,874	49
2020-21	£4,717,111	50
2019-20	£4,614,222	47
2018-19	£4,038,502	47
2017-18	£4,102,376	50
2016-17	£5,052,187	58
2015-16	£5,168,635	72
2014-15	£5,260,334	73
2013-14	£5,464,981	69
2012-13	£5,402,000	74
2011-12	£5,209,000	Not Available
2010-11	Not Available	Not Available

Please note that “Strength” shows the number of individuals (civilian and military) in post as at 1 April of each year and will have changed during the year. This “Strength” figure is different to the Establishment figure (i.e. SPA’s funded staffing).

■ Type 32 Frigates

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[31035\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what progress his Department has made on the Type 32 programme; and what plans he has for the likely capabilities of the Type 32s.

Jeremy Quin:

The Type 32 programme will be the first of a new generation of warships specifically designed from the outset to be optimised to host and deploy autonomous offboard systems.

The early pre-concept phase has commenced, and the focus is now on developing the operational concept, including how they might support the Future Commando Force within a Littoral Response Group. The programme and procurement strategy will be decided following the concept phase, which has not yet been launched.

■ Ukraine: Military Aid

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[31038\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department classifies the military aid offered to Ukraine as defence expenditure in respect of the two per cent defence spending commitment to NATO.

Jeremy Quin:

Yes. This is qualifying spend under the specific criteria set out by NATO.

■ Unmanned Air Vehicles: Procurement

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[31760\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the protector programme is constrained by US International Traffic in Arms Regulations regulations.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[31766\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the E-7 Wedgetail platform is constrained by US ITAR regulations.

Jeremy Quin:

Maintaining UK operational freedom is a core tenet of procurement of these platforms. The Ministry of Defence (MOD) as a Department of State is committed to act as a trusted end-user when procuring, managing, transferring and disposing of US defence technology, including through robust security clearance processes of personnel and physical security measures to protect Export Controlled assets. The MOD ensures that access to Export Controlled Assets and information is denied to any unauthorised third parties.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[31762\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the protector programme requires the delivery of a US cryptographic key to meet its airworthiness requirements as defined by UK Def Stan 00-970.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[31765\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the weapon systems of the UK's P-8 aircraft require the provision of a US cryptographic key.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[31767\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the E-7 Wedgetail fleet requires the delivery of US cryptographic keys to meet its airworthiness requirements as defined by UK Def Stan 00-970.

Jeremy Quin:

I am withholding details of cryptographic requirements of aircraft fleets as its disclosure would be likely to prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces.

■ Warships

Mr Tobias Ellwood: [\[29945\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department plans to increase the number of corvettes in service with the Royal Navy beyond plans outlined in the 2021 Integrated Review.

Jeremy Quin:

The Royal Navy has no plans to acquire any corvettes. The Refresh to the National Shipbuilding Strategy lays out our shipbuilding pipeline over the next 30 years including Type 26, Type 31 and Type 32 Frigates.

■ Warships: Procurement

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[31751\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent steps he has taken to progress the conversion of a Bay class support ship to deliver a more agile and lethal littoral strike capability.

Jeremy Quin:

The Royal Navy has reviewed design and costing options for upgrading amphibious shipping in support of the UK's Commando Forces.

It has been decided that extending in service and upgrading RFA ARGUS and operating her alongside our Landing Ship Docking (Auxiliary)s in their current configuration, represents the optimum solution to support a forward deployed Littoral Response Group. This will provide a sustainable air manoeuvre, surface manoeuvre and command and control capability with the ability to manage availability as platforms undergo maintenance. The extension of RFA ARGUS also sustains Defence's Role 3 afloat medical capability.

The lessons from this analysis, and from operating these platforms forward in the coming years, will inform the procurement of the Multi-Role Support Ship which will replace the capabilities embodied in these platforms in the future.

■ Watchkeeper WK450**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[31030\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the expected out-of-service date is for Watchkeeper.

Jeremy Quin:

The expected out-of-service date for Watchkeeper is 2042.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ Broadband****Mr Jonathan Lord:** [\[31105\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department is taking to deliver full-fibre and gigabit-capable broadband by 2025.

Matt Warman:

The Government is delivering the biggest broadband upgrade in UK history. Currently, 69% of UK premises can access gigabit-capable broadband, continuing a rate of incremental growth in line with meeting the target of at least 85% gigabit-capable coverage across the country by 2025. This is not the limit of our ambitions and we will continue to work closely with the industry to get close to complete gigabit coverage as quickly as we can thereafter.

To support this, we are investing £5 billion through Project Gigabit so hard-to-reach areas can get ultra-reliable gigabit speeds. We have already upgraded coverage to over 600,000 premises, and we have over half a billion of pounds of contracts out for tender right now.

In addition to our Project Gigabit contracts, we are investing up to £210 million in the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme to support rural communities with the cost of installing new gigabit-capable connections.

We are also providing funding to connect rural public buildings like schools, GP surgeries and libraries. We recently announced a joint £82 million investment with the Department for Education (DfE) to connect up to 3,000 eligible schools to lightning-fast gigabit broadband.

■ Broadband and Mobile Phones: Standards**Dr Luke Evans:** [\[28501\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of Ofcom in improving customer service standards in the mobile and broadband sector.

Matt Warman:

Ofcom has industry rules in place which are designed to protect consumers - specifically around complaints processes and customer access to alternative dispute

resolution procedures. In June 2019, major broadband and mobile providers signed up to Ofcom's voluntary [Fairness Commitments](#) which sought to encourage signatory providers to embed fairness across their businesses. In [May 2021](#), Ofcom reviewed progress against the Fairness Commitments and identified customer service levels as an area of concern, as such this is likely to be a focus for future work on the Commitments.

In May 2022, Ofcom published its customer service tracking [report](#) for mobile, broadband and landline, which is based on customers' experiences in 2021, amid the continued impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Ofcom found that overall customer satisfaction levels were high - with 91% of mobile customers and 83% of broadband customers satisfied with their service overall. However, service levels did not return to 2019 levels across the industry. Ofcom will continue to engage with providers and challenge them to prioritise service improvements to beyond pre-pandemic levels.

■ **Broadband: Finance**

James Daly:

[30204]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps she is taking to support Openreach to reopen their Community Fibre Partnership applications.

Matt Warman:

Building Digital UK (BDUK) has been in frequent communication with Openreach to assist with their review of their Fibre Community Partnership (FCP) scheme and to support them in reopening the scheme as soon as possible. BDUK is also continuing to work through existing high priority FCP projects that have been submitted to the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme as suggested and sequenced by Openreach.

Communities that are interested in the FCP scheme can register their contact details on the [Openreach website](#) to receive a notification once the scheme has been reopened to new applications.

■ **Charities: Lotteries**

Kim Leadbeater:

[27768]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether her Department has made a recent assessment of the potential implications of amending the charity lottery annual sales limit.

Nigel Huddleston:

Society lottery sales and prize limits were last increased in July 2020 when the annual sales limit was raised from £10 million to £50 million. We published a review of the impact of these changes in March 2022 ([link](#)). The review considered evidence on the annual sales limit, and found that the increase had allowed some operators to move to a single licence and reduce costs. The review concluded that more data was necessary to fully measure the impact of the 2020 changes, and that therefore further policy changes were not necessary at this time.

My officials will continue working with the Gambling Commission, as part of its regulatory role, to keep the sector under review.

■ **Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Official Hospitality**

Jon Trickett: [\[27520\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how much her Department spent on hospitality in (a) 2020, (b) 2021 and (c) 2022.

Matt Warman:

The Department spent the following amounts on hospitality between 2019-2022:

2019-20 - £18,040

2020-21 - £124

2021-22 - £102,073

*2021-22 figures are unaudited.

The expenditure for 2021-22 includes £92,000 in relation to the Future Tech Forum, a two day event in November 2021 where the Secretary of State for DCMS hosted leading figures from around the world, including Ministers.

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

Jon Trickett: [\[28389\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what the wage ratio was between the highest paid member of staff in her Department and the lowest in (a) 2020, (b) 2021 and (c) 2022.

Matt Warman:

The [DCMS Annual Report](#) for 2020-2021 provides information on the highest and lowest remuneration for staff for the years 19/20 and 20/21:

Remuneration ranged from £22,375 to £185,000 (2019-20: £21,117 to £195,000).

	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020
Highest remuneration of any DCMS employee		Not yet published	£195,000 £185,000
Lowest remuneration of any DCMS employee	£22,375	£21,117	
Ratio	8.72	8.76	

This calculation is based on total remuneration, and therefore takes into account salary, allowances, non-consolidated performance related pay and benefits in kind. It

does not include severance payments, employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

Information for 2021-22 is not yet available and will be published in the 21-22 DCMS Annual Report and Accounts (publication aimed for October 2022).

The figures provided are subject to audit.

■ **Telecommunications: Infrastructure**

James Daly:

[\[30203\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department is taking to encourage collaborative and constructive negotiations and agreements for rights to install telecommunications apparatus.

Matt Warman:

The Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Bill contains measures to encourage the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanisms, which are specifically aimed at encouraging more collaborative and constructive negotiations.

However, the government recognises that legislation is not the only way in which better collaboration can be achieved. Officials from my department have held monthly Access to Land Workshops over the last 12-18 months, which cover a number of workstreams and attract attendance from stakeholders across the telecommunications industry, including site provider representatives. I am pleased to say that these workshops have made excellent progress and one of the outputs of this work is the creation of a new industry body, which in time will continue this work independently of DCMS.

I understand that this body will be called the National Connectivity Alliance and that so far it has appointed a steering group of 24 members from across all parts of the telecommunications sector. It aims to bring together stakeholders from across the telecommunications industry to discuss issues of mutual interest, to improve collaboration and understanding and to be a forum where members can share best practice.

I welcome this development and fully support the creation of this body and wish them every success for the future. I hope that site providers and the telecommunications industry share my sentiments and will work together to ensure its success.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ **Agricultural Products: UK Trade with EU**

Kevin Hollinrake:

[\[28895\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether it is his Department's policy to reach a sanitary and phytosanitary agreement with the EU.

Victoria Prentis:

The UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) remains the starting point for our new relationship. The sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) chapter of the TCA puts in place a framework that allows the UK and the EU to take informed decisions to reduce their respective SPS controls, with a commitment to avoid unnecessary barriers to trade.

We are open to discussions with the EU on steps we can take to reduce trade friction; however, these cannot be on the basis of dynamic alignment with EU rules, as this would compromise UK sovereignty over our own laws.

■ Bovine Tuberculosis: Disease Control

Daniel Zeichner: [\[27636\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the impact of controlled shootings of badgers on the welfare of that animal population.

Steve Double:

Reports on the humaneness, safety and effectiveness of badger culling are published annually[1].

The conclusion of the Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) for the 2021 season was that the likelihood of suffering in badgers culled by controlled shooting is broadly within the range of those reported for hunting or killing of other terrestrial mammals. This view was supported by Natural England's Chief Scientist.

[1] <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/bovine-tb-controlling-the-risk-of-bovine-tb-from-badgers#monitoring-and-evaluation>

Daniel Zeichner: [\[27637\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 23 June 2022 to Question 19626 on Bovine Tuberculosis: Disease Control, how that expenditure was allocated in each financial year since 2013-14.

Victoria Prentis:

Expenditure set out in the previous answer was from budgets allocated to the England Bovine TB Programme following annual departmental business planning decisions, in turn based on agreed Departmental Expenditure Limits.

■ Chemicals: Regulation

Geraint Davies: [\[30983\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will make an estimate of the number of chemical substances that will fall into a lower tonnage band under UK REACH than under EU REACH.

Geraint Davies:

[\[30984\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department has made an assessment of the impact of potential changes in the chemical substances registered in lower tonnage bands under UK REACH compared with EU REACH on human health and the environment.

Geraint Davies:

[\[31710\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the Consultation on Extending the UK REACH Submission Deadlines, if he will publish the cost benefit analysis that informed his proposal to place a number of chemical substances in lower tonnage bands in UK REACH.

Steve Double:

Applying tonnage bands to substances according to the quantities in which they are manufactured or imported has been a fundamental part of the registration process since EU REACH came into force in 2007. Less information is required where substances are being manufactured or imported in lower tonnages. This is because when lower quantities are in circulation, the use and hence the potential exposure are also reduced. This has not changed in UK REACH.

It may be the case that some chemical substances are registered under UK REACH at lower tonnage bands than they are under EU REACH, but registered tonnages under EU REACH are not directly relevant to the Great Britain context given the differing market sizes, and it would not in any event be feasible to assess the differences until full registration information is submitted under UK REACH.

■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Civil Servants

Caroline Lucas:

[\[27572\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many of the 91,000 jobs proposed to be cut from the civil service will be from his Department; and whether he has made an assessment of the impact of that reduction on the ability to grow numbers of skilled staff recognised in the three year spending review agreed in March 2022.

Victoria Prentis:

No decisions have been taken on where reductions will be made to civil service headcount.

■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: EU Law

Layla Moran:

[\[27721\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate he has made of (a) the number of officials in his Department involved in recording retained EU legislation for the purposes of the Retained EU Law Dashboard in the latest period for which figures are available and (b) the cost to the public purse of recording that information.

Victoria Prentis:

Defra has a large body of Retained EU Law (REUL). To ensure as much of this as possible was captured, a central coordinating function was responsible for ensuring completion of the Cabinet Office commission. In addition, numerous officials from across Defra were involved in producing and contributing information for inclusion in the dashboard. This work was carried out as part of officials' normal business activities, and we did not record the amount of staff time spent specifically on this work.

Since it has not been possible to make an accurate estimate of staff time, we cannot give an accurate estimate of costs. All costs associated with data collection were met as part of Defra's normal administrative budgets.

There has been no additional non-pay 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 legislation 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 on Tableau Public, which is a free platform for hosting public dashboards. The dashboard will continue to be updated at no additional cost.

■ **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Official Hospitality**

Jon Trickett:[\[27522\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much his Department spent on hospitality in (a) 2020, (b) 2021 and (c) 2022.

Victoria Prentis:

Total expenditure on hospitality by the Core Department is set out in the table below.

FINANCIAL YEAR	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 PROVISIONAL
Expenditure	£293,052	-£4,312	£92,255

The overall credit for 2020-21 is primarily due to one large credit for £18,000 in April 2020.

■ **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Pay**

Jon Trickett:[\[28390\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the pay ratio was between the highest paid member of staff in his Department and the lowest in (a) 2020, (b) 2021 and (c) 2022.

Victoria Prentis:

The pay ratio between the highest paid member of staff and the lowest in Defra was 9:1 in 2020 and 8.88:1 in 2021. Pay awards for 2022 have not yet been implemented in Defra.

■ Exports: Horticulture

Wendy Chamberlain:

[22542]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of including UK ornamental horticulture and landscaping in the Government's global export strategy.

Victoria Prentis:

With production of ornamentals being worth £1.4 billion in the UK at farm-gate in 2020, the Government recognises the importance of the ornamental horticultural industry sector to our economy. Last year the Ornamental Horticulture Roundtable Group published their 'Unlocking green growth: A plan from the ornamental horticulture & landscaping industry'. This identifies how barriers to the sector's growth can be unlocked through a collaborative approach between government and industry, with one of the opportunities for the sector's growth identified as the inclusion of UK ornamental horticulture and landscaping as part of the government's global export strategy. We are working with industry and across government to explore how this can be achieved.

Exports of ornamentals were worth £68 million in 2020. DIT works closely with the Commercial Horticulture Association (CHA), providing support to horticultural exporters from across the UK (including tree and plant growers, ornamental horticulture and landscaping). Jointly, DIT and CHA have developed a capability brochure showcasing UK capability in horticulture, which is available on the Agri-Tech UK portal www.agritech-uk.org. The portal is used by DIT commercial officers overseas to support companies listed in the searchable company directory expand their business overseas.

■ Fly-tipping

Dr Luke Evans:

[28498]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the work of the National Fly-Tipping Prevention Group on disseminating good practice on the prevention of fly tipping.

Victoria Prentis:

We work closely with the National Fly-Tipping Prevention Group, whose members contribute on a voluntary basis, to promote and share best practice. The group has published various guides on tackling the issue, along with a range of case studies, and we use our influence to disseminate these as widely as possible. We are currently working with the group to produce a best practice fly-tipping toolkit and have recently published the first part on their website:

www.tacklingflytipping.com/Documents/NFTPG-Files/FlyTipping-Toolkit-Cases.pdf.

■ Fly-tipping: Motorways

Dr Luke Evans:

[\[28497\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking with relevant local stakeholders to tackle fly tipping near motorways in (a) the UK and (b) Leicestershire.

Steve Double:

We commissioned WRAP to deliver a pilot fly-tipping intervention grant to help local authorities trial new approaches to tackle fly-tipping at hotspots. This includes a project trialling the use of AI enabled CCTV in conjunction with automatic number plate recognition to tackle fly-tipping at motorway laybys. If successful, this intervention could be replicated by others.

We understand that enforcement plays a key role in tackling fly-tipping. In a new trial, National Highways will be collecting evidence of littering and fly-tipping across the Strategic Road Network and will be working with relevant local authorities to support prosecution.

National Highways also supports local authorities in Leicestershire, as with other counties, to reduce the cost of removing waste on the trunk roads they are responsible for by providing opportunities for them to share their upcoming traffic management and road closures.

■ Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[27536\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent steps his Department has taken to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions relating to consumption.

Victoria Prentis:

All UK domestic and international GHG emissions reduction targets are based on territorial emissions. The UK has driven down territorial emissions by 44% over the past three decades, the fastest reduction of any G7 country and in October 2021 we published our Net Zero Strategy which delivers a comprehensive set of measures to support and capitalise on the UK's transition to net zero by 2050. Nevertheless, measuring consumption-based emissions provides helpful insight and supports policy development, enabling us to keep track of our carbon footprint and informing our efforts to reduce this.

Many of our policies to reduce emissions will help reduce consumption emissions. One example is the Resources and Waste Strategy which sets out steps to improve resource productivity by reducing consumption of raw material. The strong link between material resource efficiency (or resource productivity) and GHG emissions related to consumption, as measured by [UK Carbon Footprint](#), means that measures to improve resource productivity should help reduce our consumption related emissions. The measures in the strategy include reforms to waste collection and

packaging, the launch of the [Waste Prevention Programme](#) and a commitment to double resource productivity by 2050. Additionally we will continue to monitor levels of raw material consumption (our 'material footprint') and resource productivity via the set of indicators, [Monitoring Progress](#), which was launched under the Strategy.

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[27537\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if his Department will make an assessment of the potential merits of publishing levels of both (a) consumption- and (b) territory-based emissions.

Victoria Prentis:

As part of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change process, we report on UK territorial production emissions to an internationally agreed standard. For the purpose of assessing progress towards UK Carbon Budgets, measurement of the country's carbon emissions is on a territorial emissions basis. Although a few countries do publish consumption figures, there is no equivalent internationally agreed methodology for the calculation of, nor the comparison of, consumption emissions. However, we recognise the importance of monitoring the emissions that relate to our consumption, including emissions within the countries we import from. For this reason Defra has for a number of years published the emissions that relate to our total consumption [UK Carbon Footprint](#).

The carbon footprint published by Defra refers to emissions that are associated with the consumption spending of UK residents on goods and services, wherever in the world these emissions arise along the supply chain.

■ Incinerators

John Stevenson:

[\[28411\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on the future (a) planning rules for and (b) regulation of waste incinerator plants.

Victoria Prentis:

The Secretary of State regularly discusses a range of issues of mutual concern with the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

John Stevenson:

[\[28412\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if his Department will make an assessment of the potential merits of introducing new criteria for determining where waste incinerator plants can be located in (a) residential and (b) other areas.

Victoria Prentis:

Defra currently has no plans to do so.

■ Incinerators: Recycling**Catherine West:**[\[28465\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the Answer of 6 October 2020 to Question HL 8373 on Incinerators: Recycling, whether the further monitoring provided adequate evidence of incinerator capacity planned between July 2022 and 2025; how that compared with levels of residual waste; and what assessment she has made of the potential impact that will have on national recycling rates.

Victoria Prentis:

The Government's view is that Energy from Waste (EfW) should not compete with greater waste prevention, re-use, or recycling. Proposed new plants must not result in an over-capacity of EfW waste treatment provision at a local or national level.

Officials are currently assessing planned incinerator capacity against expected future residual waste arisings. This further assessment of residual waste treatment capacity needs will be published in due course.

■ Meat: Novel Foods**Henry Smith:**[\[16913\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the potential role of cultivated meat products in (a) reducing intensive farming levels and (b) supporting animal welfare objectives.

Henry Smith:[\[16915\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of enabling a cultivated meat sector in the UK on the environment and on achieving net zero ambitions.

Steve Double:

The Government has made no formal assessment of the role cultivated meats might play in reducing intensive farming levels or supporting animal welfare objectives

The cultivated meat sector probably presents great potential though we will only be able to fully understand the likely impact on greenhouse gas emissions when the specifics of the industry are more clearly identified and the evidence base is better established.

Defra officials and others from across Whitehall will continue to work together to assess the analysis of the cultivated meat sector as the industry develops, to understand the potential of this novel technology.

The recently published Government Food Strategy identifies new opportunities to make the food system healthier, more sustainable, more resilient, and more accessible for everyone across England. It sets out how we will deliver a sustainable, nature-positive food system that provides choice and access to high quality products supporting healthier and home-grown diets for all.

The Government is also making significant investments to unlock innovation and translate our world leading research into practical, farmer-led solutions that improve productivity, environmental sustainability and resilience, and which move towards net zero emission farming systems.

■ **Polio: Greater London**

Catherine West: [\[27689\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he has had recent discussions with the Environment Agency on the detection of poliovirus in London sewage works.

Steve Double:

The UK Health Security Agency is leading the investigation and response to the poliovirus detected in sewage samples collected from the London Beckton Sewage Treatment Works.

■ **Public Footpaths: Urban Areas**

Chi Onwurah: [\[28420\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what proportion of Natural England funding for national trails is allocated to urban areas.

Victoria Prentis:

It is not possible to proportion the amount of National Trail funding allocated to urban areas. Funding is allocated to National Trail Partnerships who spend their allocation in accordance with the priorities identified for individual trails to ensure the trail is maintained to national trail standards. Trails in urban areas are generally hard surfaces therefore tend to require less funding than in rural areas.

■ **Waste Management**

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[27549\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 22 June 2022 to Question 18820 on Waste Management, when he plans to implement reforms to the waste carrier, broker, dealer regime.

Steve Double:

We expect to publish the response to the recent consultation in due course.

■ **Zoonoses: Disease Control**

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[25834\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that the UK is effectively prepared to tackle zoonotic diseases.

Victoria Prentis:

Zoonotic infections threaten both human and animal health. For zoonotic diseases, we have systems in place to detect and manage outbreaks, for both endemic (those that are already found in the UK) and exotic infections, collaborating closely with the public health agencies.

For Salmonella for example, we have well established National Control Programmes in the poultry sector to protect public health. These mandate regular testing for Salmonella followed by appropriate measures to help control the risk where flocks are found to be positive.

The Animal and Plant Health Agency's (APHA) scanning surveillance programme is set up to detect a wide range of animal-related disease threats through diagnostic service and the networks of expertise in its Species Expert Groups.

We also carry out horizon scanning for infections not yet in the UK. This helps us prepare for possible future incursions, through the APHA's International Disease Monitoring programme and through collaborative work with UK public health bodies in the Human and Animal Infection and Risk Surveillance group. This group assesses new and emerging infections and advises on suitable mitigations and controls that may be necessary to protect public health.

Defra has an England Disease Contingency Plan for exotic notifiable diseases and our disease control plans are exercised regularly. The contingency plan outlines how we would work with other government agencies and departments to control zoonotic diseases as well as those which only affect livestock. This is being put to use at the moment, through our response to avian influenza outbreaks.

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE**■ China: Sanctions****Sir Iain Duncan Smith:**[\[29852\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of US sanctions on the Xinjiang Police College for human rights violations.

Amanda Milling:

Her Majesty's Government (HMG) have robust processes in place to ensure that all projects funded by UK aid meet our human rights obligations and values. This includes publicly available HMG guidance that sets out the human rights risks that must be considered prior to providing any justice or security sector assistance.

We are aware of concerns raised by a recent report from Freedom from Torture regarding a British Council partnership with London Policing College (LPC). This project was part of a regional programme that included efforts to reduce human rights violations and other malpractice through better policing. This project did not involve

the Xinjiang Policing College or any other public security entities in Xinjiang, and no funds were distributed to any overseas institutions.

■ **Climate Change: International Assistance**

Kerry McCarthy: [\[29949\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much the UK supplied in international climate finance in (a) 2019, (b) 2020 and (c) 2021; and how much will be supplied in 2022.

Vicky Ford:

The UK publishes details of our International Climate Finance (ICF) through the European Environment Agency (https://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/gb/eu/mmr/art16_finance/envx3sopa/Final_2020_UK_MR_climate_finance_report.xlsx/manage_document). The latest published figures report a total spend of £1,183.61 million in 2019. Figures for 2020 and 2021 have not yet been published. The UK met its public commitment to spend £5.8 billion ICF between 2015/16 and 2020/21 and we remain committed to doubling this to £11.6 billion between 2021/22 and 2025/26.

■ **Cybersecurity: Russia**

Matt Vickers: [\[30198\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps she is taking to work with her international partners in response to the global cyber threat posed by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Amanda Milling:

The UK Government remains vigilant to cyber threats, wherever they come from, and is ready to defend against them, working closely with allies to deter, mitigate and attribute malicious cyber activity. We consider all levers of power to protect the UK's security, consistent with our adherence to UK and international law.

The UK has dedicated significant resource to monitor, understand and counter Russia's cyber threats. This intelligence is shared with our allies, so that we are all prepared to defend ourselves from attack.

■ **Dame Rosalind Marsden**

Harriett Baldwin: [\[30009\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what representations she has made to the Government of Sudan about their denial of a visa to Dame Rosalind Marsden, consultant to the United Nations and former British Ambassador to Sudan.

Vicky Ford:

As publicly stated by our Ambassador in Khartoum on 23 May, we are disappointed that the Sudanese authorities have chosen not to renew the visa for Dame Rosalind

Marsden. The decision is unfortunate especially given the request of the Sudanese authorities for the UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS), and its partners to devote more attention to support for peacebuilding. In her capacity as a senior consultant to the UN in Sudan since July 2021, Dame Marsden has been supporting a series of integrated peacebuilding assessments, intended to help UN Agencies and partners design and prioritise support.

■ **Development Aid: Polio**

Dr Philippa Whitford: [\[30036\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether a decision has been taken on the financial contribution the UK will make to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative over the next three years.

Amanda Milling:

The UK is a longstanding supporter of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI), having provided £1.38 billion of funding since 1995. GPEI has been allocated £50 million of fully flexible funding over the next three years, which will enable GPEI to immediately respond to outbreaks of polio. Investing in GPEI will support the delivery of the objectives contained in the International Development Strategy, including to reduce the risk of future global health threats. The UK will continue to be a strong partner to GPEI.

■ **East Africa and Sahel: Food Supply**

Chris Law: [\[30040\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the announcement of 24 June 2022 entitled PM pledges new support for countries on the food security frontline, how much and what proportion of the £372 million will be allocated to (a) East Africa and (b) the Sahel.

Chris Law: [\[30041\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she (a) has made and (b) plans to make an assessment of the potential merits of increasing her Department's funding allocations to (a) East Africa and (b) the Sahel to help prevent famine.

Vicky Ford:

The UK is a major humanitarian donor to the East Africa region, and a committed donor to the Sahel. Between 2019-2021 the UK provided over £160 million in humanitarian aid to the Sahel, and in 2021/2022 we provided more than £230 million to address humanitarian requirements across East Africa.

The UK played a critical role in convening the recent UN Horn of Africa Drought Roundtable which took place in late April in Geneva. This included working with states in the region and the UN to ensure appropriate levels of participation. It helped to bring much needed focus on the drought and mobilised roughly US \$400 million in new funding.

My [Minister Ford] recent engagement as the Minister for Africa has included: A ministerial conference on global food security on 24 June; a meeting with the Disasters Emergency Committee to discuss the crisis in East Africa, comprising UK non-governmental organisations (NGOs); and engaging with World Bank President David Malpass.

On 24 June the Prime Minister pledged £372 million in global food security aid, to be allocated along the following lines; £130 million for the World Food Programme, £133 million for research and development partnerships, £52 million for UN's global emergency response fund, £37 million for the UN International Fund for Agricultural Development, £17.7 million through the FCDO's Green Growth Centre of Expertise, £2 million for the Nutrition Match Fund.

The UK will work closely with these organisations including through our network of country-based advisors to ensure that this money is used effectively and that allocations are made accordingly to need, including in the Sahel and East Africa. We continue to monitor the situation and our response closely.

■ **Ecuador: Economic Situation**

Ruth Jones:

[\[30138\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of the (a) political and (b) economic situation in Ecuador.

Vicky Ford:

We have been actively monitoring the political and economic situation in Ecuador during the recent nationwide indigenous strikes and protests. We welcome the news that on 30 June a political agreement was reached between the Government and indigenous groups. Ensuring a peaceful and equitable resolution will be an important outcome for Ecuador. The recent protests have exposed long-standing socio-economic challenges in Ecuador that will require strong political will to resolve, both in the 90-day delivery timeframe of the political agreement and, importantly, in the long term.

Our Embassy remains in regular contact with the Ecuadorean authorities about the current situation. The immediate economic costs of the protests, and the associated damage, have been high for Ecuador. Delivering on the conditions of the political agreement will likely require further commitments to public spending with implications for Ecuador's economy. We will continue to monitor the political developments and the economic impact of the situation, particularly during the 90-day timeframe set for delivery of the political agreement.

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

Sarah Olney:

[\[27697\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much her Department has spent on consultancy fees in each of the last five years.

Vicky Ford:

FCDO consultancy spend in 2020-21 was £2.7 million. Total FCO plus DFID spend for years 2019-20, 2018-19, and 2017-18 was £3.0 million, £2.6 million and £1.3 million respectively. Consultancy spend for 2021-22 will be reported in the FCDO's annual report and accounts, which will be published shortly.

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Mandarin Language

Catherine West: [\[31181\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what estimate she has made of the number of FCDO employees who speak Mandarin.

Amanda Milling:

As of January 2022, 63 FCDO staff have achieved qualifications in Mandarin at C1 or C2 level (in the Common European Framework Reference scale) over the past five years. FCDO language qualifications are valid for 5 years.

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Pay

Jon Trickett: [\[28395\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what the pay ratio was between the highest paid member of staff in her Department and the lowest in (a) 2020, (b) 2021 and (c) 2022.

Vicky Ford:

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office can confirm the below pay ratios between its highest and lowest paid staff;

FCDO Pay Ratio between highest and lowest paid member of staff:

2020. 9.00

2021. 9.00

2022. 8.92

Gaza: International Assistance

Ian Lavery: [\[28422\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will urgently increase funding for (a) child protection and (b) mental health and psychosocial support as part of her Department's humanitarian and development assistance to Gaza.

Amanda Milling:

I [Minister Milling] met with UNRWA staff during my visit to the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs) on 23 June where I heard first-hand about the vital work the agency undertakes to provide core services to Palestinian refugees. In 2021, the UK provided £2 million to UNICEF to help them provide child-sensitive grants to vulnerable households in Gaza reaching 4,311 boys and girls. This support enabled

families to meet the essential needs of their children, with the majority of the support spent on food, education, and healthcare. Through our annual support to UNRWA, the UK supports their Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) interventions, especially for children, which included summer school activities targeting 98,595 children (52,236 girls and 46,359 boys) in Gaza in 2021.

■ Indo-pacific Region: Visits Abroad

Catherine West: [\[31182\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many Ministerial visits to the Indo-Pacific region there have been in each year since 2010.

Amanda Milling:

MINISTERS FROM NOW FCDO AND LEGACY FCO AND DFID DEPARTMENTS MADE 296 VISITS TO INDO-PACIFIC COUNTRIES IN EACH OF THE FOLLOWING YEARS, INCLUDING COUNTRIES BEING VISITED MORE THAN ONCE IN A YEAR.

Year	xFCO	xDFID
2010 [from May]	13	4
2011	24	3
2012	20	9
2013	23	6
2014	16	5
2015	18	6
2016	21	3
2017	24	3
2018	35	2
2019	20	1
2020 [Jan-Aug]	6	0
Post FCDO merger	FCDO	
2020 [Sept-Dec]	4	
2021	18	
2022	12	

Ministerial visits as recorded on Gov.UK between May 2010-September 2021 (xFCO) FCO ministerial gifts, hospitality, travel and meetings - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and (xDFID) Ministerial gifts, hospitality, travel and meetings with external organisations in the Department for International Development - data.gov.uk

No data published for xDFID Ministerial travel between July-August 2012 and July-September 2017.

■ Iraq: Genocide

Brendan O'Hara: [\[31855\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the findings of the Yazidi Justice Committee's report on State Responsibility and the Yazidi Genocide published on 6 July 2022, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of that report's finding that Iraq has failed in its obligations to prevent and punish genocide against the Yazidis.

Brendan O'Hara: [\[31857\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the Yazidi Justice Committee report on State Responsibility and the Yazidi Genocide, published on 6 July 2022, if she will take steps to help secure the relocation and return of kidnapped Yazidi women and children from Iraq by (a) requesting that Iraq take necessary steps and (b) providing appropriate assistance through her Department to secure this outcome.

Brendan O'Hara: [\[31858\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the findings of the Yazidi Justice Committee in its report on State Responsibility and the Yazidi Genocide, published on 6 July 2022, on the lack of Iraqi domestic legislation giving effect to the Genocide Convention, if she will take steps to urge Iraq to enact legislation on that matter.

Amanda Milling:

We note the findings of the Yazidi Justice Committee's report. The UK advocated strongly for the passing of the Yazidi Survivors' Law in March 2021 and UK Ministers continue to raise the importance of full implementation of this law regularly with the Government of Iraq and Kurdistan Regional Government. In parallel, we have also provided £2 million to the UN Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Daesh (UNITAD). We will continue to support the Yazidi community in Iraq and champion UNITAD's work in gathering evidence of Daesh crimes, including against minority communities.

Brendan O'Hara: [\[31856\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the findings of the Yazidi Justice Committee in its report on State Responsibility and the Yazidi Genocide, published on 6 July 2022, on Iraq and

punishment of genocide, if she will make it her policy to urge the UN Security Council to refer Iraq to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court under Article 13(b) of the Rome Statute.

Amanda Milling:

We note the findings from the Yazidi Justice Committee support. The UK has focused on supporting the Government of Iraq to take the necessary actions to secure justice for the Yazidi people and many other victims of Daesh's crimes. We will continue to use our position at the UN, including as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, to raise situations of concern and to support the deployment of all appropriate tools available to the UN in dealing with potential mass atrocities. Our focus is always on securing an end to violence and protecting civilians.

Fleur Anderson:

[\[31932\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the findings of the Yazidi Justice Committee's report on State Responsibility and the Yazidi Genocide, published on 6 July 2022, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of that report's findings that (a) the Islamic State Group committed acts of genocide towards the Yazidis in Iraq and Syria and (b) that this genocide is ongoing.

Amanda Milling:

We note the Yazidi Justice Committee's report on State Responsibility and the Yazidi Genocide. It is the long-standing policy of the British Government that any judgment as to whether genocide has occurred is a matter for a competent national or international court, rather than for governments or non-judicial bodies. However, we will continue to use our position at the UN, including as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, to raise situations of concern and to support the deployment of all appropriate tools available to the UN in dealing with potential mass atrocities.

Fleur Anderson:

[\[31933\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the findings of the Yazidi Justice Committee's report on State Responsibility and the Yazidi Genocide, published on 6 July 2022, what steps she is taking with her international counterparts to help (a) trace and (b) safely return the 2,763 missing Yazidi women and children.

Fleur Anderson:

[\[31934\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the findings of the Yazidi Justice Committee's report on State Responsibility and the Yazidi Genocide, published on 6 July 2022, whether her Department is taking steps to (a) identify, (b) document and (c) preserve all evidence relating to alleged perpetrators; and what steps she is taking, in collaboration with her international counterparts, to ensure that the individuals responsible for these alleged acts of genocide are prosecuted.

Amanda Milling:

We note the findings of the Yazidi Justice Committee's report. The Yazidi community has suffered immense pain and loss as a result of the abhorrent crimes inflicted by Daesh. The UK advocated strongly for the passing of the Yazidi Survivors' Law in March 2021 and continues to advocate for the work of the Directorate of Yazidi Affairs, which is responsible for searching for survivors who are still missing, providing reparations to survivors and supporting judicial and investigative bodies on holding perpetrators to account. In parallel, we have also provided £2 million to the UN Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Daesh (UNITAD).

The UK joined likeminded partners in committing to support Yazidis displaced or abducted by Daesh in a Joint alliance statement issued in October 2021. We will continue to champion UNITAD's work in gathering evidence of Daesh crimes, including against minority communities, and press a newly formed government on the importance of these issues, including searching for those missing Yazidi women and children abducted by Daesh.

Italy: British Nationals Abroad**Deidre Brock:**[\[28889\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions she has had with her Italian counterpart on helping to ensure that UK citizens who are (a) working at and (b) retired from Italian universities are compensated for arrears in unpaid (i) wages and (ii) pension payments.

Graham Stuart:

UK citizens have made, and continue to make, a valuable contribution to educational exchange between the UK and Italy. The UK Government has been following this issue closely for several years. Her Majesty's Government Ministers and officials have made representations to their counterparts and will continue to advocate for a solution.

Malta: Council of Europe**John Howell:**[\[25805\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the debate which took place at the Council of Europe on 23 June 2022 entitled The honouring of membership obligations to the Council of Europe by Malta.

Vicky Ford:

The UK Government condemns the assassination of the journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia in 2017. All those responsible must be held to account and brought to justice. The then Minister for Europe, Wendy Morton spoke to Malta's Foreign Minister on 26 March 2021, and discussed cooperation on media freedom and serious organized crime. The British High Commissioner met Matthew Caruana Galizia, the son of

Daphne Caruana Galizia, on 29 September 2021 to discuss the findings of the public inquiry. On 5 March 2020, the Prime Minister discussed the importance of securing justice for Daphne with President Vella during a meeting at 10 Downing Street. We recognise the work of the Council of Europe and in particular Parliamentary Assembly to the Council of Europe in this sphere, and note that recommendations will go to the Committee of Ministers in due course.

■ Myanmar: Armed Conflict

Stephen Farry:

[\[28941\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of the conflict in Myanmar; and what steps her Department is taking to support Myanmar nationals.

Amanda Milling:

The UK is deeply concerned about the conflict in Myanmar, where over 14 million people are in humanitarian need, more than one million people have been displaced and violence is escalating across the country. The UK is working with international partners to call for an end to the violence, unhindered humanitarian access and the protection of civilians.

In 2021/22, the UK provided £49.4 million in aid to Myanmar. We are looking to increase our humanitarian assistance, including to the most vulnerable internally displaced persons, by providing food, water, hygiene and sanitation services, shelter and medical equipment. The UK also secured strong language on the protection of civilians at the UN Security Council on 2nd February 2022. We consistently raise the situation in Myanmar with counterparts, including at the UN, G7 and ASEAN, to try and bring an end to the crisis.

■ Refugees: Afghanistan

Caroline Lucas:

[\[27569\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what her target date is for the completion of processing expressions of interest submitted under pathway 3 of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme once the deadline of 15 August 2022 has passed; and (a) how and (b) when applicants will be informed of whether they will be offered a place on that scheme.

Vicky Ford:

Under the third referral pathway of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS), the Government is now considering Expressions of Interest (EOIs) from eligible at risk British Council Contractors, Gardaworld contractors and Chevening alumni. Processing of EOIs will be completed as quickly as possible. Those who are eligible and are referred for resettlement under the ACRS will be informed by email from the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office with advice on the next steps. The relocation of referred individuals to the UK will be subject to security checks as set out in the gov.uk guidance.

■ Rwanda and Democratic Republic of Congo: Armed Conflict**Owen Thompson:**[\[31885\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she is taking steps to help prevent the risk of violent conflict between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Vicky Ford:

In recent weeks we have raised the unacceptable increase in violence, hate speech and increased movement of armed groups in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), with the Governments of DRC, Uganda and Rwanda, as well as the leadership of the UN Peacekeeping Mission, MONUSCO. The Prime Minister discussed these issues with Rwandan President Kagame during CHOGM. Minister Ford recently spoke with the Rwandan Foreign Minister on 16 June and the DRC Minister for Planning on 24 June to re-iterate the need for all sides to continue to work together to deliver de-escalation on the ground and an end to hate speech. We welcome the meeting of regional Heads of State in Nairobi and the recent agreement reached by President Kagame and President Tshisekedi in Angola. It is vital that all parties now to implement the Roadmap to secure a real de-escalation on the ground in Eastern DRC. We will continue to closely monitor the situation.

■ Sri Lanka: Peace Negotiations**Fleur Anderson:**[\[26027\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to work with the international community to help bring peaceful resolution to Sri Lanka's political crisis.

Vicky Ford:

We are closely monitoring the political, economic and security situation in Sri Lanka. We encourage all sides to find a peaceful, democratic, and inclusive approach to resolving the current political and economic challenges. We also call on the authorities to safeguard citizen's rights, and ensure security responses are proportionate and in line with international human rights standards. The Minister responsible for South Asia, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, has emphasised that violence against peaceful protestors is unacceptable. Those responsible for attacks should be held to account. Fundamental rights including the right to peaceful protest, must be protected. The UK High Commissioner to Sri Lanka has called for independent and transparent investigations into violence against peaceful protesters.

In March 2021, the UK Government and our Core Group partners led an ambitious new resolution (46/1) on Sri Lanka at the UNHRC. The resolution provides a continued framework for international engagement on human rights in Sri Lanka, and highlights serious concerns about the situation, including those detailed in the January 2021 report of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). We continue to make clear our concerns in statements made to the UN Human Rights Council, most recently on 14 June 2022. Lord Ahmad also raised the

need to make progress on human rights and accountability when he met Foreign Minister Peiris on 15 June 2022.

■ Sri Lanka: Religious Freedom

Jim Shannon:

[\[27618\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps she is taking to help ensure that UK (a) aid to and (b) trade deals with Sri Lanka are dependant on the protection of freedom of religious belief in that country.

Vicky Ford:

The UK Government regularly raises the importance of religious tolerance and protecting the rights of all Sri Lankans to practise their faith. Staff at the British High Commission in Colombo regularly meet representatives of faith communities and affected ethnoreligious communities to hear their concerns. The High Commissioner most recently met with civil society delegates to the freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) ministerial conference. FoRB was a key theme during the Minister of State for South Asia, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad's visit to Sri Lanka in January 2022, where he also met faith leaders.

In March 2021, the UK Government and our Core Group partners led resolution 46/1 on Sri Lanka at the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC). The resolution provides a framework for international engagement on human rights in Sri Lanka, and highlights serious concerns about the situation including FoRB. We have also provided funding from the UK's Conflict, Stability and Security Fund to support work on social cohesion and countering hate speech. Sri Lanka has access to zero tariffs on certain exports to the UK as part of the Enhanced Framework of the UK's Generalised Scheme of Preferences. Countries that are part of the Enhanced Framework must implement 27 conventions relating to human and labour rights, the environment, and good governance.

■ Sudan: Human Rights

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[29980\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the recommendations set out in the report titled Sudan's Democratic Transition on Life Support, published by Redress and the SOAS Centre for Human Rights Law on 9 June 2022.

Vicky Ford:

We have noted the report "Sudan's Democratic Transition on Life Support" and welcome the important work of civil society and academia in support of Sudan. We continue to press for a resolution to the political crisis following the military coup, have consistently called for justice and accountability, and been clear that talks must be inclusive in order to deliver a new government that is genuinely civilian-led.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**■ Blood Tests: Halton**

Derek Twigg: [\[31020\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 27 June 2022 to Question 19572 on Blood Tests: Halton, if he will make an estimate of the waiting time for patients requiring a blood test following a GP referral in Halton Borough in the latest period for which data is available.

Derek Twigg: [\[31022\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate he has made of the number of people with a suspected cancer diagnosis in the Halton local authority area who wait more than two weeks for an appointment with a specialist.

James Morris:

We are unable to make a specific estimate as data on waiting times for blood tests and appointments for suspected cancer diagnosis is not collected at borough or local authority level.

■ Dementia: Diagnosis

Yasmin Qureshi: [\[31067\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of using the average age of diagnosis as a key performance indicator in the dementia strategy for assessing the progress of diagnosing dementia.

Yasmin Qureshi: [\[31068\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of using percentage of those diagnosed with a specific sub-type of dementia in the dementia strategy as a key performance indicator to assess progress in diagnosing dementia.

Gillian Keegan:

We will shortly set out our plans on dementia for England, which will focus on the specific health and care needs of people living with dementia and their carers, including dementia diagnosis, risk reduction and prevention and research. As part of the development of the plan, we are working with partners to identify appropriate key performance indicators to monitor progress and assess the plan's success.

■ Dementia: Health Services

Julian Knight: [\[31141\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to prioritise dementia through the National Dementia Strategy.

Elliot Colburn: [\[31925\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent progress his Department has made on developing a new ten-year plan to help tackle dementia.

Gillian Keegan:

We will set out plans for dementia in England shortly.

Health: Equality**Andrew Gwynne:** [\[31782\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether it remains his policy that the health disparities white paper will be published later this year.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[31783\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department will publish the Health Disparities White Paper before the 2022 summer recess.

Maggie Throup:

We will provide further information on the timing for the white paper in due course.

Joint Replacements: Surgery**Dr Rupa Huq:** [\[30076\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to reduce NHS waiting times for joint replacement surgery in England.

Maria Caulfield:

The High Volume Low Complexity programme is focusing on improving clinical pathways and quality of care through the adoption of best clinical and operational practice. The programme aims to establish fast-track surgical hubs for high volume elective procedures such as hip and knee joint replacements and reduce waiting times. Additional surgical capacity is also being made available through a £1.5 billion capital investment in elective services. This includes new surgical hubs and increased bed capacity, including for joint replacement surgery.

Learning Disability: Day Care**Fleur Anderson:** [\[26034\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that people with learning disabilities have access to day care services.

Gillian Keegan:

Local authorities are best placed to understand and plan the care and support needs of their local population. Under the Care Act 2014, local authorities have a duty to shape the local care market to ensure a diverse range of high quality and sustainable care and support services are provided, including day services for those with learning disabilities.

We continue to support to local authorities to ensure the appropriate tools and resources are available to effectively manage the local market. The Department funds support and improvement work in the sector, including the Local Government Association and Association of Directors of Adult Social Services to deliver the Care and Health Improvement Programme.

In addition, we have written to local authorities to reiterate the importance of day services and respite for carers and to encourage authorities to access the funding available.

■ Long Covid: Speech and Language Therapy

Geraint Davies: [\[30978\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his policies of the findings of the report of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists, Understanding the need for and provision of speech and language therapy services for individuals with post-COVID syndrome in the UK, published in January 2022, that speech and language therapists have experienced numerous barriers and challenges to providing rehabilitation to people with post-covid syndrome.

Geraint Davies: [\[30979\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists report, The Sustained Impact of COVID-19 on Speech and Language Therapy Services in the UK, published in January 2022, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of that reports finding that demand for speech and language therapy services had increased since the start of the covid-19 outbreak.

James Morris:

While no formal assessment has been made, NHS England has noted the Royal College's findings.

From October 2020 to March 2023, NHS England invested £224 million to develop and deliver services for people experiencing post-COVID-19 syndrome. National commissioning guidance for post-COVID-19 services recommends that services should offer an integrated multidisciplinary service from holistic assessments to onward referral to rehabilitation services, including speech and language therapy. Speech and language therapists are recognised as integral to the multi-disciplinary workforce delivering care and support to people with post-COVID-19 syndrome.

■ Surgery: Health Services

Mr Virendra Sharma: [\[31065\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish examples from within the NHS of (a) innovative care and (b) best practice for patients receiving treatment on NHS England's General Surgery Service; and if he will make a statement.

Maria Caulfield:

NHS England's Getting It Right First Time (GIRFT) programme is designed to improve the treatment and care of patients through reviews of services, benchmarking and developing an evidence base to support change. Through the High Volume Low Complexity programme, the GIRFT team is working with systems and regions to assist the National Health Service recover performance in elective services and reduce the backlog of patients.

The GIRFT programme has published examples of best practice in treating patients for general surgery and trauma and orthopaedics in its Best Practice Library, which is available at the following link:

<https://www.gettingitrightfirsttime.co.uk/bpl/>

■ Vaccination: Death**Sir Christopher Chope:****[30988]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many Regulation 28 reports from Coroners in England which refer to deaths caused by or contributed to by vaccination were received by (a) the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency and (b) NHS England in (i) 2021 and (ii) the first six months of 2022; and what steps were taken in response to those reports.

Maggie Throup:

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency and NHS England have not received any Regulation 28 reports from coroners in England in 2021 or 2022.

HOME OFFICE**■ Animal Welfare: Licensing****Alex Sobel:****[31226]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of applications for project licences to conduct experiments on animals under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 were refused permission in each year between January 2012 and January 2022.

Tom Pursglove:

From 2018 to date, no applications for project licence under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 have been refused. For previous years, the Home Office does not hold data on applications that have been refused or withdrawn through the application process.

The Government publishes extensive Guidance on applying for licences. Applications are internally reviewed by an establishment's Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body before being submitted to the regulator for assessment. During the application process applicants have the opportunity to amend or withdraw an application in response to feedback from the regulator.

■ Banks: Forgery**Sir Greg Knight:**[\[31749\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she expects the National Economic Crime Centre to conclude its investigation into alleged signatory fraud by banks; what steps she is taking to help ensure that the investigation is concluded in a timely way; and if she will make a statement.

Stephen McPartland:

The National Economic Crime Centre received a significant amount of material from the Bank Signature Forgery Campaign and is continuing to assess the material submitted to them.

The National Crime Agency does not routinely confirm or deny whether an investigation is taking place.

■ London Policing College: China**Sir Iain Duncan Smith:**[\[31249\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the adequacy of the working relationship between the London Police College (LPC) and the Metropolitan Police Service, in the context of historic LPC programmes in China with potential links to organisations that have been accused of human rights violations.

Tom Pursglove:

The London Policing College (LPC) is an independent organisation which includes retired officers from the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and is independent to the Home Office and UK Government. The Home Office has no formal relationship with the LPC.

In 2019, the British Council awarded funding to LPC as part of a regional programme to improve international teaching standards in police education in the target countries. This included efforts to reduce human rights violations.

The British Council have confirmed that they have never funded any activities involving Xinjiang security bodies. LPC have also confirmed that no Xinjiang security bodies were involved in the programme and that they have now ceased all programme partnerships with China.

■ Members: Correspondence**Louise Haigh:**[\[30073\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the email correspondence of 16 May 2022 from the hon. Member for Sheffield Heeley, reference LH20904.

Kevin Foster:

The Home Office responded to the Hon. Member's correspondence on 6 July 2022.

■ Rape

Rachael Maskell:

[\[26798\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to tackle incidences of rape; and how she is monitoring and measuring the impact of her Department's policies and interventions.

Amanda Solloway:

Rape and sexual violence are devastating crimes that can have an impact on victims for the rest of their life. The most recent published annual data shows that in the year to December 2021, the volume of police recorded rape offences rose to the highest ever recorded figure at 67,125. We welcome the fact that victims of sexual offences, which are all too often hidden crimes, are bravely coming forward to report to the police.

In June 2021, the Government published its End-to-End Rape Review Findings and Action Plan. The Action Plan set out a robust programme of work to drive improvements in the criminal justice system's (CJS) handling of adult rape cases. A year on, we have started to see increases in the number of referrals of adult rape cases from the police to the Crown Prosecution Service and in the number of charges.

On June 16, we published our second six-monthly Rape Review Progress Update which sets out the important progress that we have made, including:

- o The Home Office is providing £5m in 2022/3 to support the expansion into a further 14 police forces of Operation Soteria, which will develop a new national operating model for police forces to adopt by June 2023;
- o Running a public consultation on the police requests for third-party material, which can sometimes be unnecessary and disproportionate; and
- o Continuing to make progress towards the target of recruiting 20,000 additional police officers by March 2023. As of March 2022, the Home Office had supported the recruitment of 13,578 police officers, and in 2022/3 we have allocated £550m to achieve the target of 20,000 officers by March 2023.

Accountability and transparency are key to ensuring we achieve our ambition of doubling the volume of adult rape cases reaching court over the Parliament. We developed a CJS delivery dashboard for recorded adult rape offences which brings together data from across the criminal justice system. This is published quarterly, and the most recent national and local dashboards were published on 16 June. By closely monitoring this data we will be able to understand the ongoing impact of our work, drive improvements and share best practice.

■ Sexual Offences: Crime Prevention

Rachael Maskell:

[\[26799\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will (a) adopt a public health approach to the prevention of sexual violence and (b) take steps to reduce such criminal behaviour.

Amanda Solloway:

Tackling and preventing violence against women and girls (VAWG), including sexual violence, is a key priority for this Government. As set out in our Tackling VAWG Strategy, our approach is focused on prioritising prevention, ensuring victims receive the support they deserve, seeing perpetrators brought to justice, and making sure agencies work together effectively.

We welcome the fact that more victims of sexual offences, which are all too often hidden crimes, are coming forward and reporting to the police, however, we know there is much more to do.

In June 2021 we published the End-to-End Rape Review Report and Action Plan which outlined a robust programme of work to achieve a significant improvement in the way the criminal justice system responds to rape. As set out in the update we published on 16 June, progress to date includes:

- confirming the 14 further police forces we are expanding Operation Soteria into. This work is developing a new national operating model for the investigation of rape which will be available to all police forces to from June 2023;
- launching a consultation on police requests for third-party material, which can sometimes be unnecessary and disproportionate;
- working with the Police Digital Service and technology sector, to identify, test, and deploy new technological capability that address invasive requests for data and reduce time delays;
- providing an additional £550 million to fund the final 8,000 officers in the third year of the Police Uplift Programme to reach the target of 20,000 additional police officers by March 2023;
- confirming an investment of over £460 million in victim support over the next three years, which includes funding more than 1,000 Independent Sexual and Domestic Violence Advisors a new 24/7 helpline for rape victims, and local support services nationwide; and
- confirming a pilot of enhanced specialist sexual violence support at three major courts.

More broadly, through the VAWG Strategy we have:

- supported the introduction of a new full-time National Policing Lead for Violence Against Women and Girls – with DCC Maggie Blyth now in post;

- launched a new national communications campaign, Enough , with a focus on targeting perpetrators and harmful misogynistic attitudes, educating young people about healthy relationships and ensuring victims can access support; and made available £30 million for local areas through the ‘Safety of Women at Night Fund and the Safer Streets Fund to prevent VAWG in public spaces, including in the night-time economy.

■ Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust: Maternity Services

Mark Pritchard: [\[28883\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will maintain grant support at 85 per cent of the investigation costs this year for the Operation Lincoln investigation into baby deaths at Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust.

Tom Pursglove:

The Home Office provided West Mercia Police £2.7 million in Special Grant funding in 2021-22 for Operation Lincoln.

The Department has received and is considering a request from West Mercia Police for the additional policing costs of Operation Lincoln in 2022-23.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Import Controls: Xinjiang

Liam Byrne: [\[29902\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what recent assessment her Department has made of the extent of prohibitions or controls preventing or regulating goods, wares, articles, and merchandise imports with content manufactured in Xinjiang to the UK.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

I refer the Hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave to the Hon. Lady for York Central on 28 January 2022, UIN: [108570](#).

JUSTICE

■ Community Orders

Steve Reed: [\[31121\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 30 June 2022 to Question 25870 on Community Orders, how many community payback projects have been nominated by members of the public in each (a) local authority area and (b) probation service area in each of the last five years.

Tom Pursglove:

It is vital that the work offenders undertake as part of their Community Payback benefits local people and places.

As such, we actively encourage members of the public to nominate Community Payback projects via the Gov.uk website.

In response to PQ 25868 we provided a breakdown of all nominations received via the Gov.uk page under both CRCs and the unified Probation Service since September 2019.

Prior to unification of the Probation Service in June 2021, Community Payback was delivered by Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) who had their own processes for capturing public nominations. CRC contracts did not require them to report on these processes. However, under CRCs the public could also nominate projects via the Gov.uk website and we provided this data in response to PQ 25868, dating back to September 2019. There is no data prior to September 2019.

The Gov.uk process operates at a regional level and does not allow us to map nominations on to local authority or Probation Delivery Unit areas.

Local Community Payback teams work closely with local authorities, Community Safety Partnerships and Police and Crime Commissioners to identify and deliver constructive projects that respond to the needs of communities.

We are working to improve our data collection post-unification as part of wider reforms to Community Payback.

■ Courts and Prisons: Energy**Steve Reed:**[\[31122\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether his Department is taking steps to mitigate the effect of future energy price rises on (a) prisons and (b) the court estate.

Tom Pursglove:

The Ministry of Justice (MOJ) procures its energy (gas and electricity) via the Crown Commercial Services (CCS) Supply of Energy framework.

Through this framework, mitigation against future energy price rises is provided due to the way in which the vast majority of the MOJ's future requirements are traded by the CCS Energy Trading team over a 30-month rolling basis under what is termed the V30 basket, and to a lesser proportion over a 6-month period using the L6 basket. This provides flexibility for the CCS team to trade the basket according to an agreed hedging strategy that enables them to wait-out periods of high prices until market conditions become more favourable.

Similarly, CCS use market intelligence to identify trends in energy prices to trigger the purchase of future energy requirements before prices begin to rise, as was seen last year when they traded the vast majority of the 2022 basket before prices reached the unprecedented levels subsequently seen later in 2021 and continuing into 2022.

The MoJ is also working to reduce demand by:

- Investing in energy efficiency schemes across its estate to reduce the amount of electricity, gas and other fuels it consumes to reduce exposure to increasing energy costs;
- Investing in alternative sources of power/heat generation, for example solar panels, ground source heating.

Steve Reed:

[\[31124\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how much (a) courts and (b) prisons have spent on energy efficiency measures in each of the last ten years.

Tom Pursglove:

As set out in our Annual Report and Accounts 2020-21, the MOJ is committed to improving the energy efficiency of our courts and prisons. Over 2020-21, the MOJ invested over £50m directly on energy efficiency projects, such as the installation of LED lighting, solar panels, improved boiler and air conditioning controls. Additionally, all of our maintenance and capital improvement works include elements of energy efficiency.

Unfortunately, the cost of pulling the requested information from all of our works over the past 10 years could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

■ Criminal Proceedings: Ethnic Groups

Steve Reed:

[\[31851\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many times since 2017 his Department has undertaken repeat analyses of ethnicity and the criminal justice system not including that undertaken as part of The Lammy Review.

Tom Pursglove:

Everyone has a right to be confident that the justice system is there to protect them, regardless of their background. That's why we're committed to tackling racial inequalities, wherever we find them.

The Ethnicity and the Criminal Justice System publication is a biennial compendium of statistics from across the criminal justice system in England and Wales. The most recent edition was published in 2021, describing statistical trends for 2020, which is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/race-and-the-criminal-justice-system>.

Most of the data included within the publication is routinely produced, published, and analysed by the department responsible for each area. See the accompanying [Technical Guide](#) for details on data sources included within the publication.

■ Criminal Proceedings: Statistics**Steve Reed:** [31123]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the data tool entitled Criminal Justice System Statistics publication: Outcomes by Offence 2010 to 2020: Pivot Table Analytical Tool for England and Wales published by his Department on 21 May 2021, when he plans to publish equivalent data for the period to December 2021.

Tom Pursglove:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 6 June 2022 to PQs 8001, 8002, 8003, 9020, 9885 and 9886.

Data up to December 2021 can be found via the following link: [Criminal Justice System statistics quarterly: December 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-justice-system-statistics-quarterly-december-2021).

■ Gender Recognition: Convictions**Rosie Duffield:** [31897]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Answer of 11 September 2017 to Question 7091 on Gender Recognition Act 2004, how many people were convicted of an offence under section 22 of the Gender Recognition Act 2004 in each year since 2016.

Tom Pursglove:

The number of offenders found guilty at all courts for offences under S22 Gender Recognition Act 2004 is zero in England and Wales, from 2016 to 2021.

This information for the year of 2022 will be available in May 2023.

■ Importance of Strengthening Female Offenders' Family and other Relationships to Prevent Reoffending and Reduce Intergenerational Crime Review**Kate Green:** [31831]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many of the 33 recommendations in the 2019 Farmer Review for Women have been implemented.

Tom Pursglove:

We are making good progress on the implementation of Lord Farmer's recommendations, with 25 out of 33 recommendations completed, including the rollout of in-cell telephony and video calling in women's prisons.

We continue to work across the Ministry of Justice, Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) and wider government to take forward the report's recommendations.

■ Members: Correspondence**Robert Largan:** [28936]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when he will respond to the correspondence of 10 May 2022 from the hon. Member for High Peak, referenced RL38933.

Tom Pursglove:

The Government attaches great importance to the effective and timely handling of correspondence from MPs, either directly or on behalf of their constituents.

The letter of 10 May reference RL38933 has been answered and a response sent out.

Ministry of Justice: Pay**Pat McFadden:**[\[29985\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many (a) direct employees, (b) contractors, and (c) agency workers who work in their Department and relevant agencies and public bodies, receive a wage below that of either (i) the UK Real Living Wage outside of Greater London, or (ii) the London Living Wage inside of Greater London, as determined by the Living Wage Foundation.

Tom Pursglove:

I can confirm that the Ministry of Justice (including HMCTS and agencies) does not have any direct employees that receive a wage equivalent to below the 2021/22 Living Wage Foundation UK Real Living Wage (£9.90 per hour) or London Living Wage (£11.05 per hour).

Within HM Prisons & Probation Service, as at March 2022, there were 1,288 directly employed staff below the UK Real Living Wage (£9.90 per hour) outside of London and 22 staff below the London Living Wage (£11.05 per hour) in London.

This Government is committed to paying people a decent living wage, which is being addressed through the statutory National Living Wage. In April 2022, the National Living Wage increased to £9.50 per hour. By 2024, the Government has committed that the National Living Wage will reach 66% of median UK earnings. The National Living Wage is the statutory minimum for ages 23 and above, whereas both the UK and London Real Living Wages are voluntary. All employees across the MoJ and HMPPS are paid at, or above, the statutory minimum rates for their respective age groups.

As pay and conditions are set between employee and employer, neither the MoJ or HMPPS hold records on agencies and contractors. The Crown Commercial Service's frameworks set a minimum requirement of the current legislative amounts allowed by employers to pay, which all suppliers must adhere to when negotiating contracts with Government departments.

Offenders: Females**Kate Green:**[\[31832\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the report by the Public Accounts Committee entitled Improving outcomes for women in the criminal justice system, published on 28 April 2022, HC 997, if he will publish his Department's assessment of the implementation of the 66 commitments contained within the Female Offender Strategy.

Tom Pursglove:

We will be formally responding to the Public Accounts Committee's report shortly and will set out our future actions on the delivery of the Female Offender Strategy.

Office of the Public Guardian: Coronavirus**Helen Morgan:**[\[30214\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the impact of the covid-19 outbreak on the efficiency of the Office of the Public Guardian.

Tom Pursglove:

It currently takes up to 20 weeks for an LPA to be registered. OPG's target to register LPAs is 40 days. It should be noted that OPG must carry out checks on receipt of the LPA before notices are issued, and then must observe a statutory waiting period of 4 weeks to allow for objections before the registration process can be completed. This statutory waiting period cannot be waived and is included in the calculation for the number of days to register an LPA. Like many organisations, Covid had a significant impact on the OPG, particularly in the processing and registration of LPAs.

A backlog to register LPAs was initially created at the start of the pandemic when the numbers of staff in the office significantly reduced due to self-isolation, shielding and caring responsibilities. From April 2021 incoming workload increased significantly as restrictions were lifted. There was then a significant period of Covid related sickness from September 2021 for a number of months. The backlog has been exacerbated by record daily applications for LPAs at c4,200 per day (compared to c3,600 a day pre-pandemic). This has caused an increase in average time taken to register an LPA.

The OPG know the delays are frustrating the customers and is committed to reducing the time it is currently taking to register LPAs. OPG staff are working day and night to tackle the Covid backlog. Frontline operational staff whose role requires them to be office-based have worked in the office throughout the pandemic and continue to do so. The OPG rapidly changed working practices and processes during the pandemic to continue to deliver their services and the number of LPAs being processed each month is back to what it was before the pandemic. The OPG has continued to deliver its wider statutory functions throughout the pandemic, including supervising deputies and guardians appointed by the Court of Protection and the High Court, and investigating representations, complaints, or allegations of abuse, made against guardians, deputies, and attorneys acting under registered powers.

Office of the Public Guardian: Payments**Helen Morgan:**[\[30213\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the frequency of duplicate payments made by members of the public for services provided by the Office of the Public Guardian.

Tom Pursglove:

OPG launched a new card payment process in November 2021. The introduction of this system led to some duplicate payments, which was identified quickly. Measures have now been put in place to significantly reduce the risk of duplicate payment requests being made. There is no indication that duplicate payments are taking place frequently and the OPG successfully processes payments to register LPAs every week.

Office of the Public Guardian: Standards**Helen Morgan:**[\[30211\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many orders are currently waiting to be processed by the Office of the Public Guardian; and what the average number of orders waiting to be processed by that office was during the period between 1 January 2019 and 31 December 2019.

Tom Pursglove:

There are currently (as of 5 July 2022) 350,000 LPAs waiting to be processed by the Office of the Public Guardian. This represents all applications which the OPG has received and is currently processing and is not a reflection of the applications which have exceeded the 40-day target and might be considered to be part of a "backlog". OPG does not hold data on the average number of LPAs waiting to be processed between 1 January 2019 and 31 December 2019.

Powers of Attorney**Helen Morgan:**[\[30210\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average time taken by the Office of the Public Guardian to register Legal Powers of Attorney (LPAs) is from the date of receipt of orders during the period between 1 June 2021 and 31 May 2022; and what the average time taken by the Office of the Public Guardian to register LPAs was from the date of receipt of orders during the period between 1 June 2018 and 31 May 2019.

Tom Pursglove:

The average time taken by the OPG to register Lasting Powers of Attorneys (LPAs) between 1st June 2021 and 31st May 2022 was 73 days. The average processing time during 1st June 2018 to 31st May 2019 was 39 days. OPG's target to register LPAs is 40 days. It should be noted that OPG must carry out checks on receipt of the LPA before notices are issued, and then must observe a statutory waiting period of 4 weeks to allow for objections before the registration process can be completed. This statutory waiting period cannot be waived and is included in the calculation for the number of days to register an LPA. OPG know that delays are frustrating for customers, and they are committed to reducing the time it is currently taking to register LPAs.

■ Suspended Sentences

Steve Reed:

[\[31120\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many hours of unpaid work handed down as part of suspended sentences were cancelled as a result of not having been completed within 12 months of the sentence being handed down, in each of the last five years.

Tom Pursglove:

Suspended Sentence Orders cannot legally be extended beyond the length of the operational period of the order which is set by the judiciary.

Therefore, a Suspended Sentence Order ceases the moment the operational period expires, regardless of any outstanding requirements such as unpaid work.

It is important to note that these hours have not been “cancelled” but due to the legal limitations of a Suspended Sentence Order, the Probation Service is unable to apply for an extension in order to work hours once the operational period has expired.

While the number of unworked hours decreased between 2017 and 2019, the increase in 2020 and 2021 was the result of challenges caused by COVID-19 and restrictions imposed by public health legislation which meant either stopping delivery altogether, or running a severely restricted service.

When COVID-19 restrictions were sufficiently lifted to enable some Community Payback hours to be worked, the Probation Service prioritised working offenders on Suspended Sentence Orders given the legal limits of the order.

We remain committed to driving down the number of unworked hours. This is why, in response to the disruptions caused by COVID-19, we have invested £93million to hire 500 additional staff so that we boost the number of hours offenders spend doing tough Community Payback, such as cleaning up public places, by nearly two thirds – from five million to up to eight million hours a year.

YEAR	HOURS REMAINING ON EXPIRED SUSPENDED SENTENCE ORDERS
2017	167,070.8
2018	143,262.1
2019	91,588.2
2020	171,124.4
2021	386,845.2

Data as at 5/7/22.

Data are sourced from nDelius and while these data have been assured as much as practical, as with any large administrative dataset, the data should not be assumed to be accurate to the last value presented.

LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

■ Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities: Official Hospitality

Jon Trickett:

[\[27524\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how much his Department spent on hospitality in (a) 2020, (b) 2021 and (c) 2022.

Eddie Hughes:

The amount spent on hospitality by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities is as follows:

YEAR	SPEND ON HOSPITALITY
2020-21	£228.91
2021-22	£425.04
2022-23	£291.45*

* This is for invoices paid to date.

■ Homes for Ukraine Scheme

Mick Whitley:

[\[30150\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps his Department plans to take to support the accommodation needs of Ukrainian refugees who reach the end of their guaranteed six month stay with UK families under the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

Eddie Hughes:

We continue to work closely with local authority and voluntary and community sector partners to monitor the housing landscape and needs for Ukrainian households, including options of suitable long-term accommodation for those wishing to stay in the country. Further details will be set out in the coming months.

■ Members: Correspondence

Robert Largan:

[\[28931\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, when he will respond to the correspondence of 28 April 2022 from the hon. Member for High Peak, referenced RL35762.

Lia Nici:

A response has been issued to my Hon Friend's correspondence.

Robert Largan:[\[28932\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, when he will respond to the correspondence of 28 April 2022 from the hon. Member for High Peak, reference RL36547.

Paul Scully:

A response has been issued.

James Murray:[\[31236\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, when his Department plans to respond to the email correspondence of 23 December 2021 from the hon. Member for Ealing North on the definition of Islamophobia.

Paul Scully:

A Minister will respond to the Hon Member shortly.

■ Private Rented Housing: Cost of Living**Lisa Nandy:**[\[31093\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what recent steps his Department has taken to help support private renters in the context of the rising cost of living.

Eddie Hughes:

The Government understands the pressures people are facing with the cost of living. That is why the Government has taken action to support those who need it most worth over £37 billion in 2022-23.

While three quarters of private renters find no difficulties in keeping up with their rent, we understand that affordability may be an issue for some and that they may require additional support.

The Government has supported private renters vulnerable to the rise in the cost of living by maintaining the Local Housing Allowance uplift in cash terms in 2022/23, which has already benefitted 1.5 million households by £600 on average over 20/21; providing £100 million in 2022/23 for Discretionary Housing Payments on top of almost £1.5 billion in Discretionary Housing Payments to Local Authorities since 2011; and also providing over £300 million for the Homelessness Prevention Grant in 2022/23 to help people find a new home, access support for unexpected evictions, and secure temporary accommodation where needed.

This is in addition to support provided through the Energy Bills Support Scheme, Council Tax rebates, and an expansion of the Household Support Fund.

■ Regional Planning and Development: Northern Ireland

Stephen Farry:

[\[28514\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what discussions his Department has had with the Northern Ireland Local Government Association on levelling up funding in Northern Ireland.

Eddie Hughes:

Officials within the department's Northern Ireland Area Team maintain engagement with the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) on a monthly basis, with the Levelling Up Fund being a key part of that engagement. Alongside this, there is also regular official level engagement with NILGA and our DLHUC Local Government Engagement Team.

In March, the then Minister, Neil O'Brien, met with NILGA to discuss the department's levelling up ambitions and delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in Northern Ireland.

The previous Secretary of State addressed the NILGA Executive in December 2021.

■ Regional Planning and Development: Public Appointments

Lisa Nandy:

[\[31091\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how many applications have been received for the positions of (a) North East Levelling Up Director, (b) North West Levelling Up Director, (c) Yorkshire & The Humber Levelling Up Director, (d) East Midlands Levelling Up Director, (e) West Midlands Levelling Up Director, (f) East of England Levelling Up Director, (g) London Levelling Up Director, (h) South East Levelling Up Director, (i) South West Levelling Up Director, (j) Scotland Levelling Up Director, (k) Wales Levelling Up Director and (l) Northern Ireland Levelling Up Director.

Lia Nici:

We are in the process of recruitment and more details will be available in due course.

■ Second Homes: Holiday Accommodation

Lisa Nandy:

[\[31092\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether it is his policy to bring forward legislative proposals to ban second homes being used as holiday lets.

Mr Marcus Jones:

The Government recognises that large numbers of second homes concentrated in a single area can have a negative effect on local communities and has introduced measures to help mitigate those effects, including introducing higher rates of Stamp Duty Land Tax for those purchasing additional properties, and powers in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill which will enable councils to introduce a council tax premium on second homes of up to 100%.

We continue to keep the position under review.

NORTHERN IRELAND

■ Northern Ireland Office: Pay

Pat McFadden: [\[29986\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how many (a) direct employees, (b) contractors, and (c) agency workers who work in their Department and relevant agencies and public bodies, receive a wage below that of either (i) the UK Real Living Wage outside of Greater London, or (ii) the London Living Wage inside of Greater London, as determined by the Living Wage Foundation.

Conor Burns:

The Northern Ireland Office can confirm no employees either directly or indirectly employed by the department are paid below the UK Real Living Wage outside of Greater London or within London.

PRIME MINISTER

■ Members: Conduct

Caroline Lucas: [\[31069\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, with reference to the Answer to the Question from the hon. Member for Brighton, Pavilion at Prime Minister's Questions on 27 April 2022, Official Report, column 759 and the letter to him from Lord McDonald of Salford, former Permanent Under Secretary at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, dated 5 July 2022, on complaints about the behaviour of the Right hon. Member for Tamworth, for what reasons the principle set out in that Answer were not applied following the in person briefing he received on the complaint about that Member being upheld.

Charlotte Nichols: [\[31239\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, when he was first made aware of a formal complaint of inappropriate behaviour by the Right hon. Member for Tamworth while serving as a Foreign Office Minister between 2019 and 2020.

Boris Johnson:

I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave to the right Hon. Member for Holborn and St Pancras during Prime Minister's Questions on 6 July 2022.

TRANSPORT■ **Air Routes**

Munira Wilson: [\[30159\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the impacts of highly concentrated flight paths on overflown communities.

Munira Wilson: [\[30160\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department has made a recent estimate of the number of people living under highly concentrated flight paths in (a) south west London and (b) the UK.

Munira Wilson: [\[30161\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the Airspace Modernisation Programme on the number of people living under highly concentrated flight paths in (a) south west London and (b) the UK.

Munira Wilson: [\[30162\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Airspace Modernisation Programme, whether he plans to review the effect on the wellbeing of affected people of the introduction of highly concentrated flight paths in the United States.

Munira Wilson: [\[30163\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department has commissioned research on the health impacts of living under concentrated flight paths in the context of airspace modernisation.

Robert Courts:

All major airports are required to map their noise impacts on a common basis every five years. However, there is no definition of 'highly concentrated flightpath' so no specific assessment has been made of the number of people impacted by such flightpaths.

All proposals to alter flightpath arrangements must follow the Civil Aviation Authority's (CAA) airspace change process (CAP 1616) which was revised in 2018 following the publication by the department of revised air navigation guidance. This guidance sets out the Government's objective to limit and, where possible, reduce the total adverse effects on people as a result of aviation noise.

A key requirement in the guidance is the need for airspace change sponsors to consider the use of multiple flightpaths to disperse air traffic, as well as undertaking a full assessment of the airspace options they are considering. Noise impacts must be assessed using the Department's Transport Analysis Guidance which includes a module for valuing the impacts of noise on health and quality of life.

The Government accepts that there are health impacts associated with aircraft noise and keeps all relevant evidence under review. The Department has previously

commissioned research on the effects of aviation noise on annoyance, health and wellbeing and has tasked the CAA to carry out a further survey in the next year.

The airspace modernisation programme is a critical national infrastructure project that aims to deliver quicker, quieter and cleaner journeys to the benefit of all airspace users and those impacted, including communities. Airports are responsible for the specific arrangements for low-level flightpaths. Engagement with all relevant stakeholders, including communities, is an important part of CAP1616 and is crucial to the success of the airspace modernisation programme. It is the responsibility of every airspace change sponsor (usually an airport or Air Navigation Service Provider (ANSP)) to ensure engagement meets the needs of local stakeholders. The majority of sponsors in the programme are currently at Stage 2 of the CAP1616 process. Once approved by the CAA, each sponsor will move to Stage 3. It is at this stage that sponsors will undertake a full options appraisal before undertaking a formal public consultation with all interested stakeholders, including local communities. We expect that the majority of sponsors will be in a position to consult publicly from 2023 onwards.

■ Driving Tests

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[\[31208\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent steps he has taken to improve the availability of practical driving tests to tackle the backlog.

Trudy Harrison:

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) operates a 24-week booking window for car tests and there are test slots available within this window.

The DVSA recognises the high demand for learners wanting to take their practical driving test and is working hard to provide as many practical driving test appointments as possible and has a number of measures in place to do this. These include offering a national recovery allowance and annual leave buy back to examiners, asking all those qualified to conduct tests, but who do not do so as part of their current day job, to return to conducting tests, and conducting out of hours testing (such as on public holidays and weekends).

The DVSA is also recruiting more than 300 driving examiners across Great Britain to help meet the increasing demand for driving tests.

■ Electric Vehicles: Charging Points

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[\[31906\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent steps he has taken to achieve his Department's target on the number of on-street chargers for electric vehicles.

Trudy Harrison:

Of the £2.5 billion of Government funding committed to the EV transition since 2020, over £1.6 billion will be used to support charging infrastructure.

In our electric vehicle infrastructure strategy we laid out that we expect at least ten times more public chargepoints to be installed across the UK by the end of the decade, bringing the number to around 300,000 by 2030. The exact number of on-street chargepoints will be highly dependent on local circumstances and the range and technology of future electric vehicles. Local authorities have a key role to play as they are best placed to consider local needs.

We want the transition to zero emission vehicles to be consumer and market-led, supported by Government measures where appropriate.

The On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) is available to all local authorities to provide public chargepoints for their residents without access to private parking. As of 1 April 2022, 157 LAs have applied to the scheme, providing over 11,000 chargepoints. This year, £20 million is available.

In addition, the new Local EV Infrastructure (LEVI) fund will provide approximately £400 million of capital and £50 million of resource funding to support local authorities in England to work with industry and transform the availability of charging for drivers without off-street parking. We have launched an initial tranche of £10 million funding in advance of the full launch later this year.

■ **Electric Vehicles: Grants**

Mr Toby Perkins:

[\[31813\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of financial incentives provided by the electric car grant before its withdrawal.

Trudy Harrison:

The Government's approach to supporting the uptake of electric cars is clearly working – while the Government slowly reduced the grant over time, the sale of electric vehicles soared. The sales of fully electric cars grew from less than 1,000 in 2011 to almost 100,000 in the first 5 months of 2022 alone.

An independent report commissioned by the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles to assess the impact of the grant scheme, found that the grant has had a material impact on demand for new EVs, but also that the importance of it has reduced as the market has matured and price has become less of a barrier to vehicle uptake.

Mr Toby Perkins:

[\[31814\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the cessation of the electrical vehicle grant, what additional steps his Department is taking to help encourage the public to purchase electric vehicles.

Trudy Harrison:

This Government has committed £2.5 billion since 2020 to support the transition to zero emission vehicles, with funding to offset their higher upfront cost, and to accelerate the rollout of chargepoint infrastructure.

Although Government has recently closed the plug-in car grant to new orders, Plug-in Grants will continue until at least financial year 2023/24 for taxis and motorcycles, and 2024/25 for vans, trucks and wheelchair accessible vehicles.

Plug-in Grants are just one way in which Government supports electric vehicle uptake. We have put in place favourable benefit in kind tax rates for zero emission vehicles out to 2025: company car tax was 1% in 2021/22 and 2% in 2022/23 through to 2024/25. Further, all zero emission cars are exempt from vehicle excise duty (VED) and zero emissions vans pay a nil rate of tax on the van benefit charge.

In addition, we announced in the Net Zero Strategy that we will introduce a zero-emission vehicle mandate, setting targets for a percentage of manufacturers' new car and van sales to be zero emission each year from 2024.

In March we published our ambitious electric vehicle infrastructure strategy, backed by £1.6 billion of funding, setting out our vision and commitments to make electric vehicle charging cheaper and more convenient than refueling at a petrol station, supporting drivers across the whole country to make the transition to a cleaner, greener vehicle.

■ Heaton Chapel Station: Disability

Navendu Mishra: [\[31939\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department plans to help ensure step-free access at Heaton Chapel railway station.

Wendy Morton:

I recently launched the next round of nominations for the Access for All (AfA) programme and welcome nominations for any station in Great Britain currently without step-free access.

In the meantime we are providing £1 million of funding to Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) for minor accessibility improvements and customer information systems through which Heaton Chapel station will benefit.

■ Night Flying

Sarah Olney: [\[31185\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential impact on health of a future increase in night flights at (a) Heathrow and (b) other UK airports.

Sarah Olney: [\[31186\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with representatives of community groups that are overflown by night flights.

Sarah Olney: [\[31187\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will consult the public on any proposals in respect of the relaxation of the night flights regime at London airports.

Robert Courts:

The Government accepts that there are health impacts associated with aircraft noise and keeps all relevant evidence under review. The Department for Transport has previously commissioned research on the effects of aviation noise on annoyance, health and wellbeing and has tasked the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to carry out a further survey in the next year. The Department has also commissioned an Aviation Night Noise Study, to understand specifically how impacts associated with exposure to aviation noise vary by time of night.

The Government sets noise and night flight controls at the designated airports (Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted). At other airports, these controls are agreed locally.

Following consultation, the Government announced in July 2021 that the existing night flight movement limits at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted are to be rolled over for a period of three years – until October 2025.

We expect to consult publicly on proposals for the regime from 2025 onwards by the end of 2023.

The Department has regular engagement with representatives of community groups overflown by night flights, including through our formal Airspace and Noise Engagement Group (ANEG).

■ Railway Network: Passengers**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[\[31907\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent steps he has taken to help ensure personal safety concerns from passengers on the rail network can be reported to the relevant authorities in a timely and confidential way.

Wendy Morton:

The rail industry and British Transport Police (BTP) have in place well established mechanisms for reporting crime. People wishing to report incidents can contact BTP direct, discreetly make use of the 61016 text service, or dial 999 in an emergency. To ensure that the public and vulnerable can report issues relating to personal safety and crime confidentially, a number of new approaches have been recently been developed. These include a dedicated Crime Stoppers number, the development of a new confidential reporting system, and the launch of the Railway Guardian App.

■ Season Tickets: London and Newcastle**Chi Onwurah:**[\[31109\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, for what reason a flexible season ticket between Newcastle and London has not been introduced in line with changes on other lines in England.

Wendy Morton:

Prior to the launch of flexible season tickets, we asked train companies to identify significant commuter routes where flexible seasons might be needed.

We encourage those who feel their route has been missed to raise this with the relevant train operating company.

■ Shipping: Conditions of Employment**Dan Carden:**[\[31915\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he has taken to help strengthen seafarers' employment rights following the actions of P&O Ferries on 17 March 2022.

Robert Courts:

The government continues to promote and deliver its seafarer protections nine-point plan, and the wider objectives of Maritime 2050.

On 6 July, the government introduced the Seafarers' Wages Bill to the House of Lords and published the Government's Response to the Consultation on Seafarers' Remuneration. The Bill seeks to ensure that seafarers working on vessels that regularly use UK ports are paid at least an equivalent rate to the UK National Minimum Wage, irrespective of flag or nationality.

This is in addition to other commitments in the nine-point plan, including BEIS' forthcoming consultation on a "fire and rehire" statutory code, reform to longer-term working conditions for seafarers, and working with international partners to collaborate on seafarer protections and welfare.

TREASURY**■ Children: Day Care****Dr Rupa Huq:**[\[30075\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of increasing financial support via the Tax-Free Childcare scheme for parents in London in the context of the rise in the cost of childcare in London relative to other parts of England.

Mr Simon Clarke:

Tax Free Childcare provides financial support for working parents with their childcare costs. For every £8 parents pay into their childcare account, the government adds £2 up to a maximum of £2,000 in top up per year for each child aged up to 11, and up to £4,000 per disabled child until they're 17.

In addition, 15 hours of free childcare per week is available for all three- and four-year-olds regardless of circumstance and an additional 15 hours of free childcare per week is available for working parents of three- and four-year-olds. Some parents can also access the disadvantaged 2-year-old offer which gives 15 hours of free childcare

per week to 2-year-olds who meet certain social and economic criteria. Universal Credit claimants are able to claim up to 85% of their childcare costs.

As Tax-Free Childcare is a UK-wide offer, the level of financial support it provides has been set at the same level to avoid arbitrary cut-offs between different regions.

■ Cost of Living and Pay

Rachael Maskell:

[\[31866\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to address regional disparities in (a) the cost of living outside of London and (b) minimum pay rates.

Mr Simon Clarke:

Levelling up is the Government's central ambition to reverse this country's striking geographical inequalities, including in living standards and pay, productivity and jobs, by spreading opportunity more equally across the country and growing the private sector.

In May, the Government announced over £15 billion of additional cost of living support, targeted at those across the country with the greatest need. As a result, millions of vulnerable households will receive at least £1,200 of support this financial year, with the vast majority of households receiving at least £550. This package builds on the over £22 billion previously announced, meaning government support for the cost of living now totals over £37 billion this year, equivalent to 1.5% of GDP.

In addition, we increased the NLW by 6.6% to £9.50 an hour in April for workers aged 23 and over, which keeps us on track to our target to end low pay by 2024-25.

The UK has a national wage policy, and that remains the case. Having a single national rate is clear and simple for employers to understand. Introducing regional rates would make the system more complex and increase the risk of non-compliance.

■ Economic Situation: Coronavirus

Lisa Nandy:

[\[31094\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the rate of economic recovery from the covid-19 outbreak across each of the regions of the UK.

Mr Simon Clarke:

Encouraging regional growth is a key part of our ambition to level up opportunities right across the UK, which is why at Spending Review 2021 we announced a comprehensive spending package to boost investment in places in need and improve people's everyday lives. This included launching the new £1.4bn Global Britain Investment Fund to ensure that economic opportunities are spread more evenly across the UK and ensuring SMEs across the UK can access the finance they need including through British Business Bank programme.

Furthermore, we announced the first 105 places to receive support for regeneration from the £4.8bn Levelling Up Fund, alongside unprecedented investment of £5.7bn in five-year consolidated transport settlements for eight city regions.

■ Equal Pay

Rachael Maskell: [\[31868\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to address pay disparity outside of London for (a) women, (b) ethnic minorities and (c) disabled people.

Mr Simon Clarke:

The Government is responsible for setting legal minimum wage floors which protect vulnerable low paid workers. The UK has a national wage policy. Having a single national rate is clear and simple for employers to understand. Introducing regional rates would make the system more complex and increase the risk of non-compliance.

To help tackle low pay in the UK, in 2016 the Government introduced the National Living Wage (NLW). Each year, the independent Low Pay Commission (LPC) produces recommendations to the Government on the National Living and Minimum Wage rates. The LPC has representatives from business, employee, and academic communities, and reached a consensus agreement on the rates.

The Government has accepted the independent Low Pay Commission's (LPC) recommendations on the main rates. Consistent with the Government's target, on 1 April 2022, the Government increased the NLW by 6.6% to £9.50 an hour for workers aged 23+. This helps keeps us on track to meet our target, which will help make significant progress on ending low pay by 2024-25. Women, individuals from some ethnic minority backgrounds, and those with a disability are disproportionately likely to benefit from this increase.

■ Financial Conduct Authority: Surveys

Charlotte Nichols: [\[28925\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if she will publish the staff satisfaction findings of the most recent survey of staff at the Financial Conduct Authority.

Richard Fuller:

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) is operationally independent from the Government. Therefore, questions about operational matters, including those relating to staffing, are for the independent FCA.

This question has therefore been passed to the FCA who will respond directly to the honourable member by letter. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

■ Mortgages: Interest Charges

Virginia Crosbie: [\[31947\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions he has had with the UK Mortgage Prisoners Support Group on the (a) depth and (b) severity of the situation people unable to move out of high interest loans are facing.

Richard Fuller:

Ministers last met with UK Mortgage Prisoners earlier this year and exchange regular correspondence with them.

The Government has worked with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) on interventions to help mortgage prisoners switch. Resources have also been put in place so that mortgage prisoners can understand their options better, including their ability to switch, and access guidance through MoneyHelper. These resources can be found online at: <https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/homes/buying-a-home/help-for-mortgage-prisoners>.

■ National Lottery: Licensing**Jamie Stone:****[30099]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has had discussions with the (a) Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and (b) Gambling Commission on the implications of the fourth National Lottery licence on levels of (a) Lottery Duty and (b) returns to good causes.

Mr Simon Clarke:

The Fourth National Lottery Licence Competition was an independent process run by the Gambling Commission. The Treasury engaged with senior officials from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and the Gambling Commission regarding the Competition as it progressed. HMRC monitor receipts from specific betting and gaming duties, including Lottery Duty.

■ National Security Council**John Healey:****[30991]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 27 June 2022 to Question 23221 on Military Aid: Ukraine, how many meetings of the National Security Council he has personally attended since April 2022.

Mr Simon Clarke:

The National Security Council is a committee of the Cabinet. It is a long-established precedent that information about the discussions that have taken place in Cabinet and its Committees, and how often they have met, is not normally shared publicly.

■ No-interest Loans Scheme**Jessica Morden:****[31057]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he plans to take steps to participate in the implementation of no interest loan schemes.

Richard Fuller:

The Government has provided £3.8 million to Fair4All Finance to pilot a No-Interest Loans Scheme. The scheme will enable consumers in vulnerable circumstances to access affordable rather than high-cost credit to meet unexpected costs.

Good progress is being made and, starting in January 2022, dozens of loans have now been issued at the proof-of-concept site in South Manchester. Loans issued to date are already providing tangible real-life impacts for recipients. For example, credit has been provided to cover costs of new white goods to keep a family running, to pay for funerals for loved ones, and to support consolidation personal debts so that they are more manageable.

Fair4All Finance are now finalising contracts with the lenders chosen to take part in the wider pilot and we expect that loans will start being issued more widely by September.

■ Political Parties: Capital Gains Tax and Stamp Duty Land Tax

Gary Sambrook:

[\[28919\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to HMRC Manuals CG61800 and SDLTM25510, whether it is his Department's policy that those provisions will apply to the forthcoming boundary changes under the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 2020.

Lucy Frazer:

Changes to parliamentary constituencies are made by an Order in Council under the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986. The Parliamentary Constituencies Act 2020 did not change this. This policy has not changed and the provisions in HMRC Manuals CG61800 and SDLTM235510 therefore still apply.

■ Social Security Benefits: Disability

Emma Hardy:

[\[28914\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on the potential merits of extending the eligibility criteria for the one-off energy rebate for those in receipt of contribution-based disability benefits.

Mr Simon Clarke:

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

The Government understands that the rising cost of living has presented additional financial challenges to many people, and especially to the most vulnerable members of society, such as disabled people. That is why the Cost of Living package announced on 26 May includes UK-wide support to help disabled people with the particular extra costs they are facing, with 6 million people who receive non-means-tested extra-costs disability benefits such as Personal Independence Payment due to receive a one-off Disability Cost of Living Payment of £150.

Receipt of New Style Employment and Support Allowance (NS ESA) alone does not confer eligibility for this payment. NS ESA is an incapacity benefit providing income

support to those whose ability to work is affected by a disability or health condition – it is not an extra-costs disability benefit. If someone in receipt of NS ESA requires further financial support because of the additional costs associated with living with a disability, then they may be able to apply for Personal Independence Payment (PIP) – receipt of NS ESA does not preclude receipt of this benefit. However, claims for PIP made after 25 May will be ineligible for the one-off Disability Cost of Living Payment of £150.

The Government is also providing a one-off Cost of Living Payment of £650 for over 8 million households across the UK in receipt of means-tested benefits, paid in two instalments. These payments will only be made to those on means-tested benefits in order to support households on the lowest incomes. Contributory ESA and other new style benefits were not included as qualifying benefits for this Cost of Living Payment because they are not means-tested, so households in receipt of these benefits may have other financial resources available to them.

To support households who need additional help, the Government is providing an extra £500 million towards the cost of essentials. In England this will be via an extension to the Household Support Fund with the Devolved Administrations receiving £79 million. This is in addition to the £1 billion already provided via the Household Support Fund.

■ **Wealth: Taxation**

Richard Burgon:

[\[31171\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of introducing a one-off wealth tax on individual wealth above £10 million.

Lucy Frazer:

The Government is committed to a fair tax system where those with the most contribute the most. This is why the Government has taken steps to ensure the wealthy pay their fair share by reforming the taxation of dividends, pensions, and business disposals to make the tax system fairer and more sustainable.

The Government has also ensured the wealthy pay the tax that is owed. In 2019-20, HMRC secured £2.2 billion in tax from the wealthiest individuals that would have otherwise gone unpaid.

The UK does not have a single wealth tax, but it does have several taxes on assets and wealth. The UK taxes assets and wealth across many different economic activities, including the acquisition, holding, transfer and disposal of assets, and income derived from assets.

Notably, the Wealth Tax Commission, which has no connection or link to the Government, found in 2020 that if considering Inheritance Tax, Capital Gains Tax, Stamp Duty, and Stamp Duty Land Tax, the UK is among the top of the G7 countries for wealth taxes as a percentage of total wealth.

It is also clear that the Wealth Tax Commission's suggestion of a potential one-off wealth tax in the UK would be a complex undertaking, and the amount of revenue raised would be highly dependent on the final design of the tax.

WALES

■ Wales Office: Legal Costs

Jon Trickett:

[31740]

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, how much their Department and its associated agencies spent on legal disputes in (a) 2020, (b) 2021 and (c) 2022.

David T C Davies:

The Office of the Secretary of State for Wales has not spent any money on legal disputes in the years 2020, 2021 and 2022.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Bereavement Support Payment

Beth Winter:

[30177]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what progress her Department has made on preparing the Remedial Order on the eligibility criteria for Bereavement Support Payments.

Guy Opperman:

The draft Bereavement Benefits Remedial Order proposes to extend Bereavement Support Payment and Widowed Parent's Allowance to cohabiting partners with dependent children. We are currently considering representations received on the proposals during the Order's first laying period. On conclusion, the Order will be laid for a second and final 60-day sitting period. This will be followed by debates in both Houses of Parliament before the proposals can become law. Due to the nature of the Parliamentary processes, we cannot say at this stage when the Order will come into force.

DWP is working closely on the implementation of the Order, and we will be updating the GOV.UK website at key points during the parliamentary process:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bereavement-benefits-proposal-for-implementation-of-the-mclaughlin-2018-and-jackson-2020-judgments>

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Consultants

Sarah Olney:

[27701]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much her Department has spent on consultancy fees in each of the last five years.

David Rutley:

The DWP consultancy spend for the financial years ending 2018 through to 2022 is shown below.

2017/18 £7,200,259

2018/19 £4,446,169

2019/20 £4,570,665

2020/21 £1,284,861

2021/22 £1,041,058

■ **Department for Work and Pensions: Official Hospitality**

Jon Trickett:[\[27526\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much her Department spent on hospitality in (a) 2020, (b) 2021 and (c) 2022.

David Rutley:

	TOTAL HOSPITALITY SPEND	2019- 20	121,796
2020-21	7,496		
2021-22	11,800		

Source: Hyperion

■ **Department for Work and Pensions: Pay**

Jon Trickett:[\[28392\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the pay ratio was between the highest paid member of staff in her Department and the lowest in (a) 2020, (b) 2021 and (c) 2022.

David Rutley:

The pay ratio between the highest paid member of staff in DWP and the lowest in (a) 2020, (b) 2021 and (c) 2022 can be found at:

[DWP annual report and accounts 2021 to 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/104444/dwp-annual-report-and-accounts-2021-to-2022.pdf)

2021-22 information is not yet available, however will be published in the Remuneration Report in the Annual Accounts in due course.

■ Employment and Support Allowance: Cost of Living

Thangam Debonnaire:

[\[28893\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the potential impact of the decision to not provide the cost of living payment to claimants of new-style Employment and Support Allowance on those claimants.

David Rutley:

Non-means tested benefits are not eligible benefits for the Cost-of-Living Payment in their own right because people claiming these benefits may have other financial resources available to them.

Many claimants of contributory and new style Employment and Support Allowance are also in receipt of a means tested benefit. For example, as of November 2021 there were around 400,000 claimants getting both income and contributory Employment Support Allowance, and around 100,000 claimants getting Employment Support Allowance and Universal Credit.

If someone in receipt of a contributory or new style benefit makes a successful claim to an eligible benefit made after the initial qualifying date, they may qualify for the second, £324 cost-of-living payment in the Autumn.

Contributory and new style Employment and Support Allowance claimants may also benefit from other parts of the Cost-of-Living package of support announced by the Chancellor, including the £400 rebate for domestic energy customers provided through the Energy Bills Support Scheme.

■ Farms: Safety

Daniel Kawczynski:

[\[31058\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether he plans to review legislation on farm safety.

Chloe Smith:

The health and safety of people working in or affected by work in agriculture is covered primarily by The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, enforced by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). HSE publishes guidance to assist the industry to comply with their legal obligations and on how to reduce injuries and ill health by identifying causes, eliminating hazards and controlling risks.

Whilst there are currently no plans to review the main legislation, HSE is working together with the industry to promote the benefits of farming safety by active engagement with the Farm Safety Partnerships in England, Wales and Scotland.

■ Kickstart Scheme

Mark Eastwood:

[\[30174\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many young people continued to receive earnings from employment after their Kickstart Scheme job ended; and how many organisations employed young people on that scheme.

Chloe Smith:

Throughout the duration of the Kickstart scheme, over 30,000 employers took on a young person, providing them with the opportunity to gain experience that would improve their chances of progressing to find long-term, sustainable work. Essential to this effort has been employers, including B&M retail, Superdrug, McColls, JD Sports and CDS Superstores, who were the top recruiters, taking over 8,000 Kickstart participants between them. As of the 4th July, around 30,000 young people had yet to complete their Kickstart jobs.

As of May 2022, around 7 in 10 people were in paid employment 10 months after starting their Kickstart job. This figure is subject to revision and it includes participants who left their Kickstart Scheme job in less than six months.

The Kickstart evaluation will continue to assess the longer-term outcomes for Kickstart participants after they have completed their six-month jobs, the fieldwork for the commissioned evaluation will continue until at least 2023. We will publish the findings once complete.

Notes section:

The management information presented here has not been subjected to the usual standard of quality assurance associated with official statistics but is provided in the interests of transparency. Work is ongoing to improve the quality of information available for the programme. The information provided on the number of employers is based on PAYE numbers, if an employer has more than one PAYE, they may be included in this figure more than once. In addition, the number quoted for young people in paid employment is based on those whose earnings are reported via RTI so does not include some groups such as the self-employed.

■ Members: Correspondence

Mr John Baron:

[\[29908\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when she plans to respond to correspondence of 8 March, 30 March, 25 April and 25 May 2022 from the hon. Member for Basildon and Billericay regarding a constituent, reference JB36639.

Guy Opperman:

Unfortunately, DWP did not have a record of receiving the correspondence referred to. A DWP official contacted the hon. members office on 5 July, where a copy of the original email was provided to DWP. This has shown the original email was sent to an invalid email address.

When DWP receive correspondence from a Member of Parliament, they aim to fully resolve or agree a resolution within 15 working days of receipt. The Child maintenance Service will provide a further update to the MP by 26 July.

Rosie Cooper: [\[31801\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when she will respond to the correspondence of 5 May 2022 from the hon. Member for West Lancashire on the bedroom tax, reference ZA59623 .

Guy Opperman:

Your letter of 4 May to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities was transferred to this Department. A reply was sent to the hon. Member on behalf of the Secretary of State on 27 June 2022.

Rosie Cooper: [\[31803\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when she will respond to the correspondence of 10 May 2022 from the hon. Member for West Lancashire on state pension claims, reference ZA59678.

Guy Opperman:

A reply was sent to the hon. Member by the Minister for Welfare Delivery, on behalf of the Secretary of State, on 7 July 2022.

■ Pension Credit

Wendy Chamberlain: [\[31232\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of her Department's Pension Credit Day of Action and associated awareness raising activities; and whether she has made an estimate of the number of applications for pension credit made as a result of those activities.

Wendy Chamberlain: [\[31233\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps her Department is taking to monitor the take-up of pension credit awards by (a) those who qualify but have not previously claimed pension credit (b) new recipients of the state pension.

Guy Opperman:

Pension Credit applications have increased massively following the launch of the Pension Credit awareness campaign in April. This builds on the extensive campaigning on this issue over the last few years.

Early indications are that the Pension Credit Day of Action on 15 June has been highly effective. The Day of Action involved working closely with broadcasters, media, newspapers and other stakeholder partners who were encouraged to reach out to pensioners to promote Pension Credit through their channels.

Although not all claims can be directly attributed to the campaign, the internal management information suggests there were over 10,000 Pension Credit claims made during the week of the media day – an increase of 275% compared to the

same week in 2021, which itself was an enhanced week due to the 2021 Pension Credit Action Day.

The impact of these claim volumes on numbers of successful awards and on Pension Credit take-up will take longer to establish given the usual cycle involved in producing those statistics. However, the campaign is ongoing including encouraging the private sector to drive forward efforts to enhance claims, and specific effort to reach out to communities who have traditionally not claimed Pension Credit.

We are continuing to monitor the impact of the campaign and the Department will publish estimates of take-up in due course.

■ Pensioners: Cost of Living

Alex Norris:

[\[31911\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether she has plans to extend the £650 cost of living payment to pensioners who are in receipt of the state pension but are not eligible to claim pension credit.

Guy Opperman:

The government is committing an extra £37 billion to support the most vulnerable this year. The £650 Cost of Living Payment is deliberately targeted at low-income households in receipt of a means tested qualifying benefit. For people above State Pension age, this is those in receipt of Pension Credit.

With the full package of support, most pensioner households will receive £850 (via the additional Winter Fuel Payment, Council Tax Rebate & Energy Bills Support Scheme) on top of arising state Pension, which has never been higher. Pensioners receiving means-tested benefits who are in most need of support will receive £1,500, including payments in July and the autumn totalling £650.

If someone in receipt of a contributory State Pension, additionally makes a successful claim for Pension Credit, they may qualify for one or both instalments of the Cost of Living Payment. This is because claims for Pension Credit can be backdated for a maximum of 3 months, provided the entitlement conditions are met throughout the 3 months.

In addition, all pensioner households will receive an extra £300 to help them cover the rising cost of energy this winter.

■ Social Security Benefits: Visual Impairment

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[29897\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether her Department plans to increase the benefit entitlement for people who are blind or partially sighted to mitigate the impact of rising cost of living.

Chloe Smith:

In recognition of global high inflation and the subsequent impact on cost of living, the Government is providing over £37bn of extra funding this year.

Around six million people across the UK who receive disability benefits will receive a one-off payment of £150 from September 2022, including those in receipt of Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payment.

We know people with disabilities may face a wide range of additional costs, such as specialist equipment, specialist food, and increased transport costs, and this payment will help with costs.

■ Universal Credit: Armed Forces

John Healey: [\[30990\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to Answer of 21 June 2022 to Question 16854 on Armed Forces: Universal Credit, how many service personnel and veterans have (a) been identified as eligible for and (b) received an additional benefits payment to help with the cost of living since April 2022, as of 4 July 2022.

David Rutley:

I refer the Honourable Member to the answer I provided to Question [11554](#) on 14 June 2022.

Tonia Antoniazzi: [\[31203\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 5 July 2022 to Question 28473 on Universal Credit: Veterans, when he plans to (a) develop and (b) publish statistics on armed forces personnel on Universal Credit, including breakdowns by claim characteristics.

David Rutley:

The information requested is not currently readily available.

■ Universal Credit: Cynon Valley

Beth Winter: [\[30175\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many constituents in the Cynon Valley have been pursued by her Department due to being incorrectly overpaid Universal Credit through no fault of the claimant in the year 2021-22.

Beth Winter: [\[30176\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many constituents in the Cynon Valley her Department has decided to waive recovery of an overpayment of benefit which was not due to a fault of the claimant in financial year 2021-22.

David Rutley:

The Department for Work and Pensions does not hold data (of this type) by constituency.

As such, the information requested is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

DWP's fraud and error estimates for the 2021/22 financial year, which include estimates of Official Error overpayments, can be found in our annual publication – see link below.

[Fraud and error in the benefit system: financial year 2021 to 2022 estimates - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fraud-and-error-in-the-benefit-system-financial-year-2021-to-2022-estimates)

■ Universal Credit: Veterans

John Healey:

[30989]

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 have previously served in the armed forces are former (a) Army, (b) Royal Navy and (c) RAF personnel.

David Rutley:

The information requested is not available. The department does not hold information about the service of personnel in the armed forces.

■ Way to Work Scheme

Mr Jonathan Lord:

[31099]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent estimate she has made of the number of people who have moved into work during the Way to Work campaign.

Julie Marson:

As of 6 July, we estimate that at least 520,400 unemployed Universal Credit claimants and Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimants have moved into work during the Way to Work Campaign between 31 January and the end of 30 June 2022. This total figure is composed of our into work measure to the end of May (over 386,000) and our internal management information up to 30 June (72,800). We are now also able to include JSA claimants who have moved into work between 31 January and 9 June 2022 (35,100) into our total. Furthermore, we have also included those claimants with a sanction in place that moved into work during the period of the campaign up to 30 June (26,500). Figures are rounded to the nearest 100. The management information presented here has not been subjected to the usual standard of quality assurance associated with official statistics but is provided in the interests of transparency and timeliness.

■ Workplace Pensions

Liz Saville Roberts:

[31180]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to employees who have reached the earnings trigger and are auto-enrolled onto a workplace pension scheme, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of setting the lower limit of qualifying earnings at £0 for the purposes of calculating how much employers should

contribute towards an employee's pension; and whether she has made an estimate of the cost of setting that limit at £0.

Guy Opperman:

It remains the government's intention to lower the earnings limit on Automatic Enrolment as soon as Parliamentary time allows. The latest published estimate of the costs of this change to workplace pensions is set out in the analytical report that accompanied the 2017 Automatic Enrolment (AE) Review, here: [Automatic enrolment review 2017: analytical report \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612222/automatic-enrolment-review-2017-analytical-report.pdf). It shows that the removal of the AE Lower Earnings Limit (LEL) would initially increase total contributions by £2.6 billion per annum. This represents an initial upper bound cost estimate as, for example, many employers choose to pay above the current automatic enrolment statutory minimum contribution levels.

We continue to build the evidence base and use the latest data to improve the estimates in line with government's ambition of implementing the AE 2017 Review proposals in the mid-2020s.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

HOME OFFICE

■ Policing update

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Priti Patel):

[\[HCWS196\]](#)

I am pleased to announce that Her Majesty The Queen has approved the appointment of Sir Mark Rowley QPM as the new Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service, following my recommendation after a highly competitive recruitment process. I also had regard to the views of the Mayor of London, as occupant of the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime.

The Metropolitan Police Service faces major challenges, having been moved to the engage phase by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), and needs to demonstrate sustained improvements in order to regain public trust in London and nationally. It is vital that the right person is in place to take on the biggest leadership role in policing in this country. I expect the new Commissioner to work with HMICFRS's Policing Performance Oversight Group to make the necessary improvements.

Sir Mark brings a wealth of experience with him and I am confident he will be able to exercise the strong and decisive leadership required, in order to deliver the sustained improvements that are so urgently needed. This will be a difficult time for the force as it seeks to regain the public's trust, but I am confident that Sir Mark is the right person to meet this challenge.

At a time when the Government is investing record sums into policing - including the recruitment of 20,000 additional police officers across England and Wales - the new Commissioner will need to focus on delivering the aims we set out in our Beating Crime Plan: cutting crime, reducing the number of victims and make our capital and country safer. But, reflecting the context in which this recruitment has been made, I also want the new Commissioner to focus on getting the basics right, restoring confidence in policing, and ensuring that Londoners and those who visit our capital city get the service they deserve from the Metropolitan Police.

Support for police is often based on personal experience, and the public have a set of basic expectations of the criminal justice system. They expect to be able to contact their local police, knowing their names and how to reach them. They want to see police in their neighbourhood confronting crime and making streets safer. They expect crimes to be investigated, offenders caught and punished, and when a case proceeds for justice to be swift and certain. The Beating Crime Plan outlines our approach to this, but to be successful the new Commissioner must embed the aims and objectives in wider strategic plans.

While it is the responsibility of the Mayor to hold the Commissioner to account for the Metropolitan Police's transformation, I will be closely monitoring progress. I look forward

to working with them both to drive real change in the force. The public deserves nothing less.