



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 14 July 2022 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:30 P.M., 14 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

ATTORNEY GENERAL

■ Attorney General: Electronic Purchasing Card Solution

Emily Thornberry: [\[31792\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many people held electronic purchasing cards that allowed them to make purchases against the budgets of (a) her office and (b) the Government Legal Department as of 31 March 2022.

Edward Timpson:

The Attorney General's Office holds (a) 1 government procurement card, (b) the Government Legal Department holds 41 government procurement cards.

■ Attorney General: Official Hospitality

Jon Trickett: [\[27517\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how much her Department spent on hospitality in (a) 2020, (b) 2021 and (c) 2022.

Edward Timpson:

The Attorney General's Office (AGO) spent £18,547.96 on hospitality in 2020 financial year. This was the departments contribution towards the annual meeting of the five Attorneys-General from New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States, held in London on the 20th July 2019.

There was no spend on hospitality in the 2021 financial year. In 2022, the AGO spent £1146.09 hosting the Ukrainian Prosecutor General during her visit to the UK.

■ Government Legal Department

Emily Thornberry: [\[28875\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, which unit of the Government Legal Department received her award for innovative legal advice at her Department's 2022 awards ceremony; what subject area did that advice cover; and what the (a) nature and (b) cost was of that award.

Edward Timpson:

Earlier this year The Attorney General launched a new award, as part of the Government Legal Department's annual awards, to celebrate government lawyers who have provided innovative legal advice to support Government priorities. The aim is both to celebrate the excellent work of hard-working and talented lawyers serving the Government and the country, and to highlight the role that such lawyers play in solving hard problems and finding solutions to help Government serve people most effectively.

The award was won by a member of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities' Legal team, for their work on the Building Safety Bill. This will make an enormous difference to many thousands of people, including improving building safety and protecting leaseholders from bills of up to hundreds of thousands of pounds.

There is no cost associated with this award.

■ Overseas Companies

Layla Moran:

[\[33911\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, when the Government last received a legal challenge from an international entity; and what the cost to the public purse was of defending that challenge.

Edward Timpson:

There is a broad range of entities which might be described as "international", and there is likely to be a range of ongoing litigation against the government (acting for the United Kingdom) brought by different entities at any given time, and at various stages of completion. Proceedings have recently been brought by the European Commission, and other States may take legal action against the UK under specific treaties.

Such cases are dealt with by government lawyers in the relevant departments and the Government Legal Department, with counsel or external law firms instructed through the Attorney General Panel system at fixed rates, or through off-panel nominations also at pre-agreed rates.

In relation to the proceedings recently brought against the UK by the European Commission, the matter is at an early stage and it is not possible to determine the costs incurred so far or what the costs of defending the challenge will ultimately be.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Art Works: Royalties

Chris Bryant:

[\[900938\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many artists have received royalties through the artist's resale right.

Jane Hunt:

Artist's Resale Right is administered by the Design and Artists Copyright Society (DACS) and the Artists' Collecting Society (ACS). Since the right was introduced in 2006, DACS reported in 2019 to paying out royalties to 5,424 artists and artists' estates and ACS reported in 2020 to paying out royalties to 780 artists and artists' estates.

■ Cammell Laird: Strikes**Gareth Thomas:** [\[32468\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department holds documents on the 1984 Camell Laird dispute; and whether he will make a statement.

Jane Hunt:

BEIS does not hold documents related to the 1984 Cammell Laird dispute. Any records from that period will have been reviewed and either destroyed or transferred to The National Archives for permanent preservation.

■ Cobham Ultra Acquisitions: Ultra Electronics**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[32495\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the proposed undertakings offered by Cobham Ultra Acquisitions Limited in relation to its acquisition of Ultra Electronics Holdings plc, how many (a) members will sit on the two SecureCos boards and (b) of those members will be UK nationals.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[32497\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the proposed undertakings offered by Cobham Ultra Acquisitions Limited in relation to its acquisition of Ultra Electronics Holdings plc, whether the non-executive Director appointed on the boards of the two SecureCos will be from UK Government Investments.

Jane Hunt:

The agreed undertakings are available on GOV.UK. As set out in the undertakings, the boards of the SecureCos will be comprised solely of British nationals with the appropriate security clearance and the non-executive Director appointed to the boards of each SecureCo will be appointed by the Government. The size of the boards is a matter for Ultra.

■ Cooperatives**Rachael Maskell:** [\[31871\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he is taking steps to build confidence in cooperative businesses.

Jane Hunt:

Government supports all small businesses, who will benefit from the £15 billion of targeted government support to help with the rising cost of living. Government has cut fuel duty for 12 months, raised the Employment Allowance to £5,000, and is zero-rating VAT on energy-saving materials.

Additionally, Help to Grow programmes will enable eligible SMEs to mitigate the effects of rising costs by providing financial discounts on approved digital technologies up to a value of £5000.

Our network of 38 Growth Hubs across England provides SMEs access to information and advice. Additionally, advisers at the government's Business Support Helpline (England) can provide free support and guidance about local and national business support offers.

■ Counterfeit Manufacturing: Internet

Dr Luke Evans: [\[28499\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what progress he is has made in discussions with representatives of online platforms on counterfeit goods on those platforms.

Jane Hunt:

The Government takes the issue of IP infringement seriously, including the sale of counterfeit goods, and is working with industry and law enforcement agencies on several initiatives to tackle this issue.

Officials at the Intellectual Property Office meet regularly with representatives from online platforms to discuss the availability of counterfeits on their services and to help co-ordinate law enforcement action against sellers. The filtering and takedown processes provided by online platforms are continually evolving, and discussions with government play a part in that development.

The recently published IP Counter Infringement Strategy sets out the Government's approach to this issue.

■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Contracts

Jon Trickett: [\[29879\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many contracts that are worth (a) between £1 million and £3 million and (b) over £3 million their (i) Department and (ii) Department's agencies and non-departmental public bodies (A) have agreed since 2010 and (B) are due to agree within the next 12 months; how much their Department has spent on monitoring each contract in each year since 2010; and how many officials have been working on that monitoring in each year since 2010.

Jane Hunt:

This information is not held centrally and can only be provided at disproportionate cost.

■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Legal Costs

Jon Trickett: [\[31724\]](#)

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

Jane Hunt:

The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy does not hold centrally the breakdown between advice on legal disputes and other forms of advice and this can only be obtained disproportionately.

Legal, professional and consultancy costs are included within note 4.1 of the BEIS Annual Report and Consolidated Accounts [here](#).

■ **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Official Hospitality**

Jon Trickett: [\[27519\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much his Department spent on hospitality in (a) 2020, (b) 2021 and (c) 2022.

Jane Hunt:

Annual spend on hospitality is not held centrally and can only be obtained disproportionately. However, the table below shows Department's hospitality spend in financial years 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22.

CATEGORY (£)	(A) 2019/20	(B) 2020/21	(c) 2021/22
Hospitality	54,816	4,182	21,303

■ **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Pay**

Jon Trickett: [\[28385\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the wage ratio was between the highest paid member of staff in his Department and the lowest in (a) 2020, (b) 2021 and (c) 2022.

Jane Hunt:

The information required to calculate the Annual wage ratio is not held centrally and can only be obtained disproportionately. However, financial year data is held centrally. The table below shows Department's wage ratio in financial years 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22.

BETWEEN THE HIGHEST PAID MEMBER OF STAFF AND THE LOWEST	PAY RATIO
(a) 2019/20	10
(b) 2020/21	9.2
(c) 2021/22	10

Abena Oppong-Asare:[\[30187\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many (a) direct employees, (b) contractors and (c) agency workers who work in his Department and relevant agencies and public bodies receive a wage below that of 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.

Jane Hunt:

The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy does not have any direct employees, contractors, agency workers, relevant agencies and public bodies who receive a wage below, as determined by the Living Wage Foundation.

Pat McFadden:[\[31804\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will take steps to ensure that those who work (a) directly in, (b) indirectly for, and (c) in agencies and public bodies connected to, his Department are paid at least (i) the UK Real Living Wage outside of Greater London or (ii) the London Living Wage inside of Greater London, as determined in each case by the Living Wage Foundation.

Jane Hunt:

[Holding answer 13 July 2022]: 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 have committed that the National Living Wage will reach 66% of median UK earnings.

As of 12 July 2022, the total number of direct employees, contractors and agency workers in the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy earning below the Real Living Wage rate of £9.90 per hour was zero.

As pay and conditions are set between employee and employer, the Department does not hold records on contractors. The Crown Commercial Service's frameworks set a minimum requirement of the current wage legislation, which all suppliers must adhere to when negotiating contracts with Government Departments.

■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Public Expenditure**Mr Andrew Mitchell:**[\[29905\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, which projects have underspent in order to contribute departmental budget from (a) climate finance and (b) foreign aid in order to fund lethal aid to Ukraine; and if he will make a statement.

Jane Hunt:

Around £100m from the BEIS International Climate Finance budget in 2022-23 has been identified to be handed back to HM Treasury.

Kerry McCarthy: [\[29947\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the total value of climate finance and foreign aid underspending is that has been diverted to the Ministry of Defence.

Kerry McCarthy: [\[29948\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the value is of his Department's underspend on climate finance and foreign aid.

Jane Hunt:

Around £100m from the BEIS International Climate Finance budget in 2022-23 has been identified to be handed back to HM Treasury.

■ **Electric Vehicles: Charging Points**

Hilary Benn: [\[33712\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has made an assessment of the impact of the location of electric meters in block of flats on the ability of residents to connect to smart meters and charge electric vehicles.

Greg Hands:

Energy suppliers are working together on solutions to extend the range of the smart meter Home Area Network. Energy suppliers are now rolling out a new type of communications hub which can operate on different frequencies and therefore serve many previously hard to reach flats and tower blocks.

Legislation came into force on the 15th June 2022 which requires all new homes and buildings in England, including blocks of flats, and those undergoing major renovation, with associated parking to install a charge point. These requirements provide best value for money by avoiding more costly retrofitting in the future.

■ **Employment Tribunals Service**

Dan Jarvis: [\[33784\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 7 July 2022 to Question 30022 on Employment Tribunals Service, whether his Department has taken recent steps to help increase the ability of Employment Tribunals to accept out of time applications.

Jane Hunt:

Employment Tribunals have the discretion to allow claims submitted out of time, these decisions will be based on the individual circumstances of the case and applying the relevant law. We believe that this approach, taken on a case by basis, is the most proportionate at this time.

■ Energy Supply

Mr Gregory Campbell: [\[33720\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the number of energy suppliers that have ceased trading in each of the last two years; what estimate he has made of the number of consumers that have been transferred to alternative energy suppliers as a result; and what estimate he has made of the total additional estimated cost to consumers of those transfers.

Greg Hands:

Information on energy suppliers that have ceased trading, and their customer base, is published by the regulator Ofgem at <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications/check-whos-taken-over-your-energy-supply>.

Suppliers can make a claim for the unrecoverable costs of acting as the supplier of last resort. The individual claims and decisions can be found on [Ofgem's website](#).

■ Innovate UK: Expenditure

Chi Onwurah: [\[33779\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the total spend was of Innovate UK in each of the last five years; and what proportion of that spending went on universities.

Jane Hunt:

The information requested is as follows:

YEAR	TOTAL AWARD BY INNOVATE UK	AWARD TO ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS	ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS % OF TOTAL
2017	£1,045m	£159m	15%
2018	£2,353m	£179m	8%
2019	£1,097m	£207m	19%
2020	£1,491m	£243m	16%
2021	£815m	£125m	15%

■ Life Sciences: North East

Alex Cunningham: [\[32527\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent steps his Department has taken to help support life sciences manufacturing in the North East.

Jane Hunt:

[Holding answer 12 July 2022]: In April 2021, the Government launched the £20m Medicines and Diagnostics Manufacturing Transformation Fund (MDMTF). Five companies were awarded funding through the MDMTF, including Piramal Healthcare, which will undertake a facilities upgrade at their Morpeth site in Northumberland.

In March 2022, the Government launched the £60m successor Life Sciences Innovative Manufacturing Fund (LSIMF) to support businesses investing in life sciences manufacturing projects in the UK. This received many Expressions of Interest and approximately 5% were from companies in the North East. It is expected that the announcement of the first wave of successful applicants will take place in Autumn 2022.

Alex Cunningham:[\[32528\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent steps his Department has taken to help secure investment in the North East's life science cluster.

Jane Hunt:

[Holding answer 12 July 2022]: The Life Sciences Vision aims to build upon the UK's geographic diversity of the Sector, by supporting clusters of excellence like the Northeast.

The Government has supported Fujifilm Diosynth Biotechnologies in bringing a £400m investment to Billingham; and awarded a grant to Piramal Healthcare to upgrade facilities in Northumberland.

In March, we launched the £60m Life Sciences Innovative Manufacturing Fund to support businesses investing in UK life sciences manufacturing projects. The fund received a large number of applications, including companies in the Northeast. Applications are now under review. We expect to announce the first wave of successful applicants in Autumn.

Alex Cunningham:[\[33774\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he is taking steps to support life sciences manufacturing in the North East.

Alex Cunningham:[\[33775\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he is taking steps to encourage additional investment in the life sciences cluster in the North East.

Jane Hunt:

I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave him today to Questions [32527](#) and [32528](#).

Members: Correspondence**Robert Largan:** [\[28937\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he will respond to the correspondence of 5 May 2022 from the hon. Member for High Peak, reference RL29291.

Jane Hunt:

My rt. hon. Friend the Minister of State for Business, Energy and Clean Growth wrote to the hon. Member on 14 June about changes to schemes to support energy-intensive industries.

Research: Finance**Chi Onwurah:** [\[30014\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent assessment he has made on the impact of UK-based researchers losing or giving up their grants from the European Research Council on (a) the international reputation of UK science and (b) future investment into UK-based research.

Jane Hunt:

The UK's preference remains to associate to Horizon Europe and we are disappointed that the EU continues to delay this. To provide reassurance, the Government has stepped in to ensure UK-based researchers who have obtained European Research Council grants will not lose out on funding.

Through the UK's Horizon guarantee, the Government will fund eligible successful UK applicants who expect to sign grant agreements by December 2022 and who have been unable to sign agreements with the EU. This means that UK-based researchers can receive the full value of their funding to take their projects forward at their UK institutions.

Research: Visas**Chi Onwurah:** [\[30013\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has had discussions with the Home Secretary on the potential impact of delays in providing short-term visas to visiting academics who are on international research commissioned by UK universities.

Jane Hunt:

My rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State welcomes the recent progress to expand the range and speed of routes for international talent to come and work in the UK. Should the UK be unable to associate to Horizon Europe, continued mobility for researchers will be a top priority.

■ Silica: Urban Areas**Yvonne Fovargue:** [\[31822\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what measures he has put in place to (a) assess and (b) control the release of silica dust into urban areas; and what steps he is taking to lower the risk of exposure to that dust among the general public.

Jane Hunt:

This is not a matter for the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

■ Social Enterprises**Rachael Maskell:** [\[31870\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will take steps to help businesses seeking to pursue social objectives to (a) develop as social enterprises and (b) strengthen business resilience.

Rachael Maskell: [\[31872\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans he has for funding initiatives to support the growth of cooperatives, mutuals and wider social businesses.

Jane Hunt:

The Government is actively supporting social enterprise through:

- £425million of dormant assets have been distributed to Big Society Capital. This has leveraged around £1.7billion in private capital from external investors. It has been used to support thousands of charities and social enterprises across the country to grow their impact and scale their operations.
- A further £60million has been allocated to The Foundation for Social Investment to make charities and social enterprises in England more financially resilient and self-reliant.
- The Government is also working to enable more social enterprises to participate through the Public Services (Social Value) Act and a new central government Social Value Model, launched in 2021.

■ Social Services: Recruitment**Stephen Kinnock:** [\[32956\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 4 July 2022 to Question 27630, how many complaints relating to employment agencies operating in the care sector were (a) received and (b) investigated by the Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate in each of the last five years; and how many and what proportion of those complaints led to enforcement action.

Jane Hunt:

[Holding answer 13 July 2022]: The information requested on complaints received by the Employment Agency standards Inspectorate (EAS) for the Care sector is set out in the following table:

YEAR	COMPLAINTS RECEIVED *	CASES INVESTIGATED	CASES WHERE ENFORCEMENT ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN	PROPORTION OF CASES WHERE ENFORCEMENT ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN
2017	57	14	14	25%
2018	93	25	24	25%
2019	127	52	22	17%
2020	124	54	22	18%
2021	119	51	24	20%

The majority of cases received related to 'sleeping time' which falls to HMRC's National Minimum Wage Team to consider.

*This data includes all cases related to Healthcare which includes Nursing, Locum GPS and Care as the data is not differentiated at this time.

Data comes from a live casework system thus is subject to change.

CABINET OFFICE■ **Cabinet Office: Contracts****Jon Trickett:**[\[31002\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the total value has been of contracts held by their Department with (a) G4S, (b) Serco and (c) Capita in each year since 2020.

Mr Jacob Rees-Mogg:

All of the contracts which the Cabinet Office has held with G4S, Serco and Capita worth over £10,000 since 2020 are available on [Contracts Finder](#).

■ **Government Property Agency: Contracts****Chris Stephens:**[\[R\] \[32960\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, when he plans to issue the invitation to tender for (a) Physical Security Guard Services and (b) Hard and Soft Facilities Management Services in each region as part of the Government Property Agency Workplace Services Transformation Programme.

Mr Jacob Rees-Mogg:

The current dates for the launch of the Physical Security Guard Services and Hard and Soft Facilities Management Services are (please note due to the nature of the programme the dates are subject to changes as required):

Security Services (Guarding) - CCS Framework RM 6089, Lot 1a - 04.08.22

North

South

Central

London

Hard FM and Soft FM - CCS Framework RM 3830, Lot 1b - 17.08.22

Soft FM - North

Soft FM - South

Soft FM - Central

Hard FM - North & Central

Hard FM and Soft FM - CCS Framework RM 3830, Lot 1c - 25.08.22

Soft FM - London

■ Ministers: Resignations**Julie Elliott:**[\[32530\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Secretary of State for Education who served from 5 to 7 July 2022 will be awarded the statutory resignation pay award of three months' salary for her time served as Secretary of State.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

The Ministerial and other Pensions and Salaries Act 1991 sets out the detail and circumstances under which former Ministers are eligible for a severance payment. Any Minister, regardless of the length of time they have served in post, who is below the age of 65 and who has not been otherwise reappointed to a Ministerial position within 3 weeks of their last day of service, is eligible for a severance payment of 25% of their annual claimed salary at the time at which they ceased to hold office.

The above position will apply to the former Secretary of State for Education as it would for any other Minister that has left office. Departments routinely publish the details of any loss of office payments made to former Ministers within their Annual Report & Accounts.

COP26**■ Hydrogen and Renewable Energy****Jim Shannon:**[\[31842\]](#)

To ask the President of COP26, whether he has had recent discussions with (a) the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and (b) Ministers in the devolved institutions on (i) sharing expertise and (ii) increasing investment in (A) hydrogen and (B) renewable energy technologies.

Alok Sharma:

As the chair of the Climate Action Implementation Committee, the COP President meets regularly with Cabinet colleagues and Ministers, as well as with representatives of the Devolved Administrations on an ad hoc basis, to discuss how the UK can accelerate its transition to a low-carbon economy.

The UK Government is committed to achieving a fully decarbonised power system by 2035, and technologies including renewables and hydrogen energy will be critical to delivering on that ambition.

DEFENCE**■ Ammunition****Mr Tobias Ellwood:**[\[31779\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of introducing 6.88mm ammunition as standard for the armed forces, in the context of the US Army's Next Generation Squad Weapon programme.

Jeremy Quin:

The requirements for a replacement to the SA80 family of weapons are currently being investigated. The potential benefits of 6.8mm will be considered as part of this assessment for future needs.

■ Armed Forces: Housing**John Healey:**[\[33683\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many service personnel were living in service family accommodation in the UK as of the end of financial year 2021-22; and how many of those personnel were (a) charged for fuel and light via their pay accounts and (b) eligible for support with their utility bills under the Fuel Subsidy Scheme.

Leo Docherty:

34,920 Service personnel were living in Service Family Accommodation (SFA) in the UK at the end of financial year 2021-22. As at 12 July 2022, the Ministry of Defence charge Service personnel occupying 541 properties under the Fuel and Light Scheme. There are 1,132 properties eligible for the Fuel Subsidy Scheme, however,

entitlement of Service personnel occupying these properties is dependent on additional factors, such as the rank of the occupant.

John Healey:

[\[33684\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what plans he has to support service personnel living in service family accommodation in the UK with the rising costs of utility bills over the remainder of financial year 2022-23 where those personnel are not (a) charged for fuel and light via their pay accounts and (b) eligible for support with their utility bills under the Fuel Subsidy Scheme.

Leo Docherty:

The majority of those residing in Service Family Accommodation (SFA) use private sector energy providers. Therefore, the Government's Energy Bill Support Scheme, which is to be administered through electricity providers, is applicable. Residents of SFA utilising civilian electricity providers should receive the £400 grant as a credit on their electricity bill from October 2022 onwards, with their provider's implementation of the scheme.

John Healey:

[\[33685\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to paragraph 0419 of Joint Service Publication 464 Volume 3, what estimate his Department has made of the cost of supplying energy to a standard property of each type of service family accommodation in the UK in the financial years (a) 2019-20, (b) 2020-21, (c) 2021-22 and (d) 2022-23.

Leo Docherty:

The annual cost, by financial year (FY), to the Ministry of Defence to supply energy to a standard property of each type of Service Family Accommodation covered by Paragraph 0419 of Joint Service Publication 464 Volume 3, can be found in the table below:

PROPERTY INFORMATION	DEFENCE INFRASTRUCTURE ORGANISATION ANNUAL FUEL COST	
	FY2021-22	FY2022-23
Property Type		
Type I or Residence	£3,793.78	£13,701.78
Type I	£2,013.10	£7,280.26
Type II	£2,493.79	£8,788.89
Type II	£1,897.64	£6,959.53
Type III	£1,793.23	£6,469.44
Type IV	£2,277.09	£8,250.33
Type V Special	£1,842.92	£6,727.69
Type V	£1,912.67	£7,072.08

PROPERTY INFORMATION	DEFENCE INFRASTRUCTURE ORGANISATION ANNUAL FUEL COST	
Type D	£795.30	£2,893.58
Type C	£977.80	£3,152.73
Type B	£1,072.70	£3,291.43
Type A	£1,149.35	£3,397.28
Type V x2	£663.95	£2,957.58
Type C x2 Type C & B	£893.90	£3,282.43
Type B x2	£1,025.30	£3,468.58
Type D x2	£645.70	£2,932.03

The Defence Infrastructure Organisation only holds the requested data for FYs 2021-22 and 2022-23. The data for 2019-20 and 2020-21 is not held centrally.

John Healey:

[\[33686\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what fuel and light charges have been applied by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation to service personnel living in each type of service family accommodation in the UK in the financial years (a) 2019-20, (b) 2020-21, (c) 2021-22 and (d) 2022-23.

Leo Docherty:

Fuel and light charges are applied to Service Family Accommodation (SFA) properties eligible for the Fuel Subsidy Scheme (FSS).

Data on the total FSS annual charges, by financial year (FY) made to Service personnel living in each type of SFA is available for all four financial years, as provided in the table below:

PROPERTY INFORMATION	DEFENCE INFRASTRUCTURE ORGANISATION ANNUAL FUEL SUBSIDY SCHEME CHARGE			
	FY2019-20	FY2020-21	FY2021-22	FY2022-23
Property Type				
Type I or Residence	£2,314.10	£2,390.75	£2,463.75	£3,485.75
Type I	£1,960.05	£2,036.70	£2,109.70	£2,982.05
Type II	£1,960.05	£2,036.70	£2,109.70	£2,982.05
Type II	£1,682.65	£1,759.30	£1,835.95	£2,591.50
Type III	£1,682.65	£1,759.30	£1,835.95	£2,591.50

PROPERTY INFORMATION	DEFENCE INFRASTRUCTURE ORGANISATION ANNUAL FUEL SUBSIDY SCHEME CHARGE			
Type IV	£1,533.00	£1,609.65	£1,682.65	£2,372.50
Type V Special	£1,397.95	£1,474.60	£1,547.60	£2,182.70
Type V	£1,397.95	£1,474.60	£1,547.60	£2,182.70
Type D	£1,412.55	£1,485.55	£1,562.20	£2,200.95
Type C	£1,233.70	£1,306.70	£1,379.70	£1,941.80
Type B	£1,135.15	£1,208.15	£1,284.80	£1,803.10
Type A	£1,062.15	£1,135.15	£1,208.15	£1,697.25
Type V x2	£1,788.50	£1,876.10	£1,967.35	£2,774.00
Type C x2 & B	£1,562.20	£1,649.80	£1,737.40	£2,449.15
Type B x2	£1,434.45	£1,518.40	£1,606.00	£2,263.00
Type D x2	£1,810.40	£1,898.00	£1,985.60	£2,799.55

The Department pays a single charge to energy suppliers and is unable to separate out fuel and light charges from this total cost.

■ Armed Forces: Parachuting

Dan Jarvis:

[\[33782\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the potential impact of the Hercules fleet leaving service on the parachuting capabilities of HM armed forces.

James Heapey:

The A400M Capability Programme has successfully accelerated the estimated delivery dates for all parachuting activity. The Atlas can already air-drop a range of supplies and equipment and is planned to have a high altitude parachuting capability before the C-130J Hercules goes out of service, with a low-level parachuting capability shortly thereafter.

■ Army: Armoured Fighting Vehicles

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

[\[31780\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if his Department will make an assessment of the potential merits of increasing the number of infantry fighting vehicles in the Army, in the context of the number of those vehicles in the US, Russian and Chinese armies.

Jeremy Quin:

Under Future Soldier, the Army will deliver a modernised division capable of conducting high-end warfighting formed around the Armoured Brigade Combat Team. This will be built on a digitally networked combination of Ajax, Boxer, Challenger 3, AH64E, long range precision fires and un-crewed aerial systems.

However, as SofS has stated, as the threat changes, we need to change with it. As we deliver our modernised and transformed Army we will continually review and revise how it trains and configures force elements to meet mandated and contingent tasks. In this transition, the Army will continue to hold and maintain the appropriate number of armoured vehicles to meet the operational requirements.

AWACS: Procurement

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[33723\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether a revised Full Business Case has been concluded by his Department for the purchase of three RAF E-7 Wedgetail aircraft.

Jeremy Quin:

The revised Full Business Case for the purchase of three E-7 Wedgetail aircraft for the RAF is planned for the end of this financial year.

Cryptography: Procurement

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[31761\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, which UK SOV8 companies have been involved in the (a) definition, (b) design and (c) manufacture of cryptographic products for the protection of UK Sovereign data, information and intelligence.

Jeremy Quin:

The Government uses several suitably qualified companies to develop our sovereign cryptographic capabilities. Releasing details of the companies developing this critical national security technology publicly could have significant security implications.

Defence Equipment: Procurement

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[32494\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, for what reason his Department purchases equipment from companies based in the United States in US dollars, rather than pounds sterling.

Jeremy Quin:

It is Ministry of Defence policy to place Sterling denominated, firm price contracts wherever possible, placing the management of the exchange rate risk with the most suitable party. However, certain purchases are undertaken in US Dollars where this is mandated by the US such as Foreign Military Sales, and in US Dollars or other currencies for other Government-to-Government arrangements, or for direct

commercial sales where this is assessed to deliver the most viable procurement approach or optimum value-for-money.

■ **Tesco: Army**

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[32498\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Army regiments have provided Tesco vouchers to their members.

Leo Docherty:

Tesco vouchers have only been provided by the Rifles Benevolent Trust, to help its members with the cost of living. The Trust is a non-Public Charity to support Riflemen (serving and veterans) and their dependants in need. Regimental Associations, and the Benevolent Trusts they run, are independent and decide how they use their funds to provide support.

■ **Type 26 Frigates: Weapons**

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[31756\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the planned weapon fit is for the Type 26 frigate.

Jeremy Quin:

The planned weapon fit for the Type 26 frigate is:

- Future Offensive Surface Weapon (a long-range anti-ship missile)
- 5-inch Mk45 Mod 4A Medium Calibre Gun
- Sea Ceptor Local Area Air Defence missile system which uses the Common Anti-Air Modular Missile (CAMM)
- A single Merlin anti-submarine warfare helicopter or up to 2 x Wildcat maritime attack helicopters, which will be able to deploy:
 - o Sea Venom (Heavy) Anti-Ship medium range air to surface missile
 - o Martlet short range air to surface missiles
 - o Sting Ray anti-submarine torpedoes
 - o Helicopter-mounted M3M 0.5" Machine Gun
- 2 x 30mm Automated Small Calibre Guns
- 2 x 20mm Phalanx Close-In Weapon Systems
- Ship Mounted 0.5" Heavy Machine Gun
- 0.5" Sniper rifles
- Force protection Small Arms
- Electronic Warfare Decoy Launcher Systems

■ Type 31 Frigates: Weapons

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[31757\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the planned weapon fit is for the Type 31 frigate.

Jeremy Quin:

I refer the right hon. Member to the answer I gave to him on 25 October 2021 to Question 56820.

Attachments:

1. Type 31 Frigates [56820 - Type 31 Frigates.docx]

■ Veterans: Identity Cards

Justin Madders:

[\[33829\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he plans to rollout phase two of the Veterans' Recognition Card scheme.

Leo Docherty:

As announced during Armed Forces week, more than £1 million in new money is being invested into a new digital service for veterans, due to be available in 2023. This will make it easier and quicker to demonstrate military service in order to access a range of Government and charity services, and will in turn help ensure that Recognition Cards are given only to those with verified service. The Government remains committed to delivering Veterans' Recognition Cards and will advise of a timescale for final delivery when this work is complete.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Arts: EU Countries

Catherine West:

[\[33876\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment the Government has made of the effect of the change to visa rules on the creative industry following the UK's departure from the EU.

Matt Warman:

The Government recognises that the way creative workers work in the EU has changed, and the sector will need to adapt to new requirements as the UK is no longer in the EU. The Government is committed to supporting the sector to adapt to these new arrangements, and we have worked with the sector and directly with Member States to clarify what creative workers need to do.

EU Member States are principally responsible for deciding the rules governing what work UK visitors can undertake in each Member State. That is why we have engaged with EU Member States and, from these discussions, almost all Member States have confirmed they offer visa and work permit free routes for creative performers.

The UK's domestic rules allow musicians, entertainers and artists (and their technical staff) from non-visa national countries, such as EU Member States and the US, to perform in the UK without requiring a visa, and the UK does not require work permits.

We have continued to engage with the creative sectors to help understand the impact of these changes on the creative sectors.

■ **Football: Betting**

Andrew Bridgen:

[\[33781\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment her Department has made of the potential merits of implementing a levy on bookmakers' profits from football bets to distribute to (a) the English Football League and (b) grassroots football.

Damian Collins:

The Government currently has no plans to introduce a requirement for gambling operators to pay a fee or levy to football or other sporting bodies. The Government invests millions into grassroots sport facilities via the Football Foundation alongside the Football Association and the Premier League. In addition to the £18m of government support this provides annually, in 2021 the government announced a further £25m investment to improve and upgrade grassroots facilities across the UK to ensure that every community in the country has access to the sports pitches they need by 2030.

The recent Fan Led Review of Football Governance stressed the importance of greater financial redistribution throughout the football pyramid. We are working with the football authorities to ensure an appropriate solution on financial distributions is found, which will protect the financial health of all football clubs throughout the football pyramid.

■ **Lord Brownlow of Shurlock Row**

Angela Rayner:

[\[33794\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether his Department holds a minute of the meeting on 18 January 2021 between Lord Brownlow and herself.

Matt Warman:

My department follows the Guidance on the Management of Private Office Papers, and as such holds a minute of the meeting held on 18 January 2021 between Lord Brownlow and Oliver Dowden.

■ **Mobile Phones: Ashfield**

Lee Anderson:

[\[32627\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if her Department will take steps to improve the quality of mobile phone signal in (a) Ashfield and (b) Eastwood.

Matt Warman:

The Government is committed to extending good quality 4G mobile coverage to 95% of the UK landmass. The Government's existing 5G ambition for the majority of the population to have access to a 5G signal by 2027 has been delivered five years early through 'basic' (non-standalone) 5G.

We have already made reforms to the planning system to support the deployment of 5G and help extend mobile coverage. The changes, which came into force on 4 April 2022, enable operators to upgrade existing sites for 5G and share infrastructure to improve mobile coverage. And the Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Bill, currently before Parliament, amends the Electronic Communications Code to encourage faster and more collaborative negotiations for the installation and maintenance of telecoms equipment.

The Government is developing a Wireless Infrastructure Strategy to set out a strategic framework for the development, deployment and adoption of 5G and future networks.

■ Social Media: Public Service Broadcasting**Kevin Brennan:**[\[33716\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of ensuring that all public service broadcaster output that conforms with Ofcom regulations remains visible on social media platforms.

Kevin Brennan:[\[33717\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of ensuring that regulations requiring social media companies to remove specific content are not applicable to Public Service Broadcasting output.

Kevin Brennan:[\[33718\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment she has made of the potential effect of provisions in the Online Safety Bill in relation to (a) exemptions for journalistic content and (b) content of democratic importance on protections for all Public Service Broadcasters.

Damian Collins:

The Online Safety Bill will ensure content from all public service broadcasters is protected on social media platforms.

The Bill exempts recognised news publishers' content from tech platforms' new online safety duties. This means tech companies will be under no legal obligation to apply their new safety duties to that content. The criteria under which an organisation qualifies as a recognised news publisher are set in the Bill. They include the BBC, S4C and other public service broadcasters who publish news-related material.

The largest and riskiest services, Category 1 service providers, will also need to set and enforce policies to ensure that the importance of journalistic content is taken into

account when making moderation decisions. This will cover journalistic content published by public service broadcasters.

Parliament has just approved amendments to the Online Safety Bill tabled by the government to further strengthen the protections for recognised news publisher content. Category 1 service providers will be required to notify news publishers and offer them a right of appeal before removing or moderating their content or taking any action against their accounts. This will ensure content from news publishers, including UK public service broadcasters, are not arbitrarily removed at the height of the news cycle. These protections would not apply to news publisher content where this content would give rise to civil or criminal liability for the service, or where it amounts to a relevant offence as defined by the Bill.

EDUCATION

■ Children: Care Homes

Rachael Maskell: [\[30057\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the profit made from private children's residential care facilities in each of the last 10 years.

Rachael Maskell: [\[30058\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will investigate private care providers alleged to prioritise profit over the care of children.

Rachael Maskell: [\[30059\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will publish data on the annual turnovers of each registered private care provider for children in England in each of the last five years.

Brendan Clarke-Smith:

The department does not hold data on the profits made by private children's residential care providers in each of the last 10 years or the annual turnovers of each private care provider for children in England in each of the last five years.

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) looked at provider profits as part of their market study of children's social care in England, Scotland, and Wales, and published their final report on 10 March 2022. The department welcomes the report and is carefully considering the CMA's recommendations.

Rachael Maskell: [\[30060\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care published in May 2022, if he will make it his policy to implement the recommendations of that report on provision of residential placements.

Brendan Clarke-Smith:

The department is now carefully assessing all of the recommendations made by the Independent Review of Children's Social Care, including on the provision of

residential placements. We are establishing a National Implementation Board, which will respond with an implementation plan by the end of the year.

■ Children: Day Care

Helen Hayes: [\[26816\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many nurseries and childcare settings closed in England in each year since 2018, by local authority.

Brendan Clarke-Smith:

This is a matter for Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, Amanda Spielman. I have asked her to write to the hon. Member and a copy of her reply will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Helen Hayes: [\[26817\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent estimate he has made of the number of available childcare places in England by local authority.

Brendan Clarke-Smith:

The department does not hold figures on the number of nursery school places available, however we continue to monitor the sufficiency of childcare.

Helen Hayes: [\[32585\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 5 July 2022 to Question 25945 on Children: Day Care, what assessment he has made of the potential impact of increasing childcare ratios on levels of childcare staff (a) recruitment and (b) retention.

Brendan Clarke-Smith:

On 4 July 2022, the government published its consultation on moving to the Scottish ratios for two-year-olds, from a ratio of 1:4 (one adult to four children) to 1:5 (one adult to five children). Alongside this, the department is running a bespoke survey of providers to help us understand how the proposed changes to staff to child ratios in early years settings might affect provision, including staff recruitment and retention. The results of this survey will be published.

This survey and responses to the consultation will inform final policy decisions and the government's response to the consultation in the autumn, in which final policy decisions will be set out.

The department is committed to providing safe, high-quality early years provision for children. Throughout this consultation process, the department will engage fully with the sector and parents and carers.

■ Children: Social Services**Damien Moore:** [\[22518\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care, what discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on increasing investment in the care system.

Brendan Clarke-Smith:

On 23 May 2022, the Independent Review of Children's Social Care published its final recommendations. On the same day, the government set out the actions it is taking to improve children's social care and committed to publishing a detailed and ambitious implementation strategy later this year.

We are now carefully assessing the review's recommendations with all relevant government departments, including HM Treasury. Once we have agreed the broad shape of our reform programme, we will need to consider any cost implications.

Rachael Maskell: [\[30063\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has a timescale for the reform of (a) fostering, (b) adoption, (c) kinship and (b) residential care for children.

Brendan Clarke-Smith:

The department is carefully assessing the recommendations made by the Independent Review of Children's Social Care, including those on reforming fostering, adoption, kinship, and residential care for children. We are currently establishing a National Implementation Board, which will respond with an implementation plan by the end of the year.

Helen Hayes: [\[32587\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if his Department will make an estimate of the amount spent on early help social services in 2018-19 by region.

Helen Hayes: [\[32588\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if his Department will make an estimate of the amount spent on early help social services in 2019-20 by region.

Helen Hayes: [\[32589\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if his Department will make an estimate of the amount spent on early help social services in 2020-21 by region.

Helen Hayes: [\[32590\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if his Department will make an estimate of the amount spent on early help social services in 2021-22 by region.

Brendan Clarke-Smith:

The department publishes local authorities' planned and actual expenditure on education and children's and young people's services annually. The data for 2018-

2022 is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/section-251-materials>. The department does not hold data on early help expenditure.

■ Children's Centres: Closures

Helen Hayes: [\[32594\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 28 June 2022 to Question 23781 on Children's Centres, what assessment he has made of the impact of those closures on levels of support available for families with young children.

Helen Hayes: [\[32595\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 28 June 2022 to Question 23781 on Children's Centres, what estimate he has made of the number of children who have not had access to sure start services as a result of those closures.

Brendan Clarke-Smith:

Decisions on how best to meet the needs of the local population have always been for the council concerned. Sure Start children's centres statutory guidance is clear that if a council decides to close a children's centre, they should demonstrate that local children and families will not be adversely affected and local areas continue to have sufficient children's centres to meet their needs.

The proportion of children starting year 1 with a good level of development went from around one in two in 2013, to nearly three out of four children in 2019. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, a record proportion of children were starting Year 1 with a good level of development.

The department is committed to ensuring children and young people get the best start in life. In the 2021 Budget, the government announced a £500 million package for families. This includes a £200 million uplift to the Supporting Families programme taking total planned investment across the next 3 years to £695 million. This funding will help up to 300,000 more families facing multiple, interconnected issues to access effective support and improve their life outcomes.

£300 million of funding will be used to transform 'Start for Life' services and create a network of family hubs in half of council areas in England. This includes funding worth £81.75 million for a network of Family Hubs and £50 million for parenting programs. The department is committed to family hubs and will robustly evaluate the impact of the investment to gather best practice and inform future funding decisions.

■ Foster Care: Older People

Rachael Maskell: [\[30066\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department is taking steps to encourage older parents to take up fostering a (a) child and (b) parent and child.

Rachael Maskell:

[30067]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to encourage single people to foster (a) a child and (b) a parent and child.

Brendan Clarke-Smith:

The department recognises the urgency of action required in placement sufficiency. We will prioritise working with local authorities to recruit more foster carers, including older parents and single people. This will include pathfinder local recruitment campaigns that build towards a national programme, to help ensure children have access to the right placements at the right time.

As the Independent Review of Children's Social Care recommends, the department will focus on providing more support throughout the application process to improve the conversion rate from expressions of interest to approved foster carers. The department has invested in Fosterline and Fosterline Plus, which are helplines offering independent and free advice for prospective foster carers.

Local authorities have a duty to ensure they have sufficient placements to meet the needs of the looked after children in their area, including parent and child foster placements. The National Minimum Standards for fostering services set out the expectation that people who are interested in becoming foster carers are treated fairly, without prejudice, openly, and with respect. Prospective foster carers should be considered in terms of their capacity to look after children in a safe and responsible way that meets the child's development needs.

■ **Foster Care: Private Sector**

Rachael Maskell:

[30061]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to monitor the performance of private companies that are overseeing local fostering services.

Brendan Clarke-Smith:

The government is committed to ensuring a fostering system that meets the needs of children and young people and works for everyone involved. The department has clear regulations and rigorous inspection frameworks to ensure that our high standards are achieved. All private sector independent fostering agencies must meet the legal requirements set out in the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011.

Independent fostering agencies are regulated and inspected by Ofsted. As of 31 March 2021, 93% of independent fostering agencies were rated as good or outstanding. All Ofsted inspection reports are publicly available and available at: <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>. Local authorities can use these reports when making decisions about which external agencies they use.

■ Higher Education: Espionage

Catherine West:

[\[33877\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department has made an assessment of the level of threat of espionage on behalf of China in the UK higher education sector.

Andrea Jenkyns:

The department cannot release information regarding threat assessments on the grounds of National Security.

■ Schools: Discipline

Matt Vickers:

[\[26897\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to help improve behaviour in schools.

Brendan Clarke-Smith:

The department will shortly be publishing the updated Behaviour in Schools guidance. This guidance advises schools on how they can build a positive behaviour culture through a whole-school approach to help schools create calm, safe and supportive environments.

In addition, the department is pursuing an ambitious wider programme of work to improve behaviour in schools. Our £10 million behaviour hubs programme, launched in April 2021, is projected to support up to 700 schools over three years. It enables schools with exemplary positive behaviour cultures to work closely with schools that want and need to improve pupil behaviour, alongside a central offer of support and a taskforce of advisers.

Moreover, the national behaviour survey is underway and is asking panels of pupils, parents, leaders, and teachers about their perception of behaviour. The aim of the survey is to support future policy development by improving our evidence base and data collection on behaviour. By capturing the views of professionals and listening to the voice of children and parents, the department will gain a better understanding of behaviour and what we need to do to support teachers and leaders in practice.

In autumn 2021, the department introduced a new and updated suite of fully funded National Professional Qualifications (NPQs), including the new specialist NPQ for Leading Behaviour and Culture. Specialist and leadership NPQs provide training and support for teachers and school leaders at all levels, from those who want to develop expertise in high-quality teaching practice, such as behaviour management, to those leading multiple schools across trusts.

■ Schools: Rutland and Melton**Alicia Kearns:** [\[27750\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many of his Department's grants for the training of senior mental health leads have been allocated to schools in Rutland and Melton constituency.

Brendan Clarke-Smith:

In the 2021/22 financial year, 11 schools and colleges in Rutland and Melton constituency had successfully claimed a senior mental health lead training grant, out of 67 eligible schools and colleges.

■ Special Educational Needs**Matt Vickers:** [\[26895\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to increase the school places available for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.

Will Quince:

In March 2022, the department announced High Needs Provision Capital Allocations (HNPCA) amounting to over £1.4 billion of new investment. This funding forms part of the £2.6 billion we are investing between 2022 and 2025 and represents a significant, transformational investment in new high needs provision.

It will support local authorities to deliver new places in mainstream and special schools in the 2023/23 and 2024/25 academic years, as well as other specialist settings, and will also be used to improve the suitability and accessibility of existing buildings. This will improve existing provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or who require alternative provision (AP).

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

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**■ Forests: Conservation****Dr James Davies:** [\[31167\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will make its policy to introduce a Great British rainforests strategy.

Steve Double:

The international importance of temperate rainforests (also termed Atlantic woodland) in supporting rare and threatened species has been recognised in domestic biodiversity policy for many decades. Many temperate rainforests are protected by existing policy. Many are ancient woodlands, which are protected from development in all but wholly exceptional circumstances. We have also committed in the England Trees Action Plan to increase protections in the planning system for long established woodland in situ since 1840. Many of our temperate rainforests support rich assemblages of species and are in our series of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). SSSI selection guidelines for woodlands are focused on securing a representative series rather than protecting every example.

This government has made a world-leading commitment to halt the decline in nature by 2030, which will rely on the restoration and creation of habitats across the country. This will be supported by funding from the Nature for Climate Fund, future farming schemes including Landscape Recovery, and new funds such as the Big Nature Impact Fund. We will consider, while designing and rolling out these schemes, how they might support the protection and restoration of certain types of woodlands including 'temperate rainforest'. We also provide financial support to the buffering and expansion of valuable woodlands such as temperate rainforests through the England Woodland Creation Offer, and funding for the improvement and restoration of temperate rainforest sites through the Regional Restoration Funds.

We are currently working on the revision of the 25 Year Environment Plan, the next Environmental Improvement Plan, due January 2023. This is the overarching strategy for the environment, as set out in the Environment Act, and where relevant we will consider the role of temperate rainforest in helping to meet our substantial environmental commitments.

Forestry policy is devolved, so the protection and restoration of temperate rainforests outside England is a matter for the devolved authorities.

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE■ **Alexander Lebedev****Julie Elliott:**[\[32535\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the oral evidence of the Prime Minister to the Liaison Committee on 6 July 2022, Q49 to Q52, if she will investigate the nature of the meetings undertaken in Italy by the Foreign Secretary who served from July 2016 to July 2018.

Graham Stuart:

On 6 July the Prime Minister committed to write to the Liaison Committee; this letter will be placed in the Library in due course.

■ Bangladesh: Maternal Mortality**Catherine West:**[\[33879\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to help mitigate the impact of rising sea levels and flooding caused by climate change on maternal health in Bangladesh.

Graham Stuart:

Through our £636,548 contribution to the Bangladesh flood response in recent months, we have supported access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services to help reduce the risk posed by the rise in sea levels.

We are also working with the Government of Bangladesh to help mitigate the impacts of climate change. In January 2020 we launched a UK-Bangladesh climate partnership to share expertise and have hosted a series of virtual exchanges on adaptation, mitigation, climate finance and nature. Our six year £120 million Bangladesh Climate and Environment Programme, announced at COP26, also has a focus on resilience and improving WASH access in climate vulnerable areas.

■ Bilateral Aid**Wendy Chamberlain:**[\[31923\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether any technical assistance hold-back as part of the UK's pledge for the Global Fund's seventh replenishment will count as bilateral aid.

Amanda Milling:

Currently no decision has been made on the UK's contribution to the seventh replenishment of the Global Fund. We have also not yet taken a decision on whether or not to continue the technical assistance hold-back which is a percentage of our core funding.

■ British Nationals Abroad: Capital Punishment**Andrew Rosindell:**[\[31770\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether her Department has produced official guidelines for situations in which British nationals are sentenced to death overseas.

Amanda Milling:

It is a longstanding policy of the UK Government to oppose the death penalty in all circumstances, as a matter of principle. In individual cases we raise our concerns at whatever stage and whatever level we consider to be most effective. More information can be found on GOV.UK in our Support for British nationals abroad: A guide. (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-for-british-nationals-abroad-a-guide/support-for-british-nationals-abroad-a-guide>).

■ China

Catherine West:

[\[33875\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 7 July 2022 to Question 30087 on China, how many people in her Department have been deployed to the China Department in each year since 2010.

Amanda Milling:

A significant and increasing number of FCDO roles both at Headquarters and across the global network involve an element of China policy. This shift in focus and resource has been underway for a number of years. In 2020/21 the FCDO dedicated an additional £3 million to increase our capability on China, including a significantly expanded China Department. In 2022/23, the FCDO is establishing additional China-facing roles in London and the network to provide analysis, reporting and policy delivery.

■ Developing Countries: Food Aid

Chris Law:

[\[30039\]](#)

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, what steps she (a) has taken and (b) plans to take to help ensure that the £372 million food security commitment is disbursed urgently to countries in need.

Vicky Ford:

Putin's illegal, unprovoked and premeditated invasion of Ukraine is leading to further steep price rises in commodity markets and is massively exacerbating the disastrous impacts we are now seeing to global food security. Rising food and fuel prices and tightening financial conditions have led to vicious cycles hitting the poorest hardest. All must help to mitigate this unprecedented crisis.

About half of the UK's new £372 million commitment will fund immediate life-saving food assistance delivered through the World Food Programme (£130 million), support an urgent response to seven countries at acute famine risk through the Central Emergency Response Fund (£52 million), and leverage a Nutrition Match Fund (£2 million), to attract national spending and other donors support on addressing wasting in priority countries. Other elements are supporting governments and the private sector to address the food security crisis and build resilience and more sustainable food security in the most affected developing countries in the medium term. This is through various mechanisms, with disbursements across the three years 2022-24. Longer-term commitments include £17.7 million through the FCDO's Green Growth Centre of Expertise to improve the effective use of fertiliser and increase food production, £37 million for the UN International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and £133 million for research and development partnerships with world-leading agricultural and scientific organisations to improve food security.

■ Developing Countries: Food Supply

Chris Law:

[\[30037\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she encouraged her G7 counterparts to commit a larger collective pledge to tackle global food insecurity than the \$4.5 billion commitment announced by G7 Leaders on 28 June 2022.

Vicky Ford:

At least 1.6 billion people are already affected by the current surge in food, energy and commodity prices and are impacted in their food security. While Putin continues his brutal war of aggression against Ukraine, the world's poorest people are inching closer to starvation. Rising food and fuel prices, and tightening financial conditions have led to vicious cycles, hitting the poorest hardest.

At the World Bank Spring Meetings, the UK and partners agreed the largest ever commitment to developing countries - \$170 billion over the next 15 months, including \$30 billion for food security, of which \$12 billion is uncommitted. The UK is calling for the G7 and wider international community to step up support to tackle global food insecurity. One important element of the G7 response announced in June is the collective G7 commitment to provide USD 4.5 billion to mitigate the scale of the global food security crisis. We have been consistently calling on our interlocutors to maximise their support. We are also calling on Russia to end its illegal war; supporting UN efforts to unblock the export of Ukrainian grain and urging all countries to keep food trade flowing. We recognise that resources are limited, and our response must be as effective as possible. We are therefore also working to enhance the coherence of the international response, including through the G7 Global Alliance on Food Security.

■ Development Aid: Females

Wendy Chamberlain:

[\[31921\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the commitment to restore Official Development Assistance funding to projects supporting women and girls, whether a proportion of those additional resources will contribute to the UK's pledge for the Global Fund's seventh replenishment.

Amanda Milling:

As set out in the International Development Strategy, providing women and girls with the freedom they need to succeed is a priority for the UK. Our investment in the Global Fund includes support for women and girls, for example to address HIV infections in adolescent girls and young women in areas where women are girls are more than twice as likely to acquire HIV than their male peers. This work is funded from our contribution to the Global Fund which is classified as multilateral aid.

■ Humanitarian Aid

Sarah Champion: [\[30023\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the G7 joint statement on Strengthening anticipatory action in humanitarian assistance, published in May 2022, what steps her Department is taking to help improve its understanding of the role that anticipatory action plays in mitigating the humanitarian impact of shocks and disasters.

Sarah Champion: [\[31119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to her commitments in the G7 foreign ministers' joint statement on 14 May 2022, what steps her Department plans to take to improve its understanding of the role anticipatory action can play in mitigating the humanitarian impact of non-natural and non-climate related shocks.

Graham Stuart:

The G7 statement builds on commitments agreed during the UK's G7 Presidency in 2021, and the UK will continue to be a global leader in driving more effective approaches to crises and preventing and anticipating future shocks. The UK is supporting partners including the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF); the Red Cross; the START fund; the Centre for Disaster Protection; and the Risk Informed Early Action Partnership (REAP) to improve our understanding of the role of anticipatory action in mitigating the humanitarian impact of shocks and disasters as well as non-natural and non-climate related shocks.

■ India: Minority Groups

Afzal Khan: [\[33913\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the adequacy of the treatment of minorities in India.

Vicky Ford:

The UK Government is committed to defending the rights of minorities, including Freedom of Religion or Belief for all, and promoting respect and tolerance between different communities. This includes hosting a recent international Ministerial Conference on 5 and 6 July which brought together governments, parliamentarians, faith and belief representatives, and civil society to strengthen international efforts to ensure freedom of religion or belief for everyone. India, like the UK, has a long democratic tradition of inclusive governance. We engage with India on a range of human rights matters and oppose discrimination against minorities. Where we have them and when appropriate to do so, we raise concerns directly with the Government of India, including at Ministerial level, while recognising that reports of discrimination against minorities are a matter for the Indian police and local legal system. The British High Commission in New Delhi and our network of Deputy High Commissions follow these reports closely.

Our network of High Commissions regularly engage with minority groups, meet representatives from minority communities and run projects supporting minority rights. Our project work primarily tackles the drivers of human rights violations, working with minority communities to encourage empowerment. We promote women's rights, promote the LGBT+ community in India and demonstrate our support. We also meet with religious representatives and, over the last three years in India, we have worked with local non-governmental organisations to bring together young people of diverse faith backgrounds to work together on social action projects in their local communities and build positive relationships between them.

■ **Kashmir: Armed Conflict**

Afzal Khan: [\[33914\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps her Department is taking with its international counterparts to help resolve conflict in Kashmir.

Graham Stuart:

The long-standing position of the UK is that it is for India and Pakistan to find a lasting, political resolution to the situation in Kashmir, taking into account the wishes of the Kashmiri people. It is not for the UK to prescribe a solution or to act as a mediator. We encourage both sides to maintain positive dialogue and find lasting, diplomatic solutions, but the pace and scope is for them to determine.

■ **LGBT+ People: Discrimination**

Lloyd Russell-Moyle: [\[33890\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent steps her Department has taken to help tackle discriminatory laws faced by LGBT+ people in the Global South.

Vicky Ford:

The UK is committed to championing LGBT+ rights internationally and supporting those who defend them. Ministers and our overseas missions work closely with partners to advance LGBT+ equality, and promote the implementation of new laws and policies that better protect LGBT+ people from violence and discrimination.

Since 2018, the UK committed over £11 million in programmes to support the promotion and protection of LGBT+ rights. On 24 June, the Prime Minister announced a further £2.7 million of UK funding to support LGBT+ grassroots human rights defenders, and advance equality and freedom across the Commonwealth.

■ **Mali: Armed Conflict**

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[33740\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies on UN MINUSMA of the arrest of 49 Ivorian soldiers linked to MINUSMA in Mali on 10 July 2022.

Vicky Ford:

We are concerned about the reported arrest of personnel from Cote d'Ivoire linked to the UN Peacekeeping mission, MINUSMA. We are in touch with MINUSMA to verify the reports. We continue to urge the transitional authorities of Mali to respect MINUSMA's freedom of movement, as we did during last month's renewal of MINUSMA's mandate by the UN Security Council. Restrictions impact on the mission's ability to deliver its mandate and on the safety and security of peacekeepers. Following reports of a massacre in Moura, central Mali, in March this year, I called on the transitional authorities to ensure unfettered access to MINUSMA to carry out an investigation into the allegations.

■ Myanmar: Humanitarian Aid**Yasmin Qureshi:**[\[32505\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions she has had with her Thai counterpart on enabling humanitarian aid to cross the border between Thailand and Myanmar.

Amanda Milling:

I [Minister Milling] raised the humanitarian assistance challenges in the border areas with Myanmar with Thailand's Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, when I visited Thailand in January. I discussed these issues again with my Thai counterpart during the UK-Thailand Strategic Dialogue in London on 30 June.

The UK is providing life-saving support on the Thai-Myanmar border. In Karen and Karenni states, which have seen some of the worst conflict, we are supporting the Border Consortium and DanChurchAid, along with many local organisations, to provide life-saving assistance. This support has reached over 80,000 Myanmar refugees in Thailand and 210,000 people in the Thai-Myanmar border areas.

■ Myanmar: Natural Gas and Oil**Yasmin Qureshi:**[\[32507\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she has made representations to her US counterpart on sanctioning the Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise.

Amanda Milling:

Since the coup on 1 February 2021, the UK has imposed 11 tranches of sanctions targeting the military's leadership, businesses and associates. We are in regular contact with our partners in the US, Canada and the EU to coordinate on further sanctions targets. It would be inappropriate to speculate on future targets by either ourselves or our partners.

■ Myanmar: Sanctions

Yasmin Qureshi: [\[32506\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she plans to implement aviation fuel sanctions in respect of the Burmese military.

Amanda Milling:

Since the coup on 1 February 2021, the UK has led the international sanctions response, in coordination with partners, including the US and Canada. The UK has now imposed 11 tranches of targeted sanctions against the military regime. We remain very concerned by the military's use of indiscriminate airstrikes against civilians, and we are exploring further measures to tackle the military's ability to use air capabilities to target civilians. On 28 February 2022 the UK updated our Overseas Business Risk Guidance to make it clear that UK businesses should conduct thorough supply chain due diligence to ensure that commodities such as jet-fuel do not reach the military.

■ Northern Ireland Protocol Bill

Simon Hoare: [\[33868\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether the Government plans to publish the impact assessment for the Northern Ireland Protocol Bill before the commencement of the Committee of the Whole House debate on the Bill on 13 July.

Graham Stuart:

The Bill provides specific powers to make new laws where we are disapplying the EU regime and where such laws are considered appropriate. The full details of the new regime will be set out in regulations alongside and under the Bill.

Layla Moran: [\[33909\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what the cost to the public purse has been of legal advice sought by the Government in relation to the Northern Ireland Protocol Bill.

Graham Stuart:

It is longstanding government policy, accepted by governments of all parties, not to comment on legal advice provided to the government.

■ Pakistan: Maternal Mortality

Catherine West: [\[33878\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to help mitigate the impact of rising temperatures caused by climate change on maternal health in Pakistan.

Graham Stuart:

UK funding is supporting a portfolio of climate activities in Pakistan focussing on three core priorities: Clean Energy, Adaptation and Resilience, and Climate Finance. This work underlines the UK's commitment to tackling climate change, building on the outcomes of COP 26.

Pakistan is one of 57 countries that made a commitment at COP26 to develop climate resilient, low carbon health systems. The UK, along with the Government of Pakistan and other local and international development partners have recently convened a climate and health policy forum to support Pakistan to build capacity and develop relevant public health policies to address the impacts of climate change on population health.

Torture**Tulip Siddiq:**[\[32596\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much her Department spent on torture prevention initiatives or torture protection work in (a) 2020-21 and (b) 2021-22; and how much her Department has budgeted to spend in 2022-23.

Vicky Ford:

Centrally, the FCDO spent £76,000 (2020-21) and £80,000 (2021-22) on torture prevention via the Magna Carta Fund. Overseas posts are responsible for their own programming and we are not able to confirm the amount spent on this area.

This does not include the funding for our ROLE UK programme, which has received £4.6 million from 2019 onwards and £260,000 additional International Programming in 2021/22. This supports work to prevent torture by strengthening judicial reform through improving pre-trial detention, case management, sentencing guidelines and protection of vulnerable witnesses.

Human Rights and Rule of Law funding for 2022-23 has yet to be agreed.

Western Sahara: Politics and Government**Tom Hunt:**[\[30156\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she has made an assessment of the potential impact of Morocco's Western Sahara Autonomy Proposal on the Western Sahara region; and whether she has made an assessment of the viability of that proposal.

Graham Stuart:

We take note of the proposals presented by the parties to the UN Secretary-General (UNSG) in 2007. We strongly support the work of Staffan de Mistura as the UNSG's Personal Envoy to Western Sahara and encourage all concerned to make the most of this opportunity for a renewed political process to reach a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution, based on compromise, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**■ Bereavement Counselling: Oxfordshire****Layla Moran:**[\[30123\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of availability of bereavement support services in (a) Oxford West and Abingdon constituency, (b) Vale of White Horse, (c) Oxford City, (d) Cherwell and (e) Oxfordshire.

Gillian Keegan:

[Holding answer 7 July 2022]: No formal assessment has been made. Bereavement services in Oxfordshire are commissioned by the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board. These include Talking Space, delivered by Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust through the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme.

■ Bowel Cancer: Health Education**Tracey Crouch:**[\[32516\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to Bowel Cancer UK's survey on the signs and symptoms of bowel cancer published in April 2022, what steps he is taking to raise awareness of the signs and symptoms of bowel cancer.

James Morris:

The latest National Health Service 'Help us, help you' campaign focuses on the barriers to earlier presentation for all types of cancer to increase to earlier diagnosis. Following the most recent phase of the campaign between March and June 2022, there was a 1,600% increase in the number of visitors to information on cancer symptoms at NHS.UK. A further campaign is planned later this year to include abdominal and urological symptoms, which can relate to the symptoms of bowel cancer.

■ Bowel Cancer: Screening**Tracey Crouch:**[\[32518\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to guidance from the British Society of Gastroenterology, what steps he is taking to promote and support the universal use of Quantitative Faecal Immunochemical Testing for symptomatic bowel cancer patients.

James Morris:

The guidance from the British Society of Gastroenterology recommends that faecal immunochemical testing (FIT) can be implemented safely in primary care. New contractual requirements for Primary Care Networks to support early cancer diagnosis were published in March 2022. The updated requirements have been designed to support the delivery of specific commitments aligned to National Health Service planning guidance and improving referral practice, including the use of FIT.

In addition, the use of FIT to reduce demand on endoscopy capacity has been incentivised in the GP Contract for 2022/23. From 1 April 2022, practices are financially incentivised for the proportion of lower gastrointestinal faster diagnosis standard referrals accompanied by a FIT result, to ensure that 80% of referrals on this pathway are accompanied by a FIT result.

■ **Breast Cancer: Screening**

Yasmin Qureshi: [\[29997\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the potential impact of lower than average uptake of breast screening amongst women receiving their first invitation in 2020-21 on future uptake of routine invitations within that cohort.

James Morris:

[Holding answer 7 July 2022]: We are researching the impact of different invitation methods, while taking account of previous screening history, to increase uptake across all eligible cohorts.

■ **Care Workers: Fuels**

Peter Dowd: [\[33810\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of introducing an immediate fuel subsidy for home care workers in the context of the rising cost of fuel.

Gillian Keegan:

We have no plans to make a specific assessment. The vast majority of care workers are employed by private sector providers which set their terms and conditions, including remuneration for travel costs, independently of central government. Local authorities work with care providers to determine fee rates, which should take account of employment costs, based on local market conditions.

■ **Care Workers: Pay**

Peter Dowd: [\[33811\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, in the context of the social care reform agenda, if he will take steps to ensure that the funding allocation for the social care sector enables care givers to be paid an adequate wage in the context of the rising costs of living.

Gillian Keegan:

We have made an additional £3.7 billion available for councils in 2022/23 which includes £1 billion for social care. Councils also have access to additional funding, including from un-ringfenced grants and council tax.

The vast majority of care workers are employed by private sector providers which determine their terms and conditions independently of central Government. Local

authorities work with care providers to determine fee rates, which should take account of employment costs, based on local market conditions. When commissioning services, local authorities should ensure that service providers deliver services through staff remunerated in order to retain an effective workforce.

■ **Compulsorily Detained Psychiatric Patients: Social Services**

Rachael Maskell: [\[33846\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of community-based social care support available to people who have completed treatment following detention under the Mental Health Act 1983.

Gillian Keegan:

No recent assessment has been made. Section 117 of the Mental Health Act 1983 provides patients with a statutory right to aftercare following discharge from detention. This aims to support patients in the community with as few restrictions as necessary, wherever possible.

For ongoing needs which do not arise from or are not related to a mental disorder, the individual may also be eligible for support through NHS Continuing Healthcare.

■ **Coronavirus: Screening**

Chris Grayling: [\[27544\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what mechanisms his Department uses to measure daily covid-19 testing data; and how many tests his Department records on average each day.

Maggie Throup:

[Holding answer 5 July 2022]: Daily data on COVID-19 testing includes the numbers of new confirmed positive, negative or void test results for polymerase chain reaction (PCR) and lateral flow device (LFD) tests. For PCR tests, data is recorded by the date the sample was collected from the individual and results are reported via the laboratory or facility processing the test. For LFD tests, data is also recorded by the date the sample was taken. However, LFD tests do not require laboratory processing and results are self-reported via GOV.UK or 119. Organisations may also report LFD test results directly via the Point of Care Testing portal.

The Department holds data on virus tests reported in England over a rolling seven-day average. For the latest seven-day period ending 21 June 2022, the average number of tests reported daily was 199,350.3.

Wes Streeting: [\[31889\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what was the total cost to the public purse of covid-19 tests bought by his Department since March 2020 which expired before use.

Wes Streeting: [\[31891\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many covid-19 tests held by his Department have expired before use.

Maggie Throup:

[Holding answer 13 July 2022]: We are unable to provide the information requested as it is commercially sensitive.

Wes Streeting: [\[31890\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the total cost to his Department was of disposing of expired covid-19 tests over the last two years; and what estimate he has made of the total cost of disposing of expired covid-19 tests in the next year.

Maggie Throup:

[Holding answer 13 July 2022]: No lateral flow device tests held by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) have been destroyed in the last two years.

In 2022/23, the UKHSA has a budget of approximately £2.7 million for the disposal of obsolete stock and associated costs. This is managed in accordance with the principles of managing public money and the waste hierarchy, to ensure value for money considerations and the least impact to the environment.

Wes Streeting: [\[31892\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department holds contracts for the disposal of expired covid-19 tests as of 6 July 2022.

Maggie Throup:

[Holding answer 13 July 2022]: The UK Health Security Agency has no such contract in place.

Wes Streeting: [\[31893\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has plans to repurpose any covid-19 tests it holds once expired.

Maggie Throup:

[Holding answer 13 July 2022]: The UK Health Security Agency is considering options for stock approaching its expiry date. Any disposal of obsolete stock will be managed in accordance with the principles of managing public money and the waste hierarchy, to ensure the most environmentally sustainable route and value for money.

■ Dementia: Health Services**Rosie Cooper:** [\[31056\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if his Department will take steps to develop the timeline of a national dementia strategy from five to 10 years.

Dan Carden: [\[31219\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to develop the timeline of the national dementia strategy.

Gillian Keegan:

We will set out plans for dementia in England shortly.

■ **Dementia: Research**

Rosie Cooper: [\[31800\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to Alzheimer's Research UK's position statement Getting People Involved in Dementia Research published in 2017, if he will include proposals to increase awareness of ways to get involved in dementia research in the dementia strategy.

Gillian Keegan:

The National Institute for Health and Care Research has funded and delivered the Join Dementia Research platform with Alzheimer's Society, Alzheimer Scotland and Alzheimer's Research UK. This allows individuals to register an interest in dementia research and be matched to trials to improve participation and diversity in such research.

We are currently reviewing plans for dementia in England and further information will be made available in due course

■ **Dental Health: Children**

Paul Blomfield: [\[31823\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he will publish the results of the oral health survey of 5-year-old children.

James Morris:

We aim to publish the results of the 2021/22 oral health survey of five year old children in December 2022.

■ **Dental Services: Durham**

Mary Kelly Foy: [\[19684\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions officials in his Department have had with representatives of NHS England North East and Yorkshire region on access to dentistry in County Durham.

James Morris:

We have had no specific discussions. However, NHS England and NHS Improvement have regular contact with regional commissioners to monitor and support the delivery of National Health Service dentistry. We allocated a further £50 million for NHS dentistry for the final quarter of 2021/22. Of this funding, £8.6 million was made available to the North East and Yorkshire region to support access to urgent dental care.

■ Dental Services: Standards

Stephen Morgan:

[\[19674\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to analysis by the British Dental Association, published on 10 February 2022, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the finding that 40 million fewer courses of treatment have been delivered since March 2020.

James Morris:

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the delivery of National Health Service dental activity, due to the specific risk from the aerosol-generating procedures used during treatment. However, from July 2022, NHS England and NHS Improvement have asked practices to deliver 100% of contracted units of dental activity and 100% of units of orthodontic activity to safely increase access for patients. An additional £50 million was made available for the final quarter of 2021/22 to support the provision of urgent care to patients. The Department and NHS England and NHS Improvement are working with stakeholders, including the British Dental Association, on improvements to the NHS dental system to continue to increase access.

■ Dental Services: Waiting Lists

Tom Hunt:

[\[32630\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what was the average waiting time for an NHS dentist appointment in (a) Ipswich and (b) the UK in the latest period for which data is available.

James Morris:

The information requested is not collected centrally, as appointments for National Health Service treatment in England are managed by dental practices.

■ Eating Disorders: LGBTQ+ People

Dan Carden:

[\[31917\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment has he made of (a) trends in the level of eating disorders in the LGBTQ+ community and (b) the availability of specialised treatment services for that condition in that community.

Gillian Keegan:

No specific assessment has been made. While there are no specialised eating disorder services specifically targeted towards the LGBTQ+ community, all support provided to patients would be based on clinical need, taking any protected characteristics into account.

■ Evusheld: Procurement**Dan Jarvis:** [\[33783\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans his Department has to procure Evusheld for the purposes of prescribing to clinically vulnerable patients for protection against covid-19.

Maggie Throup:

The Department is conducting an assessment of Evusheld, including requesting advice from clinicians on the most appropriate option for the National Health Service in line with the available data, the public health situation and other treatments available. While we are considering the advice received, we are unable to confirm a specific timetable for any decision.

■ Fractures: Health Services**Julian Sturdy:** [\[23284\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assistance his Department provides (a) Clinical Commissioning Groups and (b) Hospital Trusts to (i) operate Fracture Liaison Services and (ii) contribute to the Falls and Fragility Fracture Audit Programme; and if his Department will take steps to assist Vale of York CCG and York Hospital Trust to establish a Fracture Liaison Service for York.

Julian Sturdy: [\[23285\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the potential (a) cost-effectiveness and (b) efficiency gains of maintaining Fracture Liaison Services to local NHS and care services; and whether his Department is taking steps to assist Vale of York CCG and York Hospital Trust to establish a Fracture Liaison Service for York.

Gillian Keegan:

Services for those with osteoporosis and bone health conditions, including Fracture Liaison Services (FLS), are commissioned locally. NHS England is working with local integrated care systems (ICSs) to support the implementation of FLS and increase the number of clinics. NHS England is also developing regional bone health clinical networks to support clinicians working in FLS. The Department expects musculoskeletal, fragility fracture and fall services to be fully incorporated into ICSs' planning, informed by the metrics available on the Model Health System (MHS) platform. NHS England has worked with the Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership and the Royal College of Physicians, to ensure key performance indicators from the Falls and Fragility Fracture Audit Programme are included within the MHS.

No specific assessment has been made of the potential for cost-effectiveness or efficiency gains of maintaining FLS or the establishment of a service in York.

■ General Practitioners: Finance

Imran Hussain: [\[31125\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Answer of 22 February 2022 to Question 125230 on Health: Equality, whether the proposed health disparities white paper will include additional funding for GP practices serving patients in areas with higher levels of deprivation.

Maggie Throup:

We will provide further information in due course.

■ Health Professions: Mental Health Services

Rachael Maskell: [\[33845\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of workforce levels for (a) psychiatrists, (b) clinical psychologists, (c) mental health nurses, (d) psychotherapists and (e) counsellors in the context of the demand on mental health services; and what steps he is taking to tackle any potential shortfall in those workforces.

Gillian Keegan:

No specific assessment has been made. The 'NHS Mental Health Implementation Plan 2019/20 – 2023/24' states that the mental health workforce should increase by more than 27,000. This includes 470 more consultant psychiatrists, 2,520 psychologists, 4,220 nurses and 5,610 psychotherapists and psychological professionals.

Health Education England and NHS England are confirming plans with integrated care systems to meet the Plan's ambitions on service models, supply, retention and recruitment.

■ Healthy Start Scheme: North East

Catherine McKinnell: [\[18900\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 23 May 2022 to Question 1509 on Healthy Start Scheme: North East, what proportion of eligible claimants claimed Healthy Start vouchers in (a) the North East and (b) each local authority area in the North East in April 2022.

Maggie Throup:

The information requested is not currently held centrally. However, the Department continues to work with the Department for Work and Pensions to obtain the relevant data as soon as possible.

Hospitals: Devon**Daisy Cooper:**[\[14616\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he last visited (a) Derriford Hospital, (b) Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital, (c) North Devon District Hospital, and (d) Torbay District General Hospital.

Maria Caulfield:

[Holding answer 13 June 2022]: Since June 2021, the former Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (Rt hon. Sajid Javid MP) visited 96 health and care settings, of which 29 have been hospitals. This did not include Derriford, Royal Devon and Exeter, North Devon District or Torbay District hospitals.

Jack Hurn**Sir Christopher Chope:**[\[14408\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the narrative verdict given by the Birmingham Coroner on 27 May 2022 on the death of Jack Hurn; and if he will take steps to inform health service practitioners about that verdict.

Maggie Throup:

[Holding answer 13 June 2022]: The Department has not received a Prevention of Future Deaths report in this case and therefore no specific assessment has been made. However, if received, the Department will respond within the statutory deadline of 56 days. The National Health Service will continue to work with its partners on the coroner's findings to ensure that any further lessons learned are disseminated to clinicians.

Neurodiversity: Diagnosis**Rachael Maskell:**[\[33844\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the assessment process for people who have a neurodiversity condition; and if he will take steps to ensure that health professionals with the right (a) competencies and (b) qualifications are involved at an early stage of that process.

Gillian Keegan:

No specific assessment has been made. In 2021/22, we invested £10.5 million to enable local systems to test the effectiveness of diagnostic pathways for autism and we are providing £2.5 million per year until March 2024 on autism diagnosis pathways for children and young people. We expect integrated care systems to have regard to the relevant National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidelines when commissioning services. The guidelines for autism and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) advise that health care professionals should undertake the relevant training to deliver autism and ADHD diagnostic assessments.

■ NHS**Emily Thornberry:**[\[33732\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, on how many occasions since 1 January 2021 he or his predecessor received requests from the Chancellor of the Exchequer to discuss (a) the reduction of NHS treatment backlogs caused by the covid-19 pandemic, (b) the recruitment of additional NHS nurses, and (c) the delivery of plans for hospital construction and renovation.

Maria Caulfield:

While we have no record of any specific requests, Ministers have regular discussions with Cabinet colleagues on a range of issues relating to health and social care.

■ NHS: Dental Services**Lee Anderson:**[\[27733\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure people have adequate access to be able to (a) register and (b) gain an appointment with an NHS dentist.

James Morris:

Dental patients are not registered to a particular practice. A dental practice can accept a patient for a course of treatment and there are no geographical restrictions on which practice a patient may attend. NHS England's customer service centre can also advise patients on the availability of dental services, while patients requiring urgent care should contact NHS 111. Commissioners and practices have also been reminded of the importance of maintaining updated information on availability via NHS.UK.

NHS England and NHS Improvement have asked practices to deliver 100% of contracted units of dental activity and 100% of units of orthodontic activity to safely improve access for patients. An additional £50 million for NHS dentistry was provided for the final quarter of 2021/22 to provide urgent care to patients.

■ NHS: Dolby Vivisol**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:**[\[28423\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will place a copy of the (a) contract and (b) negotiation terms agreed between the NHS and Dolby Vivisol in the House of Commons Library.

James Morris:

[Holding answer 5 July 2022]: NHS England undertook a central procurement exercise for home oxygen supplies (HOS) on behalf of local clinical commissioning groups (CCGs). However, individual contracts are in place between CCGs and suppliers and are not held centrally. All HOS contracts are based on the National Health Service terms and conditions for the procurement of services which is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nhs-standard-terms-and-conditions-of-contract-for-the-purchase-of-goods-and-supply-of-services>

The North East, South East and South Central NHS regions contracted with Dolby Vivisol.

■ **NHS: Energy**

Emily Thornberry: [\[33733\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, on how many occasions since 1 January 2022 he or his predecessor received requests from the Chancellor of the Exchequer to discuss the impact of increases in gas and electricity prices on (a) NHS hospitals, (b) residential care homes in receipt of NHS funding, and (c) hospice facilities in receipt of NHS funding.

Maria Caulfield:

We have no record of any specific requests. However, Ministers have regular discussions with Cabinet colleagues on a range of issues related to health and social care. The Department is contributing to cross-Government discussions on managing the impact of energy costs.

■ **Patients: Compensation**

Feryal Clark: [\[33957\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if his Department will make an assessment of the potential merits of introducing redress schemes for people adversely affected by (a) sodium valproate, (b) Primodos and (c) surgical mesh.

James Morris:

The Government's response to the Independent Medicines and Medical Devices Safety review did not accept the recommendation to establish separate redress schemes for these interventions. We are considering this issue and will update Parliament in due course.

■ **Pharmacy: General Practitioners**

Rachael Maskell: [\[32962\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the additional competencies that could potentially be taken on by pharmacists for the purposes of relieving demand on GP services.

Rachael Maskell: [\[32963\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of requiring pharmacists to work collaboratively with GP surgeries to help tackle workload pressures.

Rachael Maskell:

[32964]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has made a recent assessment of the competencies that trainee pharmacists need to develop to provide a more comprehensive service in healthcare.

Rachael Maskell:

[32965]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of using other health professionals, in addition to pharmacists, to support primary care to meet the level of demand.

James Morris:

The Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework 2019-24 sets out how community pharmacy will support the delivery of the NHS Long Term Plan. Services have been introduced in community pharmacies to relieve pressures on general practitioners (GPs), such as the Community Pharmacist Consultation Service, which allows staff in general practices and NHS 111 to refer patients to community pharmacies for advice and treatment of minor illnesses. The majority of community pharmacies also offer blood pressure checks and support for patients who have been prescribed specific new medicines. Negotiations are continuing on additional services which could be delivered by the sector.

The General Pharmaceutical Council is responsible for setting education and training requirements for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians in Great Britain. Following a review in 2021, the Council introduced new standards for pharmacist initial education and training which will ensure that all new pharmacists entering the profession will be equipped with the skills and knowledge to deliver additional clinical roles and provision of healthcare services, including enhanced learning to become independent prescribers upon registration.

Health Education England (HEE) and NHS England are also investing a further £15.9 million over the next four years to increase the number of pharmacy staff in primary and community care and develop skills in the existing workforce.

Primary Care Networks (PCNs) can access the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme to improve access to advice and care through a range of professionals and services. PCNs receive full reimbursement for the recruitment of a variety of professions, including pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, physiotherapists and social prescribers. NHS England and HEE are supporting PCNs with training and supervision of these roles to reduce GPs' workload.

The Pharmacy Integration Programme is part of a wider education reform for pharmacy professionals. Career pathways for pharmacy professionals are being identified across sectors and increasingly within multi-professional integrated health and care teams.

■ Smoking: North West

Sir George Howarth:

[\[24547\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of trends in the level of (a) smoking and (b) health disparities in each area of the North West.

Maggie Throup:

The prevalence of smoking among adults in the North West region has declined from 21.9% in 2011 to 14.5% in 2019. There remain disparities between areas within the region, with the highest prevalence in 2019 in Blackpool at 23.4% and the lowest in Trafford at 9.1%. One area, Cheshire East, saw no reduction in prevalence between 2011 and 2019.

The difference in life expectancy between the most and least deprived areas in the North West from 2018 to 2020 was estimated at 11.6 years for males and 10 years for females. For females, the disparity in life expectancy at birth in the North West has increased by 1.2 years since 2010 to 2012. For males, there has been no significant change in this period. However, the detection of changes in life expectancy within local authorities is more challenging due to higher levels of uncertainty in these estimates.

■ Tourette's Syndrome: Health Services

Fabian Hamilton:

[\[18797\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to help ensure that specialist medical services for Tourettes Syndrome are accessible to people outside of London.

Gillian Keegan:

[Holding answer 21 June 2022]: The majority of services for people with Tourette's syndrome are commissioned locally by integrated care boards (ICBs). ICBs have a statutory responsibility to provide health service to the local population, subject to local prioritisation and funding, which includes access to specialist medical services for people with Tourette's syndrome as appropriate.

The Department continues to proactively engage with stakeholders regarding Tourette's syndrome and I recently met with the charity Tourette's Action.

■ Youth Custody: Medical Examinations

Steve Reed:

[\[32558\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department has taken to ensure that leaders of institutions in the youth estate (a) review the data generated by the Comprehensive Health Assessment Tool, (b) evaluate its efficacy in all areas and (c) ensure that it generates equitable access to services across ethnic groups.

Gillian Keegan:

NHS England has statutory responsibility for the commissioning of health services in secure and detained settings, including for the children and young people secure estate and this is undertaken by regional health and justice teams. Following the publication of 'The Lammy Review: An independent review into the treatment of, and outcomes for, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals in the Criminal Justice System', NHS England has aimed to enable central data extraction, including from the Comprehensive Health Assessment Tool, to review this data.

During 2021/22, data on those with protected characteristics has been collected for use by the adult secure estate. This approach is being developed during 2022/23 to inform the continuous improvement of care of children and young people in secure settings.

HOME OFFICE■ **Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre: Legal Profession****Caroline Lucas:**[\[32512\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many in-person visits were made by lawyers to people in Derwentside immigration removal centre (a) under the Detained Duty Advice Scheme and (b) in total since 1 July 2022.

Simon Baynes:

Between 1 July 2022 and 7 July 2022, there were no requests for in-person legal visits at Derwentside IRC and no in-person legal visits therefore took place.

■ **Extradition: USA****Mr David Davis:**[\[27510\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people have been extradited from the (a) UK to the US and (b) US to the UK in each year since 2003.

Tom Pursglove:

[Holding answer 8 July 2022]: The table below provides a breakdown of extraditions between the UK and the US between 2003 and 2022 (June).

YEAR	UK TO US	US TO UK
2003	6	2
2004	8	4
2005	14	1
2006	19	4
2007	9	6

YEAR	UK TO US	US TO UK
2008	6	10
2009	16	7
2010	12	5
2011	8	5
2012	20	4
2013	11	4
2014	18	0
2015	6	2
2016	8	5
2017	9	2
2018	6	5
2019	10	3
2020	10	2
2021	7	7
2022	2	0

Figures until 30 June 2022.

These figures provide updates on previously provided statistics in respect of years 2006, 2015 and 2017. As previously stated, all figures are from local management information and have not been quality assured to the level of published national statistics. As such they should be treated as provisional.

■ Members: Correspondence

Ruth Cadbury:

[\[33801\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department plans to respond to the email correspondence of 31 March and 25 April 2022 from the office of the hon. Member for Brentford and Isleworth regarding an asylum application.

Kevin Foster:

The Home Office responded to the correspondence on 12 July 2022.

■ Passports: Applications

Gareth Thomas:

[\[28867\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to (a) recruit more staff, (b) offer more upgrade appointments, (c) increase the responsiveness of the helpline for hon. Members and (d) put in place other resources to mitigate delays in processing passport applications; and if she will make a statement.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 11 July 2022]: Her Majesty's Passport Office has added 850 staff since April 2021, which has enabled more passport applications to be processed than ever before. Approximately three million applications were completed across March, April, and May, and an additional 350 staff will arrive this summer to add further resilience to this processing capacity.

If a customer has made a standard application and now needs their passport sooner than the published processing times of ten weeks, they should contact the Passport Adviceline (0300 222 0000) to discuss any available options. For those who have yet to apply and need their passport more quickly, appointments for urgent services are released on a daily basis, three weeks in advance. Work to increase appointment capacity has led to the recent opening of an eighth public counter.

In light of the difficulties caseworkers have had in making contact about constituents' passport matters, members of HM Passport Office staff are now dedicated to support on the Home Office's MP Enquiry Line. 25 members of non-frontline staff have been trained so far, with an average of 15 staff on the phones each day. HM Passport Office staff are also available at Portcullis House from Monday to Friday, to provide in-person surgeries for the most urgent enquiries.

Gareth Thomas:

[\[28868\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many staff in her Department have been (a) redeployed and (b) hired since March 2022 to alleviate delays in processing passport applications; and if she will make a statement.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 11 July 2022]: Since April 2021, Her Majesty's Passport Office have added over 850 additional staff to help meet the current unprecedented demand for passports, with almost 400 of these staff brought in since March 2022. A further 350 staff will added during the summer.

HM Passport Office's makes use of its own flexible resources, with fully trained staff being deployed to operational roles as required. It also routinely uses flexible resource from HMRC to support with peaks in passport demand, with over 80 full-time equivalents from HMRC supporting passport services in May.

This has helped to process applications in record numbers. Across March, April, and May, HM Passport Office completed the processing of approximately three million applications, with 98.5% of applications from the UK being completed within the published processing time of up to ten weeks.

Gareth Thomas: [\[28869\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what further support she plans to put in place to provide responses to the large number of constituent enquiries that hon. Members and their staff are making via the Home Office hub in Westminster as a result of delays in processing passport applications; and if she will make a statement.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 11 July 2022]: The UK Visas and Immigration, MP Account Management Team have recently increased the staffing at the Portcullis House hub by 50% to provide additional support for Members and their staff in answering enquiries about passport applications as well as about matters related to the situation in Ukraine.

Staffing levels at the hub continue to be reviewed to ensure the hub provides the best possible service to Members and their staff.

■ Public Sector: Crimes of Violence

Alex Cunningham: [\[33778\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 4 July 2022 to Question 27594 on Public Sector: Crimes of Violence, when the economic impact assessment for the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 will be published.

Tom Pursglove:

The economic impact assessment for the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 will be published in due course.

■ Rape: Prosecutions

Rachael Maskell: [\[26794\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the oral contribution of the Minister of State in response to the Urgent Question of 28 June 2022 on prosecution of incidences of rape, what steps he is taking to help ensure that evidence submitted to rape cases passes CPS thresholds.

Amanda Solloway:

Taking rape and sexual violence is a key priority for this Government.

Through the Rape Review, we took a hard and honest look at how the entire criminal justice system deals with rape and in too many instances it simply has not been good enough. Our accompanying Action Plan set out a robust programme of work to drive the necessary improvements in the criminal justice system's handling of adult rape cases.

Our action includes investing £6.65 million in Operation Soteria (2021-23) which will inform the development of a national operating model for the investigation of rape by the police which will be available to all forces in June 2023. This includes work to raise the quality of police case files. For example, enhanced scrutiny panels with representatives from both the police and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) have

been established in Operation Soteria areas to scrutinise casework and check whether quality decisions on individual cases are being made. The CPS will over the next 6 months be developing a file quality metric which will measure the quality of file cases and will provide insight on where issues need to be addressed.

The most recent figures show that police recorded offences of rape increased by 21% across the whole year ending December 2021 and now stands as the highest ever recorded annual figure to date (67,125 offences). We welcome the fact that more victims of sexual offences, which are all too often hidden crimes, are coming forward and reporting these crimes to the police.

In addition, we have started to see some increases in the number of referrals of adult rape cases from the police to the CPS (from 2,513 in the year to September 2021 to 2,736 in the year to December 2021), and in the number of charges (from 1,160 in the year to September 2021 to 1,243 in the year to December 2021).

■ Slavery

Christina Rees:

[\[32601\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Answer of 8 March 2022 to Question 133959 on Slavery, when she plans to introduce financial penalties for organisations that fail to meet their statutory obligations with regards to section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

Amanda Solloway:

The landmark transparency provisions contained in section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 made the UK the first country in the world to require businesses with a turnover of £36m or more to report annually on the steps they have taken to prevent modern slavery in their operations and supply chains.

To enhance the impact of transparency and accelerate action to prevent modern slavery, the Government committed to strengthening the reporting requirements contained in section 54 and introduce new measures including financial penalties for organisations that fail to meet their statutory obligation to publish modern slavery statements.

These measures require primary legislation and we intend to legislate in the forthcoming Modern Slavery Bill.

■ Visas: Afghanistan

Sir Stephen Timms:

[\[29855\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her advice is to people wishing to leave Afghanistan who are family members of British nationals and likely to qualify for the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme, but who cannot afford to obtain a visa for a neighbouring country or to travel there.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 7 July 2022]: We recognise the situation in Afghanistan is complex and presents significant challenges, including securing safe passage to another country.

The government is committed to working in step with the international community and continuing to do what can be done to support those still in Afghanistan who are eligible for resettlement to the UK to depart the country safely if they wish to do so. This includes coordinating with the countries neighbouring Afghanistan.

■ Visas: Applications**Chi Onwurah:**[\[31838\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has identified the cause of the technical glitch causing the loss of some visa applications made in mid-May 2022.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 11 July 2022]: No Ukraine Scheme Visa applications were 'lost' as a result of an IT incident in mid-May 2022, however, applications under the Homes for Ukraine scheme were affected within the Atlas casework system which caused them to be delayed.

The root cause was quickly identified and was fixed for all new applications from Friday 20th May – those applications affected then proceeded through to consideration by caseworkers.

■ Visas: Myanmar**Stephen Farry:**[\[28939\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has plans to issue protected status visas for Myanmar nationals who are living in the UK and are not able to return to Myanmar due to the conflict in that country.

Stephen Farry:[\[28940\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what support is available for Myanmar nationals who are resident in the UK and whose visas are expiring and who are unable to return to Myanmar due to the ongoing conflict in that country.

Kevin Foster:

[Holding answer 11 July 2022]: People from Myanmar will be able to make an application to extend their stay in the UK where they are on a route which allows for extension, subject to continuing to meet the relevant criteria for the route and paying any associated fees.

The Home Office does not have plans to create a visa specifically for Myanmar nationals currently living in the UK.

Those whose leave is expiring and cannot be extended can, where they have a genuine and well-founded fear of persecution if returned to Myanmar, make a claim for asylum.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Trade Agreements: Faroe Islands

Sarah Olney: [\[32606\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of suspending the Trade Agreement with the Faroe Islands until she receives a legally binding commitment from the government of the Faroe Islands that it will cease all further whale and dolphin hunts.

Andrew Griffith:

HM Government is strongly opposed to the hunting of whales and dolphins. Multiple government colleagues and I have raised this issue directly with the government of the Faroe Islands. The Faroes are reviewing the hunt and have recently proposed a catch limit for white-sided dolphins. The fact of our trade agreement strengthens our ability to have these full and frank discussions and influence on crucial issues like animal welfare. As these hunts are not illegal in local law, there are no provisions under the Free Trade Agreement for the UK to suspend it on this basis. We will continue to use our relationship to lobby the Faroes to stop this practice altogether.

JUSTICE

■ Courts: Public Consultation

Steve Reed: [\[32552\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether his Department has taken steps with (a) the judiciary and (b) representatives of Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service on establishing a system of online feedback on the conduct by judges of cases.

Miss Sarah Dines:

An online feedback system on judges' conduct of cases would not be consistent with the principle of judicial independence, which is a cornerstone of our democracy.

To preserve the independence of the judiciary, the Lord Chief Justice, the Senior President of the Tribunals, and the Chief Coroner have statutory responsibility for judicial training. These responsibilities are exercised through the Judicial College.

■ Criminal Proceedings

Alex Cunningham: [\[33777\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Answer of 28 March 2022 to Question on Criminal Proceedings, when his Department plans to publish the research

on defendants' engagement with the courts' process carried out by Revolving Doors on behalf of the Crime Reform Programme.

Miss Sarah Dines:

The research was published on HMCTS GOV.UK pages on Wednesday 13 July and is publicly available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-courts-and-tribunals-service/about/research>.

■ **Criminal Proceedings: Neurodiversity**

Matt Hancock:

[\[31089\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when he plans to publish the neurodiversity strategy for the criminal justice system.

Simon Baynes:

The Ministry of Justice is committed to improving support for neurodivergent people encountering the Criminal Justice System (CJS).

On 30 June we published a cross-government Action Plan in response to the Justice Inspectorates' Evidence Review on Neurodiversity in the CJS. As the Action Plan shows, significant progress has already been made to increase support for neurodivergent people, including the introduction of neurodiversity support managers in prisons and the promotion of Autism Accreditation across the prison estate. We are leading a cross-government six-month exploratory phase to strengthen and increase the offer for neurodivergent people at all key stages of the CJS, which will further consider opportunities to improve screening, raise awareness, enhance training and share best practice. We will also use this exploratory phase to assess whether a Neurodiversity Strategy for just the CJS is the best way forward.

Further, the department continues to work closely with the Department for Health and Social Care to deliver the Autism Strategy Refresh (published July 2021) and the Building the Right Support Action Plan, which is due to be published shortly.

■ **Crown Court and Magistrates' Courts: Carbon Emissions**

Steve Reed:

[\[33786\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate his Department has made of the potential costs of decarbonising (a) magistrates and (b) crown courts in England and Wales.

Miss Sarah Dines:

HMCTS have estimated that the minimum investment required to decarbonise the whole estate and achieve MoJ Greening Government Commitments (GGC) 2021-2025, is £63.5m. We do not hold a breakdown of this figure by jurisdiction.

We have so far invested £40m in carbon reduction projects and are aiming to achieve a sustained 6,000 tonne carbon reduction within the 2021-2025 GGC period, a 10% reduction against our 2019/20 total carbon emission baseline.

The HMCTS environmental sustainability strategy 2020-2025 outlines our commitments to carbon reduction, minimising our consumption of water, reducing and managing our waste responsibility and helping nurture and protect biodiversity.

■ Crown Court: Hearing Impairment

Emily Thornberry:

[\[31786\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 27 June 2022 to Question 21142 on Crown Court: Hearing Impairment, if he will list Crown Courts in England and Wales (a) with (b) without an operational hearing loop.

Tom Pursglove:

These were the Crown Courts confirmed to have operational hearing loops by HM Courts & Tribunals Service's (HMCTS) Facilities Management contract provider as of June 2022:

Birmingham Crown Court
Birmingham Crown Court Annex
Bolton Combined Court
Bournemouth Combined Court
Bradford Combined Court
Bristol Crown Court
Burnley Combined Court
Caernarfon Criminal Justice Centre
Cambridge Crown (PFI)
Cardiff Crown Court
Carlisle Combined Court
Central Criminal Court
Chester Crown Court
Coventry Combined Court
Croydon Combined
Derby Combined Court
Doncaster Crown Court
Durham Crown Court
Gloucester Crown Court
Great Grimsby Combined Court
Guildford Crown Court
Harrow Crown

Hove Trials Centre
Inner London Crown Court
Ipswich Crown (PFI)
Isle of Wight Combined Court
Isleworth Crown Court
Kingston on Thames Crown
Kingston Upon Hull Combined Court
Leeds Combined Court
Leicester Crown & County Court
Lewes Combined Court Centre
Lincoln Crown Court
Liverpool QE2 Crown Court
Luton Crown Court
Maidstone Combined Court Centre
Manchester Crown Court (Crown Square)
Manchester Crown Court (Minshull Street)
Mold Law Courts
Newcastle Moot Hall
Newcastle Upon Tyne Combined Court
Newport Crown Court
Northampton Combined Court
Norwich Combined Court Centre
Nottingham Crown & County Courts
Peterborough Combined Court Centre
Plymouth Combined Court
Portsmouth Combined Court
Preston Combined Court
Preston Crown Court (ADO)
Reading Crown Court
Sheffield Combined Court
Snaresbrook Crown Court
Southampton Combined Court

Southwark Crown Court
St Albans Crown Court
Stafford Combined Court
Stoke on Trent Combined Court
Swansea Crown Court
Swindon Combined Court
Taunton Combined Court
Teesside Combined Court
Truro Combined Court
Winchester Law Courts
Wolverhampton Combined Court
Wood Green Crown Court
Woolwich Crown
Worcester Combined Court
York Crown Court

These were the Crown Courts not confirmed to have operational hearing loops by HMCTS' Facilities Management contract provider as of June 2022:

Aylesbury Crown Court
Basildon Combined Court
Canterbury Combined Court Centre
Chelmsford Crown Court
Exeter Combined Court
Guildford Magistrates Court and Family Court
Hereford Crown Court
Kings Lynn Crown Court and Magistrates Court
Lancaster Crown Court
Leamington Spa Magistrates' Court
Lincoln Magistrates Court
Loughborough Court
Merthyr Tydfil Combined Court Centre
Oxford Combined Court Centre
Reading Magistrates Court and Family Court
Salisbury Law Courts

Shrewsbury Justice Centre

Southend Combined - Crown, Magistrates, County and Family Courts

St Albans Magistrates Court

Loughborough Court was included twice in the number of Crown Courts that were not reported to have a hearing loop in the answer for PQ 21142, due to having an additional report for the 'super courtroom' launched in November 2021. It has only been included once in this answer as the 'super courtroom' is within the Loughborough Court building.

These lists relate to the permanent estate only, and do not include Nightingale Courts or other temporary Crown Court venues.

The Crown Court locations which were not reported to have hearing loops on site may still have facilities available or be able to make reasonable adjustments to help users who need hearing equipment. Some of the hearing loop equipment used by HMCTS is portable and can be moved between Crown Court sites if this is needed to help a user with a hearing disability. Users can contact the court involved to discuss what they need to help them attend court and access services and HMCTS will make reasonable adjustments. More information about available reasonable adjustments and arranging them is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-courts-and-tribunals-service/about/equality-and-diversity.

HMCTS carries out service assurance checks to monitor the quality of its services at local, regional and national levels, which includes checks on accessibility for users with hearing disabilities. HMCTS routinely reviews its Service Assurance Framework so these checks make sure appropriate equipment and facilities are in place, and that any issues around the provision and maintenance of equipment is raised with the Facilities Management contract provider.

■ Crown Court: Trials

Afzal Khan:

[33001]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many and what proportion of cases in the Crown court since 11 May 2022 had no recorded attendance of a defence advocate.

Miss Sarah Dines:

HM Courts and Tribunals Service is monitoring impact of the operation of the Criminal Bar Association's 'Bar Action' on the Crown Court. The table below is drawn from manual returns for each Crown Court for hearings affected on the day(5).

It remains our priority to ensure that justice is served, and we encourage the Criminal Bar Association to work with us – the decrease in outstanding cases in the Crown Court shows what is possible when we work together.

<u>HEARING DATE(1)</u>	<u>WEEKLY TOTAL LISTED HEARINGS(2)</u>	<u>TOTAL NUMBER OF HEARINGS DISRUPTED ON THE DAY DUE TO 'BAR ACTION'(3)</u>	<u>BAR ACTION IMPACTED HEARINGS' AS % OF WEEKLY TOTAL LISTED HEARINGS(2,3)</u>	<u>NUMBER OF TRIAL HEARINGS DISRUPTED ON THE DAY DUE TO 'BAR ACTION'(3,4)</u>
(week commencing)				
09/05/2022	10,179,246	2.4%	50	
16/05/2022	10,068,226	2.2%	40	
23/05/2022	10,563,166	1.6%	40	
30/05/2022	5,567,139	2.5%	29	
06/06/2022	10,979,219	2.0%	60	
13/06/2022	10,360,191	1.8%	45	
20/06/2022	10,335,189	1.8%	34	
27/06/2022	10,041,884	8.8%	242	

Footnotes

- 1) The Jubilee Bank holiday occurred week commencing 30 May 2022. The number of hearings listed in those weeks is therefore lower.
- 2) Each day of a trial is counted separately in the listed hearings total; a trial lasting 2 weeks would appear 10 times in the daily lists and would be counted as 10 hearings.
- 3) Hearings disrupted are those that could not go ahead due to barrister not being present; it excludes hearings that went ahead without the assigned barrister. This data is derived from manual returns from the Crown Courts on the hearings impacted by the 'Bar Action'.
- 4) Each trial disrupted by the operation of the Bar Action is counted only on the day it is disrupted.
- 5) The figures supplied have been extracted from live case management systems/manual returns and have not been verified to the same standards as National Statistics. Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that the data have been extracted from large case management systems/manual returns generated by the

courts. Consequently, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations are taken into account when data are used.

■ Family Courts: Expert Evidence

Paul Blomfield: [\[31825\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when his Department plans to respond the letter from the victims' commissioner for London, Claire Waxman, and others on the use of unregulated psychological experts in the family courts.

Tom Pursglove:

I thank both Claire Waxman and the Survivor Family Network for their letters on the use of unregulated experts in the family courts. This is an important issue, and we take the concerns raised within the letters seriously. We are actively considering our response and will be replying to both Claire Waxman and the Survivor Family Network ahead of the summer recess.

■ Genocide: Rwanda

Mr Andrew Mitchell: [\[29907\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will increase the resources the UK Government is providing to investigations of Rwandan nationals in the UK alleged to have taken part in the 1994 genocide against the Tutsis.

Miss Sarah Dines:

As the question concerns resources relating to investigations into Rwandan nationals in the UK, I am unable to provide an indication of future resource allocations. This falls under the responsibility of the Home Office and the relevant devolved administrations.

■ Judiciary: Recruitment

Steve Reed: [\[32553\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether his Department has taken steps to work with other organisations to reform the recruitment function of the judiciary.

Miss Sarah Dines:

The independent Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC) is responsible for running recruitment exercises and for making recommendations to judicial posts up to and including the High Court. It has a statutory duty under the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 to select on merit and to encourage diversity. The JAC is committed to improving its selection processes continuously, which are kept under review in partnership with external and independent experts, to ensure best recruitment practice is maintained and developed.

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ), as part of the Judicial Diversity Forum, works with the JAC, the judiciary and the legal professions to attract and support the widest range of

candidates, to improve the rate of progress of under-represented groups overall, with action required at all stages of the process and from all members of the JDF.

The Lord Chief Justice is responsible for the appointment of magistrates, and recruitment to the magistracy is delivered in partnership with MoJ, HMCTS and Advisory Committees on Justices of the Peace. The Government recently invested over £1 million in a programme of work to support the recruitment of new magistrates. This has included the introduction of a new digital recruitment process and inclusive marketing strategy designed to increase application numbers from under-represented groups. This was developed in collaboration with a steering group including HMCTS and Judicial Office, the Magistrates Association and judicial office holders, all of whom MoJ continue to work closely with.

Steve Reed:

[\[32554\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether his Department has set a target for achieving a judiciary and magistracy that is representative of the make-up of society.

Miss Sarah Dines:

The Ministry of Justice is committed to improving diversity in the judiciary and the magistracy. The Ministry of Justice, as a member of the Judicial Diversity Forum (JDF), works closely with the judiciary, the Judicial Appointments Commission, the Legal Services Board and the legal professions to take actions to increase judicial diversity. MoJ's priorities and those of other JDF members are set out in the JDF's plan ([JDF-2022-action-plan.pdf \(judicialappointments.gov.uk\)](#)). The Diversity of the judiciary: Legal professions, new appointments and current post-holders – 2022 Statistics, published on 14 July, provide detailed data which offer important evidence to help target and tailor support to underrepresented groups in the judiciary and improve diversity.

The Government has invested over £1 million to support the recruitment of new and diverse magistrates, the Government's top priority for the magistracy. A new digitised recruitment process, alongside an inclusive marketing campaign, was launched in January 2022 as part of this programme of work, targeting underrepresented groups to ensure the magistracy is reflective of the communities it serves. A new Applicant Tracking System (ATS) was also introduced, allowing the MoJ to monitor the diversity of applicants which will help inform future recruitment activity.

■ Legal Aid Scheme

Afzal Khan:

[\[33915\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to Legal aid statistics England and Wales bulletin January to March 2022 published on 30 June 2022, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on the legal system of trends in the level of completed workload in legal help and controlled legal representation between April 2010 and March 2022.

Miss Sarah Dines:

The department continues to engage with representative bodies and providers within the sector to increase our understanding of the challenges civil legal aid providers currently face.

We are currently considering our next steps on reviewing the civil legal aid market more widely and we will announce more on this shortly.

In the interim, we are injecting more than £10 million a year into housing legal aid through our reforms to the Housing Possession Court Duty Scheme and £8 million a year into immigration legal aid through the Nationality and Borders Act. Both reforms will lead to increased volumes of work for providers.

■ Legal Aid Scheme: Crimes of Violence and Domestic Abuse**Afzal Khan:**[\[32998\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether his Department is taking steps to improve (a) the availability of and (b) access to legal aid for victims of violence and domestic abuse.

Tom Pursglove:

Domestic abuse is an abhorrent crime and this Government is determined to better protect and support the victims of abuse and their children. On 29 April the Domestic Abuse Act was signed into law, bringing in a wide range of measures to help protect victims and their families.

We want to support victims of domestic abuse for whom legal proceedings can be both traumatic and costly. The proposals put forward in the Means Test Review consultation will make it easier for domestic abuse victims to access legal aid, by making the means test more generous and by excluding disputed assets from the means test where they are the subject of the case. These changes will significantly widen access to legal aid, and we estimate that 2 million more people will have access to legal aid in civil cases) including for victims of domestic abuse, and will make any contributions more affordable.

We also intend to lay secondary legislation in Autumn 2022 to increase the flexibility with which medical professionals can provide supporting evidence to victims of domestic abuse.

■ Legal Aid Scheme: Fees and Charges**Abena Oppong-Asare:**[\[26887\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the proposed 15 per cent increase in legal aid fees in the context of how remuneration from those fees for junior barristers compares with minimum wage.

Abena Oppong-Asare:[\[26888\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he plans to take to (a) improve the retention of criminal barristers and (b) reduce court backlogs.

Abena Oppong-Asare:[\[26889\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of extending the proposed 15 per cent increase in legal aid fees to the approximately 58,000 cases that are currently backlogged in the Crown courts.

Miss Sarah Dines:

We are introducing a 15% uplift across most fee schemes in line with the recommendations made in the Criminal Legal Aid Independent Review. This, alongside longer-term reforms, will increase spend by £135m a year – alongside our investment in court recovery this would take expected criminal legal aid spend to £1.2 billion per year. We have given careful consideration to the idea of increasing fees on current cases but there are a number of reasons why our current approach is the fastest process possible.

The median figure after expenses for specialist criminal barristers in the first three years is around £19,000 with the figure increasing significantly after the first year. Thus, the median income after expenses for barristers with 2 years of practice is around £32,000. Between 3 to 7 years of practice, their median income after expenses is around £50,000. The figures above are based on the evidence published by Independent Review into Criminal Legal Aid. It should be noted that this, in its turn, was based on a common dataset shared by the MoJ and Bar Council, constructed following a data share agreement between the MoJ (Legal Aid Agency), Bar Council and Crown Prosecution Service. It has not been possible to compare our estimates on barristers' annual income after expenses with the minimum wage per hour as we do not hold information on the number of weeks and hours per week that barristers work.

The 15% pay increase would mean a typical criminal barrister earning around £7,000 extra per year. We are moving as quickly as possible to introduce fee rises by the end of September. Solicitors and barristers will start to receive increased fees this year and our modelling suggests that over two thirds of the additional funding will have entered the system within the first year.

Criminal barristers play a crucial role in upholding the rule of law and are a fundamental part of our criminal justice system. Our plans to increase legal aid fees will put criminal legal aid on a sustainable footing and ensure there is a sustainable supply of practitioners.

The Government is committed to supporting recovery across the court system. Over the next three financial years, we are investing an extra £477 million for the Criminal Justice System to help improve waiting times for victims of crime and reduce the Crown Court backlog to an estimated 53,000 cases by March 2025.

The outstanding caseload in the Crown Court has reduced from around 60,600 cases in June 2021 to around 58,300 cases at the end of April 2022.

We have removed the limit of sitting days in the Crown Court for the second year in a row, extended 30 Nightingale courtrooms and raised the mandatory judicial

retirement age from 70 to 75. We have also opened two new 'super courtrooms' in Manchester and Loughborough, allowing up to an extra 250 cases a year to be heard across England and Wales.

We are also expanding our plans for judicial recruitment to secure enough judicial capacity to sit at the required levels in 2022/2023 and beyond.

By the end of March 2023, we expect to get through 20% more Crown Court cases than we did pre-Covid (117,000 in 2022/23 compared to 97,000 in 2019/20).

■ Ministry of Justice: Legal Costs

Jon Trickett: [\[31737\]](#)

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

Miss Sarah Dines:

The information requested could only be obtained at disproportionate cost, as the costs spent on legal disputes are not held in a single format centrally.

■ Offenders: Unemployment

Steve Reed: [\[33787\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether his Department has made an estimate of the costs of unemployment among ex-offenders.

Stuart Andrew:

We know that the economic and social cost of reoffending is approximately £18 billion per year. Evidence also shows that prison leavers who get a job within a year after release are up to nine percentage points less likely to reoffend compared to those who do not.

The proportion of prisoners released from custody employed at six months from their release rose by almost two thirds between April 2021 and March 2022.

We are committed to delivering a presumption in favour of offering offenders the chance to work in prison, on Release on Temporary Licence and on release, including by building stronger links with employers. We are on track to roll out Prison Employment Leads, Employment Hubs and Employment Advisory Boards across all 92 resettlement prisons by April 2023. We are also developing a £21m Employability Innovation Fund to enable more employers to work with prisons and deliver jobs on release.

■ Powers of Attorney

Navendu Mishra: [\[33028\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make an assessment of the impact of the delays in the Office of Public Guardian processing applications for Lasting Power of Attorney on applicants and their families.

Simon Baynes:

The Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) understand that the delays are frustrating for customers, at a time when applicants and their families are planning for their future, which can already be distressing.

A backlog of applications to register lasting powers of attorney built up during the pandemic and, as restrictions eased, there was a subsequent significant increase in the numbers of applications being received. Customers are currently waiting up to 20 weeks for a lasting powers of attorney to be registered, which includes a four-week statutory notice period.

Lasting powers of attorney are tools for long term financial planning, however, in cases where there is an urgent need e.g. if a customer has a terminal illness, OPG do have a process for expediting the registration.

OPG is working hard to improve the service being offered to customers. Frontline operational staff have worked in the office throughout the pandemic and continue to do so, with OPG's Birmingham office operating at maximum capacity. Staff are working day and evening shifts to maximise the use of office space. Managers are also encouraging staff to work overtime through the week and at weekends to increase the volume of lasting powers of attorney being registered. Staff are being recruited on a rolling basis and the use of agency staff is being extended.

■ Prison Accommodation**John Howell:**[\[33746\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Report of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Periodic visit to the United Kingdom carried out by the CPT from 8 to 21 June 2021 and the Government response, when his Department last reviewed the capacity of (a) each prison and (b) the prison estate overall in England and Wales.

Stuart Andrew:

The capacity of each prison and the overall capacity of the prison estate is reviewed on a weekly basis to ensure there are sufficient places for all offenders. Prison numbers can fluctuate, which is why we have a robust set of plans in place to ensure we will always have enough places for offenders sent to custody by the courts.

We are committed to building as many prison places as we need. Over the next ten years, additional capacity will come in to use through new build prison accommodation, existing accommodation returning to use following the completion of essential maintenance or places coming into use following a change in function.

We are investing £3.8 billion to deliver 20,000 additional, modern prison places including 2,000 temporary prison places across England and Wales. This includes refurbishing and building additional houseblocks across existing prison sites and creating four new prisons over the next six years and expanding another four prisons over the next three years. The first of these, HMP Five Wells in Northamptonshire,

opened in February and work is also well underway at HMP Fosse Way, Leicestershire (on the former HMP Glen Parva site).

■ **Prison and Probation Service: Complaints**

Steve Reed: [\[32564\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what guidance Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service has issued on the standard of proof for assessing complaints.

Steve Reed: [\[32565\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make an estimate of the number of prisons that have a process for complainants to state what they want to happen following an investigation into their complaint.

Stuart Andrew:

The current Prisoner Complaints Policy Framework was published in August 2019 and implemented across all prisons in England and Wales. There is a clear requirement within this for staff in all prisons to adopt a problem-solving approach, applying the 'balance of probabilities' level of proof when investigating complaints. Each complaint form gives the prisoner the opportunity to state what they want to see happen as a result of their complaint.

Prisons are required to complete routine checks of samples of complaint forms in order to assure the quality of responses. Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service works closely with the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman to share good practice and feedback and review assurance processes in relation to complaint responses.

Outside of this process, prisoners are also able to submit a Discrimination Incident Reporting Form, if they perceive that they have experienced, or witnessed, an incident of discrimination. This process is confidential, and each incident must be investigated via a designated process within a set timescale.

■ **Prison Service: Ethnic Groups**

Steve Reed: [\[32566\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether HM Prison Service has a target for the number of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff to be in leadership positions within that organisation.

Stuart Andrew:

The Cabinet Office has recently published the Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and specific government-wide targets for senior minority ethnic staff are no longer set. HMPPS currently has a national target for 14% of its workforce to be from an ethnic minority background in accordance with the 2011 Census, but this target is not specific to the senior civil service.

In January 2022, the Ministry of Justice launched the senior civil servant (SCS) Talent Agency. The aim of the Talent Agency is to develop a diverse SCS talent pipeline by supporting upwards progression and assisting with the retention of high

potential senior leaders who identify as ethnically diverse, or as having a disability. This includes the Luminare sponsorship programme which encourages and recognises talented ethnic minority staff and aims to increase ethnic minority representation in SCS roles in MoJ.

■ Prisoners' Incentives and Earned Privileges Scheme

Steve Reed: [\[32562\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prisons have forums in place for prison officers and prisoners to review the fairness and effectiveness of the incentives and earned privileges regime.

Stuart Andrew:

I refer the honourable member to the answer given to PQ 11806 on 13th June 2022.

■ Prisoners' Release

Steve Reed: [\[32561\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether (a) his Department and (b) the Parole Board report on the proportion of prisoners released, broken down by offence and ethnicity.

Stuart Andrew:

Statistics on prisoner releases are published as part of the Offender Management Statistics Quarterly National Statistics publication. This publication provides information about the demographics and characteristics of the prison population, as well as equivalent data for prisoner admissions and releases.

The publication does not currently include a breakdown of prisoner releases by offence and ethnicity; however, the content of the publication is continually under review to ensure that it continues to best meet internal and external needs.

As part of their annual report and accounts for 2020/21, published in October last year, the Parole Board provided data oral hearing outcomes by each ethnicity and gender. This can be found via the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-parole-board-for-england-wales-annual-report-and-accounts-202021>.

■ Prisoners: Location

Kate Green: [\[31829\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average distance was between an offender's home address and the (a) female or (b) male prison they were sent to in each year since 2010.

Tom Pursglove:

There are complex and wide-ranging issues involved in transferring and locating prisoners, and allocation decisions must reflect both the specific needs and

circumstances of the prisoner, including their security assessment, as well as the operating environment and range of services at the receiving prison.

HMPPS is committed to ensuring, where practicable and appropriate, that prisoners are accommodated as close as possible to their resettlement communities and families. Whilst this is a priority, it is not always possible due to a variety of factors, for example where prisoners have specific sentence planning needs which can only be met at certain establishments.

A year-by-year summary of average distance from home, in miles, for all prisoners in female and male prisons and Young Offenders Institutes (YOIs) is listed below. This includes 15-17 year olds living in YOIs. Distances are measured in a straight line between the home address and the prison/YOI currently holding the prisoner, rather than the prison/YOI they were initially sent to.

DATE	AVERAGE DISTANCE FROM HOME – FEMALE PRISONS	AVERAGE DISTANCE FROM HOME – MALE PRISONS	AVERAGE DISTANCE FROM HOME - ALL
14/05/2010	56	51	51
31/03/2011	47	43	43
31/03/2012	45	43	43
31/03/2013	45	44	44
31/03/2014	47	43	43
31/03/2015	44	43	43
31/03/2016	47	43	43
31/03/2017	46	44	45
31/03/2018	48	45	45
31/03/2019	49	45	46
31/03/2020	48	50	50
31/03/2021	47	45	45
31/03/2022	45	45	45

■ Prisoners: Medical Examinations

Steve Reed:

[\[32559\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if his Department will take steps to ensure that the prison system works with the relevant stakeholders to learn from the youth justice

system and adopt a similar model to the Comprehensive Health Assessment Tool for men and women prisoners with built-in evaluation.

Stuart Andrew:

The Comprehensive Health Assessment Tool (CHAT) is a clinical assessment tool developed and managed by the National Health Service (NHS) England who are statutorily responsible for the commissioning and management of healthcare services in both adult and youth custody.

NHS England already have a clinically approved screening tool for adults in custody and are responsible for ensuring this continues to meet the assessment needs of this population.

■ **Prisoners: Mental Illness**

John Howell:

[\[33747\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Report of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Periodic visit to the United Kingdom carried out by the CPT from 8 to 21 June 2021 and the Government response, what steps he will take to help reduce the length of time that prisoners in England and Wales diagnosed with a serious mental illness and who have already been assessed as requiring treatment in a psychiatric hospital remain in prison before being transferred.

Stuart Andrew:

The Ministry of Justice is committed to working with health partners to improve the timeliness of transfers from prison to hospital under the Mental Health Act. As stated in the Government's response to the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment's report, we recognise that in some cases this currently takes far too long.

That is why last month the Government published a draft Mental Health Bill which introduces a new statutory time limit of 28-days for transfers from prisons to hospital. This time limit, together with operational improvements, will help reduce unnecessary delays and ensure people in the criminal justice system receive swift access to treatment.

The draft Bill will also end the use of prison as a 'place of safety'. This will end the practice of courts diverting offenders or defendants requiring assessment and treatment in an inpatient setting to prison when there are no hospital beds available, ensuring vulnerable offenders are able to access the right support in the right environment.

The draft Bill will now be subject to pre-legislative scrutiny.

■ Prisons

John Howell:

[\[33745\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Report of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Periodic visit to the United Kingdom carried out by the CPT from 8 to 21 June 2021 and the Government response, if he will take steps to ensure that (a) all prisoners can benefit from at least one hour of outdoor exercise per day and (b) cells in all prisons in England and Wales measuring less than 8 m² excluding the space taken by the in-cell sanitary annexe are only used for single-occupancy.

Stuart Andrew:

HMPPS is committed to promoting prisoner welfare and wellbeing. This is ensured through a number of procedures and mandatory policies.

In relation to Time in the Open Air, subject to weather conditions and the need to maintain good order and discipline, all prisoners are afforded a minimum of 30 minutes in the open air daily. However, many prisoners may regularly benefit from more, including through participation in activities.

Prison cell occupancy in prisons in England and Wales is certified by the Prison Group Director (PGD) in accordance with the Certified Prisoner Accommodation Framework, which provides guidelines for determining cell capacities. Cells are only shared where a PGD has assessed them to be of an adequate size and condition.

■ Prisons: Carbon Emissions

Steve Reed:

[\[33785\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate his Department has made of the potential cost of decarbonising the prison estate in England and Wales.

Stuart Andrew:

No estimate has been made of the potential cost of decarbonising the prison estate in England and Wales.

We will be publishing our net zero carbon strategy later this year and this will inform the level of investment required to decarbonise the prison estate.

This will build on the progress previously made in reducing MoJ's carbon emissions by 50% to 2021 since 2009/10.

■ Prisons: Restraint Techniques

Steve Reed:

[\[32563\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, in how many prisons governors have ensured that use of force committees are not ethnically homogeneous and include a member with an explicit remit to consider the interests of prisoners.

Stuart Andrew:

I refer the Honourable Member to the answer given on 13 June 2022 to Questions 11807 and 11808: <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-06-01/11807>.

Strategic Lawsuits against Public Participation**Steve Reed:****[33789]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when his Department plans to publish the response to the call for evidence in response to the challenges presented by the increasing use of a form of litigation known collectively as Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation.

Miss Sarah Dines:

The Government hopes to publish its response to the Call for Evidence on Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation very shortly. This response will cover the targeted reforms to prevent and deter SLAPPs which the Government intends to take forward at the earliest opportunity.

Trials: Costs**Steve Reed:****[33788]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate his Department had made of the cost to the public purse of ineffective trials in each of the last five years.

Miss Sarah Dines:

We do not hold this data, on the basis that we do not record and therefore cannot isolate costs in relation to ineffective trials, and in the event of an ineffective trial we would stand up alternative trials where possible.

Youth Courts: Magistrates**Steve Reed:****[32557]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether magistrates follow an agreed number of cases in the youth justice system from start to finish.

Miss Sarah Dines:

Magistrates do not follow an agreed number of cases in the youth justice system from start to finish. If magistrates decide that it is in the interests of justice to adjourn a case, it is then a judicial decision as to whether it is practical and desirable to use the same magistrates at future hearings in the same case.

Youth Justice**Steve Reed:****[32556]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of renaming youth offender panels as local justice panels.

Stuart Andrew:

Youth Offender Panels are used in the delivery of Referral Orders, a type of community sentence for children that was introduced in 1999. The name Youth Offender Panels is included in the legislation, but in practice Youth Offending Teams may (and do) already call them other names such as 'Referral Order Panel' or 'Community Panel'. We have no plans to change the name of Youth Offender Panels in the relevant legislation.

LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES**■ Council Tax: Arrears****Lisa Nandy:****[33773]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if his Department will publish a list of the ten (a) regions, (b) cities and (c) towns with the highest levels of council tax arrears in the UK.

Paul Scully:

The department does not collect council tax arrears data for the whole of the UK or for cities and towns. Data is collected for England by local authorities and the latest data for 2021-22 can be found at the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1084448/Quarterly_return_of_Council_Tax_and_non-domestic_rates_QRC4_2021_to_2022.xlsx.

Total council tax arrears outstanding as at 31 March 2022 can be found in column AC within the 'Data' sheet.

■ Debts**Lisa Nandy:****[33769]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the potential impact of trends in the level of unsecured personal debt on the Government's levelling up agenda.

Lisa Nandy:**[33772]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the effect of trends in the level of council tax arrears on the Government's Levelling Up agenda.

Lia Nici:

The heart of the Government's Levelling Up White paper is focused on building successful and strong places, which are more economically resilient by nature and able to respond to changing economic trends. Alongside this long-term plan, the Government is also delivering national measures to continue to help people in problem debt. Key initiatives include:

- Maintaining record levels of debt advice funding for the Money and Pensions Service (MaPS), bringing the budget for free debt advice in England to over £90 million in 2022-23.
- Launching the Breathing Space scheme in England and Wales last year. The scheme gives eligible people in problem debt who receive professional debt advice access to a 60-day period in which enforcement action is paused and most fees, charges and interest are frozen.
- Developing the Statutory Debt Repayment Plan (SDRP), a statutory agreement that will enable a person in problem debt to combine their debts into a single repayment plan, with payments made over a manageable time period, while receiving legal protections from creditor action for the duration of their plan.

■ Devolution: North Yorkshire

Rachael Maskell: [\[32970\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what progress has been made on the North Yorkshire devolution deal agreement.

Rachael Maskell: [\[32971\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what the timetable is for the North Yorkshire devolution deal agreement, including the election of a mayor.

Rachael Maskell: [\[32972\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps he is taking to support future economic investment in devolution deals (a) in North Yorkshire and (b) nationally.

Rachael Maskell: [\[32973\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps he is taking to determine the budget for the North Yorkshire devolution deal.

Rachael Maskell: [\[32974\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what stakeholders his Department has engaged with regarding the North Yorkshire devolution deal.

Rachael Maskell: [\[32975\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether he plans to meet with hon. Members with constituencies in North Yorkshire before publishing the North Yorkshire devolution deal.

Rachael Maskell: [\[32976\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what plans he has to support engagement of communities in North Yorkshire with the new North Yorkshire devolution deal.

Lia Nici:

[Holding answer 13 July 2022]: The Government is committed to the clear vision and direction that was set out in the Levelling Up White Paper. This includes delivering our mission to empower local leaders and communities through extending devolution across England. The Government has engaged extensively with local authorities in the area and negotiations for a devolution deal for York and North Yorkshire are now in their final stages. The devolution of specific budgets will be subject to agreement through these negotiations.

■ Levelling Up Fund**Charlotte Nichols:**[\[31935\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether he plans to provide additional funding for the Levelling Up Fund after the completion of the second round of allocations.

Lia Nici:

The £4.8 billion Levelling Up Fund invests in infrastructure that improves everyday life for local residents across the UK, focusing on regenerating town centres and high streets, upgrading local transport, and investing in cultural and heritage assets.

We are determined to learn all the lessons we can in continuing to improve our support for local places. We are therefore not yet committing to the timing or format of future rounds of the Fund and have encouraged applicants who are in a position to do so to submit bids for the current round of the Fund.

NORTHERN IRELAND**■ Abortion: Northern Ireland****Peter Kyle:**[\[33873\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what steps he is taking to uphold the legal requirement to ensure access to abortion services in Northern Ireland.

Shailesh Vara:

The UK Government remains committed to delivering abortion services in Northern Ireland following inaction from the Northern Ireland Executive and Department of Health. It is unacceptable that fully funded abortion services remain undelivered and women and girls in Northern Ireland cannot access the same level of abortion healthcare as the rest of the UK.

I am taking the necessary steps and am determined to see the delivery of these vital healthcare services in Northern Ireland without further unnecessary delays.

■ Belfast Agreement: European Convention on Human Rights

Peter Kyle: [\[33872\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, if he will make an assessment of the potential impact of leaving the European Convention on Human Rights on the Belfast Agreement.

Conor Burns:

The Belfast/Good Friday Agreement contains safeguards to protect the rights of all sections of the community. The Agreement also requires domestic implication of the ECHR into Northern Ireland law which is enacted through the Human Rights Act 1998.

■ Northern Ireland Office: Advertising

Jon Trickett: [\[34823\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how much their Department has spent on advertising in (a) 2020, (b) 2021 and (c) 2022.

Conor Burns:

The Northern Ireland Office spent the following on advertising:

(a) 2020 - £72,110

(b) 2021 - £26,353

(c) January-May 2022 - £19,572

PRIME MINISTER

■ Employment

Sir Stephen Timms: [\[33662\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, pursuant to the Answer of 23 June 2022 to Question 18053 on total UK employment levels, what plans he has to correct the record, with a Ministerial Correction in the Official Report, in respect of oral contributions of (a) 24 November 2021, Official Report, column 344, (b) 5 January 2022, Official Report, column 11, (c) 5 January 2022, Official Report, column 14, (d) 5 January 2022, Official Report, column 15, (e) 12 January 2022, Official Report, columns 567-8, (f) 19 January 2022, Official Report, column 323, (g) 2 February 2022, Official Report, columns 268-9, (h) 23 February 2022, Official Report, column 314 and (i) 20 April 2022, Official Report, column 155.

Boris Johnson:

My answer of 23 June 2022 to PQ 18053, and my letter of 26 April 2022 to the Liaison Committee (a copy of which was placed in the Library of the House), clarified my previous answers about employment levels in the UK.

TRANSPORT**■ Airport and Ground Operations Support Scheme**

Mike Kane: [\[33793\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he received representations from representatives of industry on continuing the Airport and Ground Operations Support Scheme beyond January 2022.

Robert Courts:

We have received a large number of representations on a variety of issues from industry, all which are considered carefully.

Since the start of the pandemic, DfT estimates that the air transport sector (airlines, airport and related services) have benefitted from around £8bn of support, including grant awards made by the Airport and Ground Operations Support Scheme.

Since the UK became the first major economy in the world to remove all COVID-19 travel rules for anyone entering the UK on 18 March, now is the right time to start looking ahead to the future. We continue to take a flexible approach and keep all impacts and policies under review.

■ Aviation: Standards

Mike Kane: [\[33790\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when the new Aviation Passenger Charter will be published.

Robert Courts:

As announced in the Flightpath to the future and the recent plans for minimising disruption, Government is working alongside aviation industry, consumer and disability groups to develop the Aviation Passenger Charter.

The Charter will help passengers understand their rights and responsibilities when travelling by air.

The Charter will be published shortly.

Mike Kane: [\[33792\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether (a) additional enforcement powers for the Civil Aviation Authority and (b) other consumer protections for air passengers will be implemented before the House rises for the Summer Adjournment on 21 July 2022.

Robert Courts:

The Department for Transport recently consulted on a range of aviation consumer policy reforms, including additional powers for the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) as the Regulator for aviation, to enforce consumer rights.

The consultation closed on the 27 March and we are conducting a comprehensive analysis and review of the responses. We will publish the Government's response

and set out next steps, including consideration of any potential legislative requirements, in due course.

■ **Cycling and Walking: Finance**

Gill Furniss: [\[33883\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Answer of 8 June 2020 to Question 49717 on Cycling and Walking: Finance, when he will publish the Cycling Insights part of the research commissioned by his Department to assess what funding is required to meet its targets for increased cycling and walking by 2025.

Trudy Harrison:

The publication of this part of the research was delayed in 2020 owing to the pandemic and other pressures. However, this research underpinned the development of the second Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS2) which was published on 6 July 2022.

■ **Cycling: Training**

Catherine West: [\[32600\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will put in place a new sustainable funding settlement for cycle training budgets in local authorities.

Trudy Harrison:

The Department for Transport has provided a record £20million funding for Bikeability cycle training in English local authorities outside London in 2022/23. Funding for the Bikeability programme in subsequent years, as well as revenue funding settlements for local authorities which support a range of activities including cycle training, will be a matter for Active Travel England and will come from the £710 million provided for walking and cycling at the last Spending Review. Funding for Bikeability in London is a matter for the Mayor.

■ **Electric Scooters: Pilot Schemes**

Gill Furniss: [\[33881\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he plans to publish data from the monitoring and evaluation programme on e-scooters.

Gill Furniss: [\[33882\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he plans to publish data from the monitoring and evaluation programme on e-scooters in advance of bringing forward legislative proposals on the future of transport.

Trudy Harrison:

The Department will be publishing a full set of findings from its evaluation of the e-scooter trials in a report in due course.

■ Electric Vehicles: Bicycles

Drew Hendry:

[\[33834\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential impact on safe traffic flows of (a) allowing the unlicensed road usage by cyclists of gradient dependent dynamic variable electric bike motor power outputs over 250w, (b) motor output limitations on electric bike journey types and (c) gradient altered bike speeds.

Trudy Harrison:

The Department has not made a detailed assessment of the impact that this would have on traffic flows, but any impact would be likely to be minimal. Most e-cycles already allow the rider to increase or reduce the amount of electrical assistance being provided, thus allowing more assistance to be provided in hillier settings if the rider wishes it. The current speed and power restrictions for Electrically Assisted Pedal Cycles (EAPCs) are in place for public safety. At speeds higher than 15.5mph, there is the potential for the rider to cause serious injury to themselves and others.

The Department reviewed the case for amending the current speed and power restrictions as part of the Future of Transport Regulatory Review Call for Evidence published in 2020 and has no plans to amend the existing regulations.

■ Immigration Controls

Louise Haigh:

[\[33865\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, on what dates the joint Home Office and Department for Transport Ministerial Border Group has met to identify and prepare for high levels of demand at the UK border; and which Ministers have attended at each of the Group's meetings since its inception.

Robert Courts:

The Ministerial Group on Airport Border Operations, between the Department for Transport and the Home Office was established in early 2022. It is chaired by the Minister for Security and Borders and membership extends to the Minister for Safe and Legal Migration and the Minister for Aviation.

The group has met four times this year; on 18 January, 28 March, 12 April and 4 July. On 12 May myself and the Minister for Security and Borders met with CEOs from across the aviation industry.

■ Rail People Solutions: Contracts

Louise Haigh:

[\[33861\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the contract published on 18 June 2022 with Rail People Solutions Ltd, if he will publish the Work Package Request; and what services will be provided as part of that request.

Wendy Morton:

Due to the commercially sensitive nature of the procurement and the awarded contract, the Department does not intend to publish the documents.

■ Railway Stations: Disability**Afzal Khan:**[\[33916\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when his Department plans to announce a timetable for submissions to the Access for All Programme in Control Period Seven.

Wendy Morton:

I recently commissioned the next round of nominations for the Access for All programme, with a deadline of 16 September. Any station in Great Britain without an accessible route into the station, to and between all platforms will be a potential candidate.

■ Railways: Overcrowding**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[\[33892\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what his Department's policy is on whether standard class passengers on services operated under passenger service contracts should be permitted to sit in first class on overcrowded services.

Wendy Morton:

In order to ensure that train capacity is appropriately managed all train operating companies have the option to declassify first class and allow standard class passengers to sit in first class accommodation.

■ Strategic Risk Group**Louise Haigh:**[\[33863\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, on what dates the Strategic Risk Group that is chaired by Ministers and attended by the CEOs of airline, airport and ground handler companies has met since its inception.

Louise Haigh:[\[33864\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many times the Summer Resilience Group has met since being established; on what dates those meetings took place; and whether he attended.

Robert Courts:

The Summer Resilience Group is a Senior Official operations group that meets weekly and brings together officials from DfT, Border Force, Treasury and No.10 with Operations Directors from across industry to assess at a granular level the resilience of the sector and mitigations. This group has met seven times to date and will continue to meet throughout the summer.

I chair the weekly Strategic Risk Group, as the Minister for Aviation, which brings together senior executives from across the aviation sector. To date this has met five times and will continue to meet throughout the summer.

■ WPP: Contracts

Louise Haigh:

[\[33862\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the £11,400,000 Creative Agency Services published on 21 May 2021 and awarded to the VMLY&R division of WPP Brands, what content was developed as part of that contract; and whether that content was used to support ministerial social media output.

Trudy Harrison:

The Creative Agency Services contract supports DfT communications with the strategic development, production and distribution of campaign creative across a variety of policy areas and audiences. The remit covers some well-established campaigns as well as the potential to develop and deliver new campaigns. Existing campaigns include THINK! Road Safety and Inclusive Transport 'it's everyone's journey' along with activity on E10 Biofuel. Social media content would be one of the many campaign deliverables. However, it is used to support specific behaviour change campaigns rather than directly developing content specifically or solely for minister's own channels.

TREASURY

■ Airlines: Contracts

Kirsten Oswald:

[\[33813\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 30 June 2022 to Question 25897 on Airlines: Contracts, what recent assessment he has made of the impact on (a) tax revenues and (b) the UK economy of UK-based airlines utilising non-UK-based sub-contractors on an aircraft, crew, maintenance and insurance basis for passenger flights originating in the UK.

Alan Mak:

UK airlines lease aircraft and crew from foreign airlines to provide additional capacity, often during the summer holiday peak. The flexibility to bring in additional capacity for limited periods is welcomed by the UK's largest carriers to manage seasonal peaks or when aircraft and crew are otherwise unavailable.

This summer has seen an increase in this type of activity for several reasons including shortage of aircraft and of cabin crew.

How the leasing of foreign aircraft and crew develops is something the Government will keep under review as the market recovers and evolves following the COVID-19 pandemic.

■ Beer and Cider: Excise Duties

Owen Thompson: [\[32978\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of adopting equal tax treatment for beer and cider.

Alan Mak:

The Government is currently undertaking a review of alcohol duties in order to simplify the system and make it fairer overall, including ensuring beer and cider both pay duty according to their alcoholic strength.

■ Bereavement Benefits: Remarriage

Owen Thompson: [\[32982\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will hold discussions with Cabinet colleagues on setting a timetable for amending the rules on entitlement to a Widow's or Widower's Pension for people who remarry.

Richard Fuller:

There are currently no plans to amend existing rules regarding the treatment of survivor pensions upon remarriage in public service pension schemes (PSPS). While some PSPS include provisions for ceasing the payment of survivor pensions upon remarriage, these have been removed in reformed PSPS introduced from 2015.

■ Car Allowances

John McNally: [\[31863\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 16 June 2022 to Question 17079 on Car Allowances, if his Department will make an estimate of the number of employers who reimburse the actual mileage cost incurred rather than using Approved Mileage Allowance Payments; and if he will adjust the 45p per mile allowance.

Alan Mak:

The Government sets the Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (AMAP) rates to minimise administrative burdens. As set out in the answer to Question 17079, the AMAP rates are advisory and therefore employers are not required to use them.

AMAPs are reimbursed free from Income Tax and National Insurance Contributions. This is also the case when an employer chooses to reimburse the actual mileage cost or pay another rate where there is no profit element for the employee. These payments are not declared to HMRC. The Government does not have an estimate of the number of employers reimbursing the actual cost.

As with all taxes and allowances, the Government keeps the AMAP rates under review and any changes are considered by the Chancellor.

■ Debts

Lisa Nandy: [\[33770\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate his Department has made of (a) regional variations in and (b) which (i) regions and (ii) towns and cities have the highest personal debt levels.

Lisa Nandy: [\[33771\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of (a) the regional variations in problem debt levels in the UK, (b) which regions in the UK have the highest problem debt levels and (c) which towns and cities in the UK have the highest problem debt levels.

Richard Fuller:

To inform policy making, the Government is committed to understanding personal debt levels across the UK and at a regional level; it does this by drawing on a number of different data sources. This is used to help individuals manage their money well, encourage them to build their financial resilience and seek appropriate help if they need support with their personal finances

Relevant organisations measure personal debt levels and define 'problem debt' in different ways. HM Treasury do not hold data on levels of personal debt or problem debt but monitors these measures regularly by working closely with the Money and Pensions Service (MaPS), the Financial Conduct Authority and by engaging with the debt advice sector and other relevant stakeholders on their research and findings.

The latest data on people's personal finances were published by MaPS on 23 February 2022. MaPS monitors financial difficulty through an annual survey of 22,000 individuals. This includes a regional breakdown of how the need for debt advice changed since 2019 across the UK. The MaPS data shows that every region and nation of the UK has seen an increase in the number of people needing advice since 2019, and that the concentration of need is highest in London, the West Midlands and the North of England. The summary of their findings can be found in the link below:

[Who needs debt advice in 2022? | The Money and Pensions Service \(maps.org.uk\)](#)

MaPS also intends to publish constituency-level results later this year.

■ Electronic Government: Proof of Identity

Paul Blomfield: [\[31827\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will hold discussions with Cabinet colleagues on the potential merits of permitting the use of identity documents other than a passport and driving license for verifying Government Gateway accounts.

Lucy Frazer:

Before sharing any personal data with a customer online the Government have a duty to establish their identity to a sufficient degree of confidence. The Government aims

to strike a balance between making this journey as straightforward as we can for customers but, at the same time, setting the bar high enough to deter fraudsters.

When asked to prove their identity, customers are currently able to select two items from the following where they are available:

- Tax credit claim details
- P60 or most recent payslips
- UK passports
- Information held on credit file (such as loans, credit cards or mortgages)
- Self-assessment tax return details
- Northern Ireland and British driving licences

Most customers can use Government services securely online, but we do recognise that not every customer currently can. HMRC is constantly working on the Government Gateway service and the identity verification capability that supports it to help more people gain access while keeping customer information secure. Some of these developments include:

- Following discussions with the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency the UK driving licence was added as an additional evidence source within the HMRC identity verification service on 1 July 2022; and
- Government Digital Service (GDS) is developing a new mobile app that will allow people to use the camera on their smartphone/device to confirm a match with photographic identification, starting with the driving licence but extending to support other biometric documents over time. HMRC will be adopting this from the summer, giving some of our customers an alternative way to prove their identity. HMRC will be working with GDS to make it available to more customers in phases.

In the longer term, HMRC intends to move services to One Login for Government, the new cross-government sign-on and identity verification system being developed by GDS. HMRC is working closely with GDS on the design and development of the new service to ensure it best meets the needs of all our customers.

■ Financial Services: Standards

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[31744\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to raise standards in finance with a fair trading mark.

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[31745\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will consider supporting the work of FairLife to raise standards in finance by adopting a fair trading mark for financial firms.

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[31746\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will meet with FairLife to discuss the potential merits of a fair trading mark for firms in the financial sector.

Richard Fuller:

The Government wants to ensure that everyone, regardless of their background or income, has access to useful and affordable financial products and services. These include products and services such as banking, payment services, credit products and insurance.

The Government also shares FairLife's aims of ensuring that people build financial capability, meaning that they are able to use, and maximise their use of, products and services made available by the financial services industry.

Government policy on financial capability focuses on ensuring that people can access the guidance they need and have the confidence and skills to manage their money well.

To promote financial inclusion and capability, the Government works closely together with regulators and stakeholders from the public, private and third sectors. The Chancellor, the Economic Secretary to the Treasury and HMT officials regularly meet with a wide range of organisations to exchange views, collaborate and inform our policy development and delivery. The government would welcome a discussion with FairLife as part of this engagement and HM Treasury officials will get in touch with them to arrange this.

■ Fuels: Excise Duties**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[31752\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of introducing a rebate on fuel duty of 15 pence per litre for (a) hauliers, (b) coach operators and (c) other essential road users.

Alan Mak:

At Spring Statement 2022, in response to high fuel prices, the Government announced a temporary 12-month cut to duty on petrol and diesel of 5p per litre. This represents a tax cut worth £2.4 billion in 2022-23, benefiting anyone who consumes fuel across the UK – including hauliers, coach operators and other essential road users.

All taxes remain under review.

■ Individual Savings Accounts**Paula Barker:** [\[32632\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of increasing the age limit for a Lifetime ISA, in the context of people saving to buy a home.

Richard Fuller:

The Lifetime ISA (LISA) was designed as a long-term savings product intended to support younger people saving for their first home, or for later life. Since April 2017, adults under 40 have been able to open a LISA and save up to £4,000 each year until they reach 50. The government provides a 25% bonus on all LISA contributions within these limits.

The government considers that those over the age of 40 are less likely to be first time buyers, and the Government's consultation on pensions tax relief in 2015 showed that younger people were in particular need of alternative support to save.

However, individuals aged 40 or over who have not previously opened a LISA are still able to save into another ISA type, benefitting from the annual subscription limit to £20,000.

The Government has no current plans to amend the terms of the LISA but keeps all aspects of savings tax policy under review.

■ Personal Savings: Statistics**Beth Winter:**[\[31938\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions he has had with the ONS on the potential merits of the ONS producing official statistics on average savings per household.

Richard Fuller:

The ONS publishes official aggregate data on household finances, including savings, as part of the UK Quarterly National Accounts. Latest data for Q1 2022 shows total household currency and deposits (a measure of household savings) were around £2 trillion.

The ONS also publishes data at an individual household level measuring household wealth as part of the Wealth and Assets Survey. This survey measures the well-being of households and individuals in terms of their assets, savings, debt and planning for retirement, with the latest data covering the period April 2018 to March 2020.

The ONS routinely engage with users of official statistics and review existing publications on an ongoing basis.

■ Private Rented Housing: Tax Allowances**Mr Gregory Campbell:**[\[33719\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of reviewing buy to let tax relief in the context of the difference in mortgage interest cost for a limited company and a private landlord.

Lucy Frazer:

Property income for unincorporated landlords is taxed through the Income Tax system and is taxed through the Corporate Tax system for incorporated landlords.

The Income Tax and Corporate Tax systems are not directly comparable, as they offer different rates of tax and reliefs, reflecting the different nature of the taxpayers.

From April 2017 to April 2020, the Government phased in a restriction of deductions for finance costs for landlords of residential properties to the equivalent of the basic rate of Income Tax. The restriction makes the tax system fairer by ensuring unincorporated landlords with higher incomes no longer receive the most generous tax treatment. As with all aspects of the tax system, the Government keeps these reliefs under review and will set out any reforms at a future fiscal event.

■ Social Security Benefits: Russia

Gareth Thomas: [\[31714\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what information his Department holds on whether any benefits payments the Government has made in the last 12 months into a UK bank account have then been transferred into a Russian bank account.

Gareth Thomas: [\[31715\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether HM Revenue and Customs is taking steps to prevent benefits payments made to a UK bank account from transfer into a Russian bank account.

Lucy Frazer:

HMRC does not have jurisdiction over any onwards transfer of a benefit payment made to a UK bank account into a Russian bank account.

HMRC does not hold information on whether any benefits payments the Government has made in the last 12 months into a UK bank account have then been transferred into a Russian bank account.

■ Taxation

Sarah Olney: [\[33884\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many higher rate taxpayers there were in each constituency in each of the last three years.

Lucy Frazer:

Estimates of the number of individuals paying the higher rate of Income Tax, including additional rate taxpayers, by parliamentary constituency for the tax years 2017-18 to 2019-20, which are the latest available, are provided in the attached table.

It is worth noting that a taxpayer's country and region are determined by residential postcode. Projections of taxpayer numbers by country and region beyond the 2019-20 outturn are based on economic outturn data and forecast assumptions applying to the UK as a whole. As such, the latest available dataset to provide the requested information is based on the 2019-20 tax year.

Attachments:

1. Supporting table for PQ 33884 [Supporting table for PQ 33884.xlsx]

■ Treasury: Deltapoll

Emily Thornberry:

[\[33731\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the (a) dates, (b) locations and (c) target group were, defined by demographic breakdown, work status or age of the twice-weekly focus groups, carried out for his Department by Deltapoll Ltd. between 1 February 2022 and 5 July 2022 under the terms of procurement contract reference CCZZ21A48.

Alan Mak:

Details of focus group activity carried out by Deltapoll upon instruction from HM Treasury between 1 February 2022 and 5 July 2022 are detailed below.

Unless otherwise specified two groups per week were undertaken. Groups were split by the demographic detailed in the demographic information column.

DATE	LOCATION	DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION
WC 28 March 2022	Yorkshire and the Humber	Age
WC 5 April 2022	East of England	Gender
WC 18 April	South East	Gender
WC 25 April	West Midlands	Age
WC 2 May 2022	North East	Age
WC 9 May	North East	Age
WC 17 May	North West	Gender
WC 23 May	East Midlands	Income
WC 30 May	Yorkshire and the Humber	Gender
WC 6 June 2022	Wales	Age
WC 13 June	London	Ethnicity
WC 20 June	Midlands	Age
WC 27 June	East of England	Age
WC 4 July 2022	South West	Urban status

■ Treasury: Electronic Purchasing Card Solution

Emily Thornberry:

[\[31799\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people held electronic purchasing cards that allowed them to make purchases against his Department's budget as of 31 March 2022.

Alan Mak:

As of 31 March 2022, 100 procurement cards were held by individuals to make purchases against HMT's departmental budget.

■ **Treasury: Hanbury Strategy**

Emily Thornberry:[\[33730\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the (a) dates, (b) locations and (c) target group were, defined by demographic breakdown, work status or age of the twice-weekly focus groups carried out for his Department by Hanbury Strategy Ltd. between 1 January 2021 and 31 January 2022 under the terms of procurement contract reference CCZZ20A84.

Alan Mak:

Details of focus group activity carried out by Hanbury Strategy upon instruction from HM Treasury between 1 January 2021 and 31 January 2022 are detailed below.

Unless otherwise specified two groups per week were undertaken. Groups were split by the demographic detailed in the demographic information column.

DATE	LOCATION	DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION
W/C 11 January 2021	South West	Income
W/C 18 January	North East	Age
W/C 25 January	East Midlands	Age
W/C 1 February 2021	South West	Income
W/C 8 February	East England	Urban status
W/C 15 February	West Midlands	Gender
W/C 22 February	North West	Gender
W/C 1 March 2021	West Midlands	Age
W/C 1 March	West Midlands	Age
W/C 8 March	Yorkshire and the Humber	Furlough status
W/C 15 March	Scotland	<i>Information not held</i>
W/C 22 March	Wales	Gender
W/C 29 March	England	Ethnicity
W/C 12 April	England	Age
W/C 26 April	England	Age

DATE	LOCATION	DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION
W/C 10 May 2021	North East, North West, Midlands, Yorkshire and Humber	Urban status
W/C 17 May	South East	Age
W/C 25 May	South West	Urban status
W/C 7 June 2021	East of England	Furlough status
W/C 14 June	England (excl. London)	Self-employed
W/C 21 June	West Midlands	Furlough status
W/C 28 June	North East	Age
W/C 5 July	London	Age
W/C 12 July	South West	Age
W/C 19 July	North West	Age
W/C 26 July	South East	Urban status
W/C 9 August 2021	East Midlands	Age
W/C 16 August	London, North East	Ethnicity and gender
W/C 23 August	West Midlands	Electric vehicles / petrol and diesel users
WC 30 August	North West	Age
WC 6 September 2021	East of England	Age
WC 13 September	Scotland	Independence view
WC 20 September	Yorkshire and the Humber	Furlough status
WC 27 September	Wales	Age
WC 4 October 2021	South West	Age
WC 11 October	North East	Age
WC 18 October	North West	Age
WC 25 October	Midlands	Age
WC 1 November 2021	South East	Age
WC 8 November	Yorkshire and the Humber	Income

DATE	LOCATION	DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION
WC 15 November	East of England	Age
WC 22 November	South West	Age
WC 29 November	North East	Age
WC 6 December 2021	East Midlands	Employment status
WC 13 December	Scotland	Independence

■ Wealth

Richard Burgon: [\[31172\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an estimate of the number of people with wealth over £10 million in each of the past 10 years.

Lucy Frazer:

The tax information HMRC holds does not include comprehensive data on the wealth of taxpayers.

The Office for National Statistics undertakes a Wealth and Assets survey biennially, which can be found here:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/personalandhouseholdfinances/incomeandwealth/datasets/totalwealthwealthingreatbritain>.

Table 2.5 provides a percentage of households estimated to have wealth of over £1 million. The most recent estimate was 17 per cent of households.

WALES

■ Borderlands Line

Alison McGovern: [\[32951\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, with reference to the Bidston to Wrexham railway line, when the increased service will be delivered.

Sir Robert Buckland:

Cross-border services between Wrexham and Bidston are operated by Transport for Wales. Passenger services are a devolved matter in Wales and therefore Transport for Wales is the responsibility of the Welsh Government.

Alison McGovern: [\[32952\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, whether he plans to take steps to help reduce journey times on the Bidston to Wrexham line.

Sir Robert Buckland:

The UK Government recognises the importance of cross-border connectivity, including the Wrexham to Bidston line. This is why we commissioned Sir Peter Hendy to conduct his review into Union Connectivity.

The final report of the Union Connectivity Review contains recommendations which aim to improve connectivity in North Wales and the Mersey Dee region. The Government is considering the Review's recommendations carefully before responding.

River Wye: Pollution Control

Sir Bill Wiggin: [\[32483\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure that the Welsh Government fulfils its obligations to reduce pollution in the River Wye.

Sir Bill Wiggin: [\[32484\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, whether he has had recent discussions with the Welsh Government on ensuring that pollution in cross-border watercourses is a priority for both governments.

Sir Bill Wiggin: [\[32485\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what discussions his Department has had with the Government in Wales on Natural Resources Wales fulfilling its obligation on helping to reduce pollution in the River Wye.

Sir Bill Wiggin: [\[32486\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, whether he has had recent discussions with the Welsh Government on pollution in the River Wye.

Sir Bill Wiggin: [\[32487\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, whether he has had recent discussions with the Welsh Government on the effectiveness of Natural Resources Wales.

Sir Bill Wiggin: [\[32488\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, whether he has had recent discussions with the Welsh Government on (a) phosphate pollution in waters in Wales and (b) what steps that government will take to stop pollution travelling downstream into England.

David T C Davies:

River pollution is the responsibility of Defra and their Arms-Length Body the Environment Agency (EA) in England. Defra is committed to improving the water environment and will continue to work with the EA and Natural Resources Wales (NRW) to ensure there is a coordinated response to the management of cross-border watercourses.

The EA and NRW have good working relationships, thereby ensuring consistency and joint working across the border. Both organisations are continuously improving the way they work together to increase effectiveness. Some activities that are currently being improved are the consistency of monitoring and data analysis. This will ensure both bodies have a strong evidence base from which to make decisions.

Examples of this close working relationship include the publication of the River Dee Basin Management Plan – which covers areas in England – by NRW and the development of the River Basin Management Plan for the River Severn – which also includes the Wye Catchment – which will be published by the EA later this year.

Defra understand that the build-up of phosphates in the Wye catchment from the overuse of fertilisers and animal manure will take time to reduce due to its dependence on natural processes. However, work is under way to accelerate reductions in phosphate pollution from wastewater treatment in the River Wye through catchment partnerships, such as the Nutrient Management Board.

The EA believes the Nutrient Management Board remains the right mechanism and collective group to drive action in the Wye catchment. It is working with the Nutrient Management Board members, such as Natural England, NRW, Herefordshire Council and Powys Council, on improving the effectiveness of the Nutrient Management Board because all parties agree there needs to be more action to improve the River Wye's water quality. Some of the improvements have been seen at the March 2022 Board meeting, and some are ongoing and will take a little longer to embed.

Regarding the effectiveness of NRW, I have recently written to Julie James MS, the Welsh Government Minister responsible for NRW to ask her about the speed of its energy consents.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ **Asbestos: Industrial Diseases**

Tony Lloyd:

[\[32476\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, in the context of potential closure of her Department's Phoenix House office in Barrow-in-Furness, whether her Department has taken steps to maintain knowledge and experience of staff dealing with claims arising from asbestos exposure.

Julie Marson:

Following the plans to close Phoenix House being announced in 2017, resources have been increased other locations, and capability is being built in these locations which includes those cases arising from asbestos exposure.

Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (IIDB) is delivered by experienced teams in three sites, the planned closure of Barrow-in-Furness means that work currently undertaken in this site will be delivered from our other IIDB teams based in Barnsley and Bradford.

Transfer of work will be done in a seamless way, with no degradation of service to our customers, including those customers who claim with asbestos related diseases, or under schemes such as the “ *Workers’ Compensation Scheme, Pneumoconiosis (Workers’ Compensation) Act 1979 and the 2008 Mesothelioma Scheme.*”

■ **Disability Living Allowance: Newport West**

Ruth Jones: **[33925]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people were in receipt of the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance in Newport West constituency.

Chloe Smith:

The latest quarterly statistics for the number of people who received the higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance, by Westminster Parliamentary Constituency, are published on Stat-Xplore here:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk>

Guidance for users is available at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Getting-Started.html>

■ **Social Security Benefits: Russia**

Gareth Thomas: **[31711]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether any benefit payments made by her Department into a UK bank account have been transferred into a Russian bank account in the last six months.

Gareth Thomas: **[31712]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether her Department is taking steps to prevent benefit payments made to a UK bank account from transfer into a Russian bank account.

Guy Opperman:

The government have imposed sanctions on Russian banks. This means the Department has suspended the payment of the State Pension – the only benefit affected by this action - due to those claimants where payment was going directly to any Russian bank which has been sanctioned under The Russia (Sanctions) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. For claimants who are not sanctioned as individuals under the above Regulations, if they open an alternative account with a non-sanctioned bank then payment will resume.

The transfer of payments from a UK account to any other account is by agreement between the claimant and the receiving bank. The department would not be aware and in terms of the individual’s entitlement to the benefit being received, does not need to be aware of any such agreement. If there was an agreement to transfer

money to a Russian account, then the banking protocols arising from the above legislation would have applied to regulate the transfer.

■ **Sodium Hypochlorite: Health and Safety**

Dame Angela Eagle: **[33036]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the impact of shortages of sodium hypochlorite on the Health and Safety Executive's ability to maintain health and safety standards.

Chloe Smith:

I refer my Honourable Friend to the answer I gave on 12/07/22 to her previous question, [UIN 32479](#).

■ **Sodium Hypochlorite: Shortages**

Dame Angela Eagle: **[33714]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what contingency plans her Department has in place to support the Health and Safety Executive in the event that the shortage of sodium hypochlorite continues.

Chloe Smith:

I refer my Honourable Friend to the answer I gave on 12th July to her previous question, [UIN 32479](#).

■ **Universal Credit**

Justin Madders: **[33038]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will publish a breakdown of the reasons for Universal Credit deductions to awards for claimants.

David Rutley:

Below are the liabilities or debts for which a Universal Credit deduction can be made:

DEDUCTION TYPE

Benefit Transfer Advance

Budgeting Advance

Change of Circumstances Advance

New Claim Advance

DWP Benefit Fraud Overpayments

DWP Benefit Overpayments

DWP Recoverable Hardship Payments

Housing Benefit and DWP Administrative Penalties

DEDUCTION TYPE

Housing Benefit and DWP Civil Penalties

Housing Benefit Fraud Overpayment

Housing Benefit Overpayment

Social Fund Loans

Tax Credit Overpayments

Child Maintenance

Council Tax Arrears

Electricity Arrears

Electricity Ongoing Consumption

Eligible Loan Arrears

Fines

Gas Arrears

Gas Ongoing Consumption

Home Office Integration Loan Arrears

Rent or Service Charge Arrears

Water Arrears

Water Ongoing Consumption

MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ Cystic Fibrosis: Mental Health Services

Peter Dowd:

[\[25891\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of (a) paediatric and (b) adult cystic fibrosis centres in England did not provide at least 85 per cent of their patients with psychological support at their annual review, in each year since 2015.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 14 July 2022. The correct answer should have been:

Gillian Keegan:

This information is not held in the format requested.

However, tables showing the number of centres where the percentage of adult cystic fibrosis patients and child cystic fibrosis patients seen by a clinical psychologist within 12 months prior to latest annual review was less than 85% in each year since 2016/2017 are attached.

This data has been submitted to NHS England on a voluntary basis during the pandemic. From April 2022, providers were asked to resume such reporting.

Attachments:

1. **FORMATTED TABLE FOR MINISTERIAL CLEARANCE PQ25891 Data Tables.docx**

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

CABINET OFFICE

■ UK 2021 Presidency of the G7

Minister for the Cabinet Office and HM Paymaster General (Michael Ellis):
[\[HCWS203\]](#)

I would like to update Parliament on the outcomes of the UK's G7 Presidency in 2021 and the costs of the 2021 G7 Summit in Carbis Bay, Cornwall.

As the most prominent grouping of democratic countries, the G7 has long been the catalyst for decisive international action to tackle the greatest challenges we face. Alongside leaders from G7 nations and the EU, the Prime Minister also invited leaders from Australia, India, the Republic of Korea and South Africa to attend the Summit as guest countries. Between them, the leaders represented almost two-thirds of people living in democracies around the world.

The Summit in Cornwall was the first in-person gathering of G7 leaders in almost two years and was a crucial opportunity to build back better from the Covid-19 pandemic, uniting to make the future fairer, greener and more prosperous.

Under the UK's leadership, the G7 made major achievements during the course of last year's Presidency, both through the Leaders' Summit and a series of Ministerial policy tracks. These include:

- Ending financing for coal power, which was then adopted by 25 nations and major finance institutions at COP26;
- A global commitment to protect, conserve or restore 30% of land and ocean areas by 2030 (the 30 by 30 initiative), which was then adopted by 70 countries at COP26;
- Establishing the G7 Partnership for Infrastructure and Investment which will support the developing world to invest in clean, green infrastructure;
- A commitment to provide a combined total of 1 billion Covid-19 vaccines to poorer countries in order to vaccinate the world by the end of 2022, support for a 'Global Pandemic Radar' to spot pathogens before they spread and develop the ability to create new vaccines, treatments and tests in 100 days;
- A collective G7 pledge of at least \$2.75 billion funding over the next five years for the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) replenishment, and a G7 endorsement of two new global girls' education targets to ensure that, by 2026, 40 million more girls are in school and 20 million more girls are reading by the age of 10 or by the end of primary school.
- More than 130 countries (representing more than 90% of world GDP) signed up to a new international corporate tax framework, including working to implement the 15% minimum global tax rate.

Benefits to the UK

The benefits to Cornwall of hosting the G7 Summit in Carbis Bay and International Media Centre in Falmouth were felt across the Duchy.

Local suppliers were used for food, drink, hospitality and gifts enjoyed by leaders and their delegations. Local artisans were profiled as a result of their contribution to the event. Her Majesty's Government estimates that a minimum of £28.7 million was provided to Cornwall either through Cornish suppliers and businesses, Cornwall Council and Cornwall Police. This includes a significant investment (£7.8 million) made in Cornwall Airport Newquay to improve its facilities and support its transition to becoming one of the UK's first licensed spaceports, directly creating 200 high-skilled jobs and forecasted to bring £200 million to the Cornish economy by 2035.

Visit Cornwall estimated that the value of the international spotlight on Cornwall was at least £50 million through increased bookings from international travellers.

In addition, £2.16 million was provided for legacy projects throughout Cornwall, including nature recovery, creating opportunities for young people and supporting local regeneration.

Sustainability

The government was committed to hosting a green Summit, and successfully achieved both carbon neutral certification and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 20121, an international standard for sustainable event management.

Costs

The total estimated cost of putting on a safe and secure G7 Summit at Carbis Bay in Cornwall was £90.7 million, split between the costs of the event itself and the costs of policing and security in Cornwall. This was under budget and cost less in real terms than the previous UK-hosted G8 Summit at Lough Erne in 2013. The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office managed the logistical arrangements for the Summit.

The Home Office coordinated policing and security for the G7 Summit with Devon and Cornwall Police (DCP), other security partners and Whitehall departments. The total costs of the police and security operation were approximately £52.7 million. DCP were responsible for the operational delivery of a secure Summit, involving almost 1500 DCP officers and staff supplemented by 5000 mutual aid police officers from police forces in England and Wales, and Scotland.

The experience of hosting the G7 Summit also supported savings for COP26 in Glasgow in November 2021, the largest event of its kind that the UK has ever hosted.

Additional information

The UK Presidency of the G7 also included work across seven Ministerial tracks, run by relevant government departments with support from the Cabinet Office G7 Taskforce, as well as six official G7 Engagement Groups and two advisory Panels: the Economic Resilience Panel and Gender Equality Advisory Committee. Costs for these elements are not included in this statement.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ Health Update

Minister of State (Minister for Care and Mental Health) (Gillian Keegan):

[\[HCWS204\]](#)

Since becoming the Minister of State for Care and Mental Health in September 2021, I have had the privilege of engaging and meeting with many people with a learning disability, autistic people and their families, carers and with many dedicated health and social care staff. It deeply saddens me to hear some of the stories they have shared of experiences of poor health and care service provision and the premature loss of a loved one. That is why today I would like to acknowledge the publication of the **sixth annual report of the Learning from lives and deaths – People with a learning disability and autistic people (LeDeR) programme** compiled by the Kings College University and its partners (University of Central Lancashire and Kingston St. George's Universities). A copy of the sixth annual LeDeR report will be deposited in the Libraries of both Houses.

The annual LeDeR report remains a crucial source of evidence that enables us to build up a detailed picture of the key improvements needed, both locally and at a national level, to tackle existing health disparities faced by people with a learning disability. It is an important step that as of January 2022, LeDeR reporting will be inclusive of the deaths of autistic people. This new information will be included in next year's report.

It is encouraging that the sixth LeDeR report found that the life expectancy of a person with a learning disability has improved by one year for both males and females in 2021. The report also highlighted the phenomenal work of learning disability liaison nurses whose role in acute hospitals settings has been 'valued as a bridge between the principles and the provision of good care.' This signals some improvement in the right direction, but there is much more to be done, such as reducing the number of avoidable and excess deaths of people with a learning disability.

I must acknowledge the unique circumstances that the pandemic presented in 2021; for the second year in a row COVID-19 remains the leading cause of death for people with a learning disability. The LeDeR report highlights that during 2021 the rate of excess deaths from COVID-19 was more than two times higher for people with a learning disability compared to the general population.

The report shows that people with a learning disability who were unvaccinated were nine times more likely to die of COVID-19 than another cause compared to those who were vaccinated. These findings highlight the importance of the vaccination programme and the sustained focus on its roll out and uptake. NHS England have continued to engage on the delivery of reasonable adjustments in the vaccination programme and are offering a further booster in autumn 2022 for adults who are in a clinical risk group following the success of last year's autumn booster programme.

We have made it clear throughout the pandemic that blanket application of do not attempt cardiopulmonary resuscitation (DNACPR) decisions is never appropriate. Concerningly, the report highlights an increase in the proportion of deaths in which the reviewer was

unable to determine whether the process for making a DNACPR decision had been correctly followed. Whether the process for DNACPR decisions were correctly followed and completed properly were unknown for around a third of people whose deaths were reviewed in 2021 due to insufficient data. We will continue to monitor this closely and measure the impacts of steps already taken and planned to address inappropriate DNACPR decisions and recording of decisions, including the new requirement which came into force on 1 April 2022, requiring GPs to record conversations about end-of-life care and DNACPRs as part of annual health checks.

There have been recurring themes in previous years' reports that have prompted action, and some are present once again in this year's report. Amongst these, the most prominent were the need for greater learning disability and autism awareness training, and the significant under reporting of deaths and increased health disparities amongst people from an ethnic minority.

I am pleased that we are taking action to address these issues. As of June 2021, NHS England have begun carrying out focused reviews for every death of a person from an ethnic minority that is reported to LeDeR.

The government has introduced a new requirement in the Health and Care Act 2022 requiring Care Quality Commission registered service providers to ensure their employees receive learning disability and autism training appropriate to their role. Significant progress has been made on the Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training programme to support this new requirement, with over 8000 people participating in the trials in 2021. A final evaluation report was published in June 2022 which will inform next steps. This action will help to ensure health and social care staff have the skills and knowledge to provide safe, compassionate, and informed care.

NHS England has published its Action from Learning Report alongside the sixth LeDeR report, setting out a range of work taking place to improve the safety and quality of care to reduce early deaths and health disparities. We will continue to work with all our partners to ensure we are tackling the issues raised with urgency.

■ Learning Disability and Autism Update

Minister of State (Minister for Care and Mental Health) (Gillian Keegan):
[\[HCWS202\]](#)

Today I am delighted to announce the publication of 'The Building the Right Support Action Plan'. This Action Plan aims to reduce reliance on inpatient care in mental health hospitals for people with a learning disability and autistic people of all ages by building the right support in the community.

People with a learning disability and autistic people should live in their own home and have the right support in place to live an ordinary life. This includes access to education, employment, and other opportunities which help people to fulfil their aspirations. We know these aspirations are not currently being met.

The Action Plan brings together the commitments that have been made by different partners to realise this aim.

We want this Action Plan to support the NHS Long Term Plan commitment to achieve a 50% net reduction in the number of people with a learning disability and autistic people being cared for in an inpatient unit by the end of March 2024. There may be times when admission to a mental health hospital is necessary and has a therapeutic benefit. Where this is the case, we are clear that this care should be of high quality, the least restrictive and for the shortest time possible. It should also be close to home so that a connection can be maintained with family, friends, and their local community.

Too often we have heard that the care of people with a learning disability and autistic people in specialist mental health inpatient care has fallen far short of the standards we would expect. Instances of abuse or poor care, as seen in appalling cases such as Winterbourne View, Whorlton Hall and Cawston Park, are unacceptable. I am determined that, working with our partners, we do everything we can stop this from happening again. I am pleased the NHS is taking action to avoid admitting people with a learning disability and autistic people to hospital settings rated inadequate by the CQC unless, in exceptional circumstances, it is in the best interests of the individual and their family and is being done with their involvement.

In the manifesto, we committed to improving how people with a learning disability and autistic people are treated in law and to make it easier for them to be discharged from hospital. Our proposed reforms to the Mental Health Act will support this by ensuring people with a learning disability and autistic people can only be detained where there is a clear mental health need and by creating new duties on commissioners to ensure that there are sufficient community-based services in their local area to support people with a learning disability and autistic people.

Delivering Building the Right Support is a joint endeavour - no one organisation can make this happen on their own. The Building the Right Support Delivery Board, which I chair, brings together organisations with the levers to make change happen. The Board will have oversight of the implementation of this Plan.

The Action Plan includes:

- work to ensure that people with a learning disability and autistic people receive high quality care and support, and are safe;
- a commitment to make it easier to leave hospital when people are ready;
- what is being done to enable people to live an ordinary life in the community, for example with the right housing and support;
- specific activities to enable a good start to life, including early diagnosis and positive experiences of education;
- reforms across government to make wider improvements, such as the Mental Health Act and Adult Social Care reforms; and,
- work and changes to deliver increased integration and join-up across systems.

We also recognise that the way that funding flows through and across the health and social care system can impact on the provision of support and people's overall

experiences of care. To support this, we commissioned an independent consultancy organisation to undertake a rapid review of funding flows. I am pleased that we have been able to publish the report alongside the Plan today and I will work with the Delivery Board to take forward action in response to the findings.