

## Daily Report

Wednesday, 7 September 2022

This report shows written answers and statements provided on 7 September 2022 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:40 P.M., 07 September 2022). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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**Notes:**

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

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



## ANSWERS

### BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

#### ■ Adoption Leave

**Florence Eshalomi:**

[\[45273\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many individual recipients claimed Statutory Adoption Leave in the financial year 2021-22; and what the total expenditure was on that policy for that year.

**Jane Hunt:**

Information provided by employers to HMRC shows that there were around 4,600 individuals in receipt of Statutory Adoption Pay in the 2021/22 financial year and the total value of those payments amounted to £21.8m.

#### ■ Boiler Upgrade Scheme: Rural Areas

**Helen Morgan:**

[\[41010\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Boiler Upgrade Scheme, what steps his Department is taking to ensure the resilience of the rural electricity network during severe weather events.

**Helen Morgan:**

[\[41011\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to ensure the resilience of the rural electricity network to severe weather events in light of the planned replacement of traditional boilers with heat pumps for off-grid properties.

**Greg Hands:**

The Government is committed to maintaining high levels of energy resilience as the sector decarbonises. Great Britain has one of the most robust energy systems in the world, however, risks from climate-related hazards will become more common as dependence on electricity grows and the variability of its weather increases.

The Government is working with the industry to continually improve and maintain the resilience of old and new energy infrastructure, networks and assets, to reduce vulnerabilities, and ensure an effective response to actual or potentially disruptive incidents- taking into account future system changes and climate change risks

#### ■ Heat Pumps: Rural Areas

**Helen Morgan:**

[\[41008\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to ensure adequate capacity in the rural electricity network to support the planned replacement of traditional boilers with heat pumps for off-grid properties.



**Helen Morgan:**

[\[41009\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the ability of the rural electricity network to support the planned replacement of traditional boilers with heat pumps for off-grid properties.

**Greg Hands:**

The Government and Ofgem jointly published an Electricity Networks Strategic Framework on 4 August 2022, which sets out a vision for the transformation of the electricity network as decarbonise and reduce dependence on fossil fuels. Network regulation, including ensuring that the rural electricity network has sufficient capacity to meet demand is a matter for Ofgem. The Government engages regularly with Ofgem and electricity network operators to discuss their plans to support connections of low carbon technologies, including heat pumps for off-grid properties.

## CABINET OFFICE

### ■ Death

**Ben Lake:**

[\[45980\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will make an assessment of the reasons for an increase in excess deaths since June 2022; and what recent discussions he has had with representatives of the Welsh Government on those increases.

**Edward Argar:**

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

A response to the hon. Member's Parliamentary Question of 2 September is attached. As Minister for the Cabinet Office, I authorise the update to be deposited into the House of Commons Library when ready.

**Attachments:**

1. UKSA Holding response letter [UKSA\_Holding\_Response\_to\_PQ45980 (1).pdf]

### ■ Government Departments: Moonlighting Systems

**Louise Haigh:**

[\[44934\]](#)

To ask the Minister of the Cabinet Office, whether MOONLIGHTING SYSTEMS LIMITED (a) holds any contracts and (b) has conducted any business with Government departments.

**Mr Jacob Rees-Mogg:**

Details of Government contracts above £10,000, and £25,000 in the wider public sector, are published on Contracts Finder:

<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Search>



**COP26****■ Hydrogen and Renewable Energy****Jim Shannon:**[\[47534\]](#)

To ask the President of COP26, whether he has had discussions with representatives of the devolved Assemblies on sharing expertise on investment in (a) hydrogen and (b) renewable energy.

**Alok Sharma:**

COP26 Devolved Administrations Ministers Meetings, chaired by the COP President, have formally convened five times. The COP President uses these meetings to consult devolved administration Ministers on a wide range of issues.

Domestic Energy Policy remains the responsibility of the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). With support from the devolved administrations, BEIS has established an Inter Ministerial Group (IMG) that covers Net Zero, Energy and Climate Change. This brings together Ministers from the four administrations to discuss emission reduction efforts across the UK.

**DEFENCE****■ Afghanistan: Refugees****John Healey:**[\[41934\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many principals with confirmed eligibility under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy scheme have not been relocated to the UK for more than 6 months since confirmation of that eligibility.

**James Heappey:**

As of 31 August 2022, we are aware of approximately 240 Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) eligible principals, who received an eligibility decision either on or prior to 28 February 2022, that have not been relocated to the UK. We are relocating individuals and their family members as quickly as possible and have relocated over a thousand individuals over the summer period. There are a range of potential issues which can delay the movement of individuals, including documentation and security considerations but we are actively communicating with all individuals to remove these barriers as quickly as possible.

**■ Air Force: Recruitment****Mr Tobias Ellwood:**[\[45672\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of reported positive discrimination recruitment practices in the RAF; and if he will make a statement.

**Leo Docherty:**

A review of the RAF's recruiting policies and processes is underway.



**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

[\[45741\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether Armed Forces Careers Offices prioritised (a) BAME and (b) female candidates for RAF computer based aptitude tests between 26 October and 23 November 2020.

**Leo Docherty:**

No. The RAF took immediate action to withdraw the erroneous direction, which was never enacted, after RAF's Directorate of Legal Services were made aware of the instruction.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

[\[45742\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, for what reason the RAF stopped undertaking selection and suitability interviews between December 2020 and March 2021.

**Leo Docherty:**

The suitability interview was paused as a trial to allow the Royal Air Force to determine if all candidates could progress through the initial recruitment process more efficiently following the disruption to recruiting due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Lee Anderson:**

[\[46142\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will make an assessment of the equity of the recruiting process used by the RAF and whether positive discrimination has occurred in this process.

**Leo Docherty:**

A review of the RAF's recruiting policies and processes is underway.

#### ■ **Armed Forces Compensation Scheme: Post-traumatic Stress Disorder**

**Owen Thompson:**

[\[45935\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many PTSD claims under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme claims process have been delayed for more than (a) a year, (b) two years, (c) four years, and (d) five years.

**Owen Thompson:**

[\[45936\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will make a comparative estimate of the percentage of PTSD claims submitted under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme process that have been delayed for (a) more than one year, (b) more than two years, (c) more than three years, (d) more than four years, (e) more than five years, compared to other physical and mental health claims submitted under that scheme.

**Leo Docherty:**

All Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) claims are subject to an Average Clearance Time (ACT) target of 90 days. However, there is no specified time in which AFCS claims must be cleared. This is important because the prognosis over an individual's injury may not be certain within that 90 day period. To ensure we do the right thing, time may be required to understand the full extent of the injury and its effect so we can achieve the best possible outcome for the individual. As a



consequence, it is not possible to determine the percentage of claims that have been delayed.

The data in this response instead presents, for all AFCS claims cleared between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2022, the number and proportion of (a) mental health awards in which PTSD was cited by the claimant, (b) mental health awards where PTSD was not cited by the claimant, and (c) all other awards by number of years between MOD receiving the claim and the claim outcome being determined is attached at (Table 1).

Please note that whilst it is possible to determine AFCS awards for mental disorders from the electronic information, it is not possible to reliably determine awards for PTSD specifically. Awards where PTSD has been cited by the claimant have been identified based on a free text search of the condition claimed for using the following terms: 'PTSD', 'post traumatic stress' and 'post-traumatic stress'. The condition claimed for is based on information supplied by the claimant and does not necessarily reflect a diagnosis of PTSD. Therefore, awards made under the mental disorders table to those that claimed for PTSD may have been awarded for a different type of mental illness. Therefore, these figures should be treated with caution.

**Attachments:**

1. AFCS; Mental Health Claims [45935 - Table 1.docx]

■ **Armed Forces: Children**

**Julian Knight:**

**[45070]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure that service personnel are able to access wraparound childcare.

**Leo Docherty:**

On 1 September 2022, the Ministry of Defence rolled out a Wraparound Childcare scheme (WAC) across the UK to provide greater flexibility to Service personnel with children, following a successful pilot program. From the start of the 2022 Autumn term, WAC funding will be available to all eligible Service families with children aged 4 to 11 years, who are in school or being home schooled in the UK. If eligible, personnel can claim up to 20 hours per week of funding for each child that is attending before and after school care during term time. WAC is known as 'Out of School care' in Wales and 'School Aged Childcare' in Scotland.

Defence continues to work closely with the Department for Education, the Devolved Administrations and Local Authorities to ensure there are sufficient spaces and that where this might not be the case that this is highlighted appropriately.

■ **Armed Forces: Food Banks**

**John Healey:**

**[45713]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Armed Forces personnel have used food banks since January 2022.



**Leo Docherty:**

This information is not held in the format requested.

The Ministry of Defence recognises that nobody is immune from the recent rises in the cost of living and is committed to doing what we can to assist Armed Forces personnel where possible. Mitigating measures include freezing the daily food charge, limiting the increase in accommodation charges to 1% and ensuring that the council tax rebate reaches those in military accommodation. We are also rolling out free wraparound childcare which is estimated to save Service personnel approximately £3,000 per child.

**■ Armed Forces: Monkeypox****Luke Pollard:**[\[42200\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many cases of monkeypox have been diagnosed in armed forces personnel in 2022.

**Leo Docherty:**

As at 22 August 2022, there have been three confirmed cases of monkeypox in UK Armed Forces personnel and one in a foreign service person based in the UK.

**Luke Pollard:**[\[42201\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department plans to vaccinate higher risk members of the armed forces against monkeypox.

**Leo Docherty:**

NHS England are responsible for the UK supply of the smallpox vaccine Modified Vaccinia Ankara (commercially known as Imvanex), which is being offered to people who are most at risk from monkeypox.

While the Ministry of Defence does not currently have direct access to the vaccine, at risk Armed Forces personnel can access it free of charge in NHS vaccine hubs and sexual health clinics. Some sexual health services are contacting those individuals likely to be at highest risk to offer vaccination.

In line with UK Health Security Agency guidance, the vaccine is not currently being offered to healthcare staff, including Defence Medical Services personnel, who work in non-specialist wards, clinics or frontline services. The risk of exposure to these individuals is considered very low.

**Luke Pollard:**[\[42202\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department is taking to (a) inform armed forces personnel about monkeypox, (b) reduce transmission of the disease in the armed forces and (c) increase diagnoses by armed forces medical personnel.

**Leo Docherty:**

To inform Armed Forces personnel, a monkeypox page has been created on the Ministry of Defence (MOD) intranet. This provides a range of regularly updated guidance and links to resources, including the latest public health messages,



vaccination information and details of who to speak to for further advice or in the event of developing symptoms.

A more targeted approach to communications is also being adopted, with the use of Twitter and directing messages to high risk groups.

In the small number of monkeypox cases in the UK Armed Forces, there is currently no evidence of transmission between Service personnel. Public health advice to personnel reflects national guidance and stresses that the risk of catching monkeypox remains low. Those personnel in at risk groups are advised to be aware of the symptoms and to contact a sexual health clinic or call 111 if symptoms are developed.

A clinical guidance note on monkeypox has been developed by military public health and infectious disease specialists. The note has been shared with Defence Primary Health Care (DPHC) teams to increase their awareness and diagnosis of monkeypox and advise how to respond to a possible or confirmed case.

DPHC clinical teams in the UK and overseas also have 24/7 access to public health and infectious disease advice and support from Defence Medical Services consultants, to discuss the diagnosis and management of suspected monkeypox cases.

Military and UK Health Security Agency public health teams have worked in close collaboration to follow-up Armed Forces monkeypox cases and their contacts. This has minimised the risk of further transmission.

## ■ **Army: Employment**

**John Healey:**

**[45710]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to his Defence Command Paper published on 22 March 2022, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of reversing the objective set out in that paper of reducing the number of British Army personnel by 9500.

**James Heappey:**

There are currently no plans to reverse the decision to reduce the regular Army to 73,000 by 2025.

The British Army will be more integrated and active, with a whole force of over 100,000 regulars and reservists, to address the current and future threats from across the globe. The Defence Secretary recently stated that, as the threat changes, we need to change with it. The Department therefore regularly looks at the balance of people, capability, and activity across the Armed Forces, in line with the threats and the available resources.



## ■ Army: Training

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

[\[45279\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of establishing a British army centre for urban warfare, similar to the British army centre for jungle warfare, with dedicated SME's providing training.

**James Heappey:**

The British Army has established an Urban Centre of Excellence (CoE), containing both military staff and a contracted pool of subject matter experts (SMEs), which achieved Initial Operating Capability in September 2022.

The Urban CoE delivers the following outputs:

- Validation of UK Land Tactical Doctrine for urban operations
- Urban operations input into the delivery of Professional Military Education
- Bespoke urban wargames as a vehicle for battlegroup and formation training
- Urban Collective Training design and delivery
- Support to the Experimentation and Trials Group in the delivery of urban experimentation
- A pool of SMEs to conduct engagement across the Army and provide advice where it is required

## ■ Defence Estates: Energy

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[40845\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much his Department spends each year on utility bills for the Defence estate.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The total cost of gas and electricity for approximately 80% of sites on the UK Defence Estate in Financial Year 2021-22 was £272.373 million. Gas and electricity information for the remaining 20% of UK Defence Estate sites is not held centrally.

Information on the cost of water is not held. Water is provided by an Aquatrine contract which does not allow for cost separation from other elements.

## ■ F-35 Aircraft

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

[\[40747\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the upper weight limit is for (a) qualified pilots and (b) other people occupying seats in an RAF F-35B.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The maximum boarding mass of an individual and their equipment for F-35B Lightning is 132.5kg.



## ■ Hawk Aircraft

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

**[40746]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the upper weight limit is for (a) qualified pilots and (b) other people occupying seats in RAF Hawk aircraft.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The maximum boarding mass for an individual and their equipment on a Hawk T1 is 120kg.

## ■ Ministry of Defence: Agency Workers

**Jon Trickett:**

**[41944]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much his Department has spent on (a) agency workers and (b) agency retainer fees in (i) 2020, (ii) 2021 and (iii) 2022.

**Leo Docherty:**

Agency workers (more commonly referred to as “Contingent Labour” or “Temporary Workers”) are subject to a Cabinet Office controls framework to ensure robust governance of spending in this area.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/contingent-labour-spend-control>

The Department maintains a central record of overall expenditure on Contingent Labour and discloses this expenditure as part of our Annual Report and Accounts (ARAc) and for ease of reference the values reported in the financial years covering the requested years are as follows;

FINANCIAL YEAR	VALUE
2021-22	£483.318 million
2020-21	£418.950 million
2019-20	£272.385 million

We have interpreted your reference to agency retainer fees as the fees charged at the commencement of the provision of a search recruitment service, this is only applicable when recruiting for a permanent or fixed term post.

Agency retainer fees are not applicable to the contingent labour market.

## ■ Ministry of Defence: Consultants

**Kenny MacAskil:**

**[42215]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much his Department has spent on external consultants in each of the last five years; and if he will publish a breakdown of the (a) amount paid to each consultancy contracted, (b) name of each consultancy contracted and (c) specific matters on which they were consulted.



**Leo Docherty:**

Spend on externally contracted consultancy services for the core Department in each of the last five years is shown in the table below.

FINANCIAL YEAR	VALUE
2021-22	£204.974 million
2020-21	£109.668 million
2019-20	£98.080 million
2018-19	£116.914 million
2017-18	£49.995 million

Details of all Government contracts awarded from 2016 above £10,000 and £25,000 in the wider public sector are published on [Contracts Finder](#). Each award notice provides information on the name of the supplier, value of the contract, its purpose and information on the type of awarding procedure used. Government departments, their individual agencies and Arms Length Bodies are required to publish all spend against individual suppliers above £25,000 on [GOV.UK](#).

All Government Departments and their individual ALBs and agencies are required to follow the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 in awarding contracts.

## ■ Royal Fleet Auxiliary: Sexual Offences

**Drew Hendry:** [\[45533\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if his Department will review the policy which excludes the assessment of mitigating factors when automatically rejecting applications, as a result of disciplinary action, from previous trainees wishing to serve again with the Royal Navy Fleet Auxiliary, where the mitigating factor for that disciplinary action was the trainee experiencing a sexual assault during their previous service.

**Leo Docherty:**

The Royal Fleet Auxiliary remains an equal opportunities employer and all applicants for employment are assessed against a number of criteria which vary from role to role. The Department maintains high standards of entry in order to ensure that it employs a capable and committed workforce. There are no planned changes to this policy at this time.

## ■ Typhoon Aircraft

**Matt Western:** [\[40897\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the width of a seat in a Typhoon fighter jet is.



**Jeremy Quin:**

The width of the seat varies from 47-50cm across its length.

■ **Ukraine: Military Aid**

**Drew Hendry:**

[\[42067\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of offering the Government of Ukraine support in the training of Ukrainian armed forces personnel in the delivery of decompression and normalisation programmes.

**James Heappey:**

We continue to tailor the training we are providing to the Armed Forces of Ukraine to meet their needs. To date, decompression and normalisation programmes have not been requested by the Ukrainian Government and it seems premature to consider such things when the focus is on mass mobilisation not de-mobilisation.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

[\[42182\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what further steps the Government is taking to support Ukraine and prevent further Russian advance into Ukraine.

**James Heappey:**

We continue to support the Armed Forces of Ukraine in their fight against Russia's illegal and unjustified invasion. To date, we have committed £2.3 billion of military support including lethal and non-lethal materiel, and training to help Ukraine defend its sovereign territory.

We continue to liaise closely with Ukraine to understand their priorities and to shape what support the UK and international community offer as these requirements evolve.

**John Healey:**

[\[45711\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Government has plans to supply Ukraine with anti-radiation medication.

**James Heappey:**

Following the donation of 5.5 million iodine tablets by the EU, the UK Government does not currently have plans to supply Ukraine with anti-radiation medication. However, we will continue to consider all requests made by the Ukrainian Government for medical equipment.

**John Healey:**

[\[45712\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the Government has received a request from the Ukrainian government for anti-radiation medication.

**James Heappey:**

The UK Government received a request through the International Donor Coordination Centre to supply Ukraine with anti-radiation medication, however, this request was superseded by the supply of 5.5 million iodine tablets by the EU.



## ■ Veterans: Mental Health Services

**Gavin Newlands:** [47571]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of his Department's capacity to support veteran survivors of military sexual trauma.

**Gavin Newlands:** [47572]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department is taking to prevent incidents of military sexual trauma within the armed forces.

**Leo Docherty:**

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) does not recognise the term 'military sexual trauma', nor the associated term 'military sexual assault'. I refer the Hon. Member to the answer I gave to UIN 15331 on 17 June 2022 to the Hon. Member for Barnsley East (Ms Peacock): <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-06-09/15331>

For Serving Personnel, the MOD has made it absolutely clear there is no place for unacceptable behaviour in the Armed Forces. On 30 March 2022 the MOD published a Zero-Tolerance to Sexual Offending policy, which is one of a range of measures intended to tackle unacceptable sexual behaviour in the Armed Forces. It is intended to improve the career experiences of serving personnel, providing clearer, tri-Service, direction to those in a position to prevent and address instances of sexual offending. It also introduced mandatory discharge from the Armed Forces for anyone convicted of a sexual offence, this includes anyone subject to notification requirements as set out in Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act (SOA) 2003 (more widely recognised as the Sex Offenders Register): <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/defence-publishes-its-zero-tolerance-approach-to-sexual-offences>

For veterans, their healthcare, including mental healthcare, is the responsibility of the NHS in England and the Devolved Administrations.

## DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

### ■ Broadcasting: Music

**Zarah Sultana:** [44985]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if her Department will make an assessment of the adequacy of legislation on the use of (a) lip syncing and (b) pre-recordings at performances advertised as being live.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

The use of lip syncing and pre-recordings as part of performances advertised as being live is a decision for the artist or performer, and a private contractual matter between them and the event organiser. Event organisers, as with all businesses and traders, must comply with consumer rights legislation.



## ■ Cultural Development Fund

**Alex Sobel:**

**[45091]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will provide details on the fourth round of the Cultural Development Fund; and if she will make a statement.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

The fourth round of the Cultural Development Fund (CDF) is expected to launch in Spring 2024. As per the [announcement](#) in May 2022, CDF rounds 3 and 4 will see up to £49.4m of further capital investment in innovative cultural and creative projects outside London over the Spending Review period 2022/23 - 2024/25.

CDF round 3 was launched in May 2022. Building on the success of the previous two rounds, this third round of funding will level up through cultural investment, increase access to creativity and culture, and support the visitor and wider local economies in places all over England.

## ■ Football: Qatar

**Layla Moran:**

**[46013]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will make representations (a) FIFA and (b) the Football Association and (c) Football Association Wales on the potential merits of establishing a workers compensation fund for workers who built stadiums for the FIFA World Cup in Qatar.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

We welcome the steps Qatar has taken to date on workers' rights, with the priority now the full implementation and enforcement of those reforms.

We encourage continued close collaboration between the Government of Qatar and International Labour Organization during the second phase of their technical cooperation programme – which runs until the end of 2023. We also welcome continued Qatari cooperation with entities such as the international trade unions.

On 4 July, FCDO Minister Milling met the Qatari Minister for Labour in Doha. They discussed Qatar's progress on labour reforms, and the Ministry's on-going cooperation with the International Labour Organization.

## ■ Parthenon Sculptures

**Dr Matthew Offord:**

**[45128]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether she plans to make it her policy to bring forward legislative proposals that will enable the Elgin Marbles to be returned to Greece.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

The British Museum, along with some other national museums, is prevented by law from deaccessioning objects in their collection.



We have no plans to change the law.

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

## ■ Voluntary Work: Industrial Disputes

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

**[45985]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the level of support available to volunteers in the event of a workplace dispute.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

Volunteering is critical to a vibrant and resilient civil society; it benefits volunteers and the organisations involving them and has transformational impacts on beneficiaries and their communities.

This Government is committed to enabling people to take part in all forms of social action, including volunteering. We know the profound benefit that volunteering has on the individual, on communities and on society.

Volunteers do not have a contract of employment as a volunteer, so do not have the same rights as an employee or worker. However, they will usually be given a volunteer agreement that explains:

- the level of supervision and support they will get
- what training they will get
- whether they are covered under the organisation's employer or public liability insurance
- health and safety issues
- any expenses the organisation will cover.

The volunteer agreement is not a contract, but it is a good way of setting out what volunteers can expect from the organisation they are volunteering for. The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) also has information on [volunteers' legal status](#) and guidance on solving volunteer problems.

## ■ Voluntary Work: Young People

**Julian Knight:**

**[45386]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department is taking to help ensure that young people can access volunteering opportunities and activities.



**Nigel Huddleston:**

DCMS jointly funds the #iwill Fund together with The National Lottery Community Fund (TNLCF) to provide youth social action opportunities for young people aged 10-20. Over £54m has been jointly invested into the Fund since 2016, which has been matched on at least a 1:1 basis by the delivery organisations, doubling the initial investment. A further £12m of DCMS and TNLCF funding was announced in July 2022.

The #iwill Fund contributes to the delivery of the National Youth Guarantee, which will also offer The Duke of Edinburgh's Award to all mainstream secondary schools in England, tackle non-military Uniformed Youth Group waiting lists and continue delivering the National Citizen Service (NCS) programme. All of these programmes provide volunteering opportunities for young people.

In addition, through the £7.4m Volunteering Futures Fund, DCMS is creating more volunteering opportunities to improve the accessibility of volunteering in arts, culture, sports, civil society, youth and heritage sectors. Young people, people with disabilities, those experiencing loneliness and other barriers to access, will get the opportunity to volunteer and help others.

**ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS****■ Air Pollution: Monitoring****Stephanie Peacock:**[\[42157\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what criteria, checks and procedures his Department used to decide where to site Automatic Urban and Rural Network units.

**Steve Double:**

Defra adheres to the Air Quality Standards Regulations (2010) when deciding where to site Automatic Urban and Rural Network units. This includes detailed provisions on the location and number of sampling points, the measurement methods to be used, the classification of sites, the data quality objectives and the siting criteria each monitoring station must meet. Potential new sites are subject to a detailed technical review process, to ensure that they meet these requirements.

**■ Dogs: Theft****Mr Toby Perkins:**[\[45661\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent steps the Government has taken to help prevent the theft of dogs in England.

**Steve Double:**

The Government fully understands the deep distress caused by the theft of a much-loved family pet and the importance of dealing with pet theft given the impact it can have on owners.



The Government launched the Pet Theft Taskforce in May 2021 in response to the apparent rise in pet theft since the start of the pandemic. The Taskforce's recommendations include the creation of a new 'pet abduction' offence to recognise that pets are not mere items of property and to recognise the potential impact on their welfare when they are taken by strangers.

The Taskforce also recommended improving the evidence base on pet theft by improving how cases are identified and tracked; improving the recording of keepership on microchipping databases; and tackling the fear of crime through raising awareness about police initiatives and prevention measures.

The offence is one of the measures in the Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill currently being considered by Parliament. As currently drafted the offence focuses on dogs, with enabling powers.

The Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill was reintroduced to the House of Commons in May 2022 and will progress to Report Stage as soon as parliamentary time allows.

## ■ **Livestock: Animal Housing**

**Beth Winter:** [\[45341\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what her Department's planned timetable is for conducting a consultation on ending the use of cages and crates in farming.

**Henry Smith:** [\[45458\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he plans to launch a consultation on banning the sale of eggs produced from caged hens; and if he will make a statement.

**Dr Luke Evans:** [\[45484\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the Government's Action Plan for Animal Welfare published in May 2021, what his Department's timescale is for conducting and concluding a public consultation on the use of cages in the farming of hens and pigs.

**Beth Winter:** [\[45512\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the Answer of 23 March 2022 to Question 129861 on Poultry: Animal Welfare, whether his Department plans to introduce necessary measures to prohibit the use of cages for farmed livestock before any such legislation is introduced by the EU Commission.

**Julian Knight:** [\[45590\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the Government's Action Plan for Animal Welfare published in May 2021, when the Government plans to publish its consultation on cage keeping of farmed animals.



**Mr Toby Perkins:**

[\[45655\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when he plans to launch a consultation on banning the sale of eggs produced from caged hens.

**Sarah Olney:**

[\[45974\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will make it his policy to publish a consultation on the keeping of caged animals.

**Steve Double:**

The Government are committed to phasing out confinement systems and supporting the industry to do so, not least to underpin UK food security. However, as reiterated by the Minister for Farming, Fisheries and Food at the 'End the Cage Age' debate held in June, we do need to work carefully and sensitively with the pig and poultry sectors as any transition must be done with, rather than against, these industries.

This is an extremely challenging time for Britain's farmers, with enormously increased input costs — of food, fuel and fertiliser — affecting almost all production systems to a greater or lesser extent, and of course for the general public who are faced with significant challenges around the cost of living.

So, any decisions by Government on this issue, including timing of consultations, must be carefully considered in light of these wider, and clearly highly important, priorities. We have a course of action in play and will progress with our plans to transition away from use of cages in farming systems as soon as the time is right.

## FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

### ■ **Bilateral Aid**

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[\[44992\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to her Department's 2021 spending review commitments, how much and what proportion of overseas aid spending her Department plans to allocate to bilateral programmes in financial years (a) 2022-23, (b) 2023-24 and (c) 2024-25; and if she will provide a breakdown of that allocated spending by programme area.

**Vicky Ford:**

The Government remains committed to transparency and will provide updates to Parliament on spending plans in due course.

### ■ **Coronavirus: Vaccination**

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[\[44987\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the FCDO Annual Report and Accounts 2021-22, which states that the temporary increase in Resource DEL in 2022-23 is to enable the Government to meet the UK's G7 Carbis Bay health commitments, including the pledge to donate surplus vaccine



doses to countries in need, what the (a) amount and (b) cost is of the doses her Department plans to donate.

**Vicky Ford:**

In June 2021, at the G7 Summit, the UK committed to donate a total of 100 million doses of Covid-19 vaccines to countries in need by June 2022. The UK has made available 100 million doses, and 85 million doses have been donated to over 42 countries to date. The vast majority have been donated through COVAX.

Vaccine supply now far outstrips demand so our focus has switched to helping low income countries reach their national vaccination targets through the COVID-19 Vaccine Delivery Partnership.

The estimated cost of vaccine donations in 2021 has been published in the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office's 2021-22 Annual Report and Accounts. We are awaiting guidance from the OECD-DAC on treatment of vaccine donations in 2022. All donations will be funded within a total Official Development Assistance expenditure of 0.5% of Gross National Income.

■ **Cyprus: UN Resolutions**

**Zarah Sultana:**

[\[44981\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether her Department has taken recent steps to help bring about a negotiated reunification of Cyprus on the basis of the bi-zonal, bi-communal federation set out in relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

**Graham Stuart:**

I [Minister Stuart] met the Cypriot Foreign Minister in July and set out our determination to find a just and lasting settlement for the island of Cyprus.

We support the UN led process and advocate a solution in line with UN parameters based on the model of a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation with political equality.

■ **Development Aid**

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[\[44980\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether her Department is taking steps to reinstate the overseas aid budget to 0.7 per cent of Gross National Income; and with reference to her Department's Annual Report and Accounts 2021-22, HC 493, published on 19 July 2022, for what reason the budget set out in that report is based on 0.5 per cent of Gross National Income for the next three years, in the context of alternative projections (a) in the report entitled Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021, published on 27 October 2021, and (b) by the Office for Budget Responsibility for meeting the fiscal tests in the 2023-24 financial year.

**Vicky Ford:**

The Government committed to Parliament to return to spending 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) on Official Developmental Assistance (ODA) when on a



sustainable basis the government is not borrowing for day-to-day spending and underlying debt is falling.

At the 2021 Spending Review, the Government set ODA budgets accordingly, and reiterated its commitment to review and confirm each year, in accordance with the International Development (Official Development Assistance Target) Act 2015, whether a return to spending 0.7% of GNI on ODA is possible against the latest fiscal forecast. In line with this approach, and noting the current macroeconomic and fiscal uncertainty, the Government will determine whether the ODA fiscal tests will be met for 2023-24 at Budget 2022.

## ■ Development Aid: Water

**Zarah Sultana:**

[\[44988\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether her Department is taking steps to help ensure access to clean water for (a) midwives and (b) other healthcare workers; and if she will hold discussions with representatives of WaterAid on this issue.

**Vicky Ford:**

The FCDO recognises the importance of ensuring that all health care staff and their patients have access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) to reduce infection risks and improve quality of care globally.

We will continue to pursue these objectives through our membership of the WASH In Healthcare Facilities international taskforce, continuing to support the Sanitation and Water for All partnership to help governments increase access to WASH services in healthcare facilities, through our bilateral programming such as our bilateral funding to the Joint Monitoring Programme who have recently published a report on WASH in Health Care Facilities, and through our core multilateral funding to the World Health Organisation.

## ■ Gaza: Demonstrations

**Andy Slaughter:**

[\[44993\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the Answer of 9 December 2021 to Question 85214 on Gaza: Demonstrations, what estimate her Department has made of the number of investigations opened by Israeli authorities into the use of live ammunition by Israeli forces against Palestinians during the 2018-19 Gaza protests.

**Vicky Ford:**

We have not made this estimate. The UK has repeatedly made clear to Israel our longstanding concerns about the manner in which the Israel Defence Forces police non-violent protests and the border areas, including use of live ammunition. We will continue to do so. The UK supports an independent and transparent investigation which establishes the facts about the violence that occurred during the Great March



of Return in Gaza. The UK continues to monitor progress of ongoing investigations by the Israeli authorities.

■ **Members: Correspondence**

**Mr David Lammy:** [\[40732\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, when her Department plans to respond to the correspondence from the hon. Member for Hornsey and Wood Green on the situation in Sri Lanka, dated 29 June 2020.

**Vicky Ford:**

A reply was sent on 12 August 2022.

■ **Nnamdi Kanu**

**Ms Harriet Harman:** [\[45513\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether her Department has provided consular assistance to Mr Nnamdi Kanu in the last 12 months; and what discussions she has had with her Nigerian counterpart on his imprisonment.

**Vicky Ford:**

The UK Government has provided consular assistance to Mr Kanu in the last 12 months and continues to provide this. We are in contact with both the Nigerian and Kenyan authorities, Mr Kanu's family and his legal representatives. Our priority is to ensure Mr Kanu's health, welfare and fair treatment.

I [Minister Ford] have raised Mr Kanu's case with the Nigerian authorities on multiple occasions, and the former Prime Minister discussed his case with President Buhari in June at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). The UK Government is seeking clarification about the circumstances of Mr Kanu's arrest from the Nigerian and Kenyan Governments. The UK takes all allegations of human rights violations very seriously and raises concerns with local authorities. We continue to proactively follow up with the Nigerian authorities on Mr Kanu's case.

■ **Palestinians: Health Services**

**Andy Slaughter:** [\[44995\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the Answer on 9 December 2021 to Question 85212 on Palestinians: Health Services, whether her Department has completed its review of the report by Medical Aid for Palestinians entitled Systematic Discrimination and Fragmentation as Key Barriers to Palestinian Health, published on 29 November 2021; and (b) what assessment she has made of the implications of its findings for her policies.

**Vicky Ford:**

Officials regularly review reports relevant to the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories to inform our policy. We are aware of the findings of this report and remain



committed to ensuring access to essential healthcare services for all Palestinians. We are a longstanding supporter of the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) which provides core services, including healthcare to Palestinian refugees in Gaza. The UK Embassy in Tel Aviv regularly raises the importance of access to healthcare with the Israeli authorities.

## ■ **Russia: Diplomatic Service**

**Drew Hendry:**

[\[45125\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the public statement on Twitter from the Russian embassy in the UK issued on 29 July 2022 at 8pm, whether her Department has made a recent assessment of the potential merits of expelling all Russian diplomatic staff; whether she has had discussions with Cabinet colleagues on the compatibility of remarks in that statement with international law; and if she will make a statement.

**Graham Stuart:**

The exploitation and use of prisoners of war for political purposes is an assault on the freedoms and values we believe in. We will ensure those responsible are held to account and will continue to consider options in concert with our allies. Having Russian representatives in the UK allows us to deliver clear and tough messages directly to Putin's government. Following the Salisbury attack in 2018, we expelled twenty three intelligence officers posing as Russian diplomats. Since then we have continued to maintain a zero-tolerance approach to illegal Russian activity.

## ■ **Sri Lanka: Economic Situation**

**Sam Tarry:**

[\[42267\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether her Department is offering aid to families in Sri Lanka affected by the economic situation in that country.

**Vicky Ford:**

The UK is closely monitoring the political, economic and security situation in Sri Lanka including food security and livelihoods. The UK is providing economic support through multilateral institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank (WB) and United Nations (UN). The UK has the joint fifth largest shares in the IMF and is a major contributor to the UN and WB. The UK has a significant voice in international debt fora and we are working with other Paris Club members on solutions to Sri Lanka's unsustainable debt levels.

The WB has reprogrammed US \$400 million in financial assistance to provide economic and health sector support. We are working to support the UN and its agencies in their coordinated response to the Humanitarian Needs and Priorities (HNP) Plan. This called for US \$47.2 million to provide life-saving assistance to 1.7 million people who are most at risk and need immediate support. The UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) has announced US \$5 million for an urgent



response to the economic crisis in Sri Lanka. The UK is a longstanding partner to the CERF and is the largest overall donor, contributing more than \$1.7 billion to the fund since its inception fifteen years ago. We are exploring additional options to respond to Sri Lanka's humanitarian needs.

## ■ Sri Lanka: Politics and Government

**Sam Tarry:**

[\[42266\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to help ensure a peaceful transfer of power in Sri Lanka following the announcement of President Rajapaksa's resignation.

**Vicky Ford:**

The UK looks forward to working with Ranil Wickremesinghe following his election as President of Sri Lanka by the Sri Lankan parliament as part of a peaceful transition of power. We continue to call for a peaceful, democratic and inclusive approach to resolving the current political and economic challenges. In his recent call with Prime Minister Gunawardena on 16 August the Minister responsible for South Asia, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, called on the Sri Lankan Government to build an inclusive consensus for the reforms necessary to bring Sri Lanka's economy back on a sustainable path. Lord Ahmad also discussed efforts to build a multi-party government with President Wickremesinghe on 23 July. We welcome the Sri Lanka Government's engagement with members of the opposition and we call for the ambitions and hopes of all citizens and communities to be listened to as Sri Lanka builds its future. We continue to engage with members of Sri Lankan civil society to encourage inclusive, peaceful and democratic solutions to Sri Lanka's ongoing challenges.

**Sam Tarry:**

[\[42268\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether the UK plans to put forward resolutions on Sri Lanka at the September session of the UNHRC regarding accountability for atrocities.

**Vicky Ford:**

In March 2021, the UK Government and our Core Group partners led an ambitious new resolution (46/1) on Sri Lanka at the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC). The resolution provides a continued framework for international engagement on human rights in Sri Lanka, and highlights serious concerns about the situation, including those detailed in the January 2021 report of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). It calls on the government of Sri Lanka to make progress on accountability and human rights, and stresses the importance of a comprehensive accountability process for all violations and abuses committed in Sri Lanka. It keeps Sri Lanka firmly on the UNHRC agenda and requests continued and enhanced OHCHR reporting on the human rights situation and on accountability. Importantly, it also strengthened the capacity of OHCHR to collect, consolidate, preserve and analyse information and evidence to support future accountability



processes. We continue to make clear our human rights concerns in statements made to the UNHRC, most recently on 14 June 2022. We will work with our partners to maintain the UNHRC's focus on Sri Lanka in the future.

### ■ **The Gambia: Flooding**

**Alex Norris:**

[\[45575\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to help support Gambia following recent flooding in that country.

**Vicky Ford:**

[Minister Ford] express my condolences for the civilians who have lost their lives or been displaced following recent floods in The Gambia. The UK is a major financial contributor to the UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) Team, which provides emergency assistance for sudden on-set emergencies, and is the third largest donor to the UN Central Emergency Response Fund, which most recently allocated \$1 million to provide humanitarian assistance to The Gambia. The UK is working closely with UNDAC and like-minded partners to support the Government of The Gambia's humanitarian response to the crisis.

### ■ **Vicky Bowman**

**Ben Lake:**

[\[45270\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions she has had with authorities in Myanmar on the arrest of the UK's former ambassador to Myanmar, Vicky Bowman; and what support her Department has offered Vicky Bowman.

**Vicky Ford:**

We are supporting Ms Bowman through our consular channels. Officials at the British Embassy in Yangon have been in contact with the local authorities to request urgent consular access in order to check on her welfare. We are monitoring Ms Bowman's situation closely and will continue to support her, and her family, until the case is resolved.

## HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

### ■ **Cancer: Health Services**

**Wes Streeting:**

[\[45964\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the 62 day cancer wait data published by the NHS in England includes all cancer patients irrespective of whether they entered the pathway as a result of (a) a referral from a GP, (b) via an accident and emergency department or (c) via a screening programme.



**James Morris:**

NHS England's monthly cancer waiting times statistics include data on two-month or 62 day performance via an urgent referral from a general practitioner; from a National Screening Service; and following a consultant upgrade. The consultant upgrade referral route includes emergency presentations via accident and emergency departments.

These statistics include the total number of patients seen and the numbers of patients seen within and outside the relevant operational standard in each month.

■ **Cancer: Medical Treatments**

**Damien Moore:** [\[45105\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure the 62-day cancer waiting times target for first treatment is met.

**Damien Moore:** [\[45107\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what strategy his Department has for ensuring the 62-day cancer waiting times target for first treatment is met.

**James Morris:**

The 'Delivery plan for tackling the COVID-19 backlog of elective care' sets out the ambition for the number of people waiting more than 62 days from an urgent referral for cancer to return to pre-pandemic levels by March 2023. The Department has committed an additional £8 billion from 2022/23 to 2024/25, in addition to the £2 billion Elective Recovery Fund and the £700 million targeted Investment Fund already made available to the system.

This investment will allow up to 160 new community diagnostic centres (CDC) to deliver additional, digitally connected, diagnostic capacity in England, providing patients with a coordinated set of diagnostic checks, including for cancer. CDCs and the associated re-design of the cancer pathway will reduce waiting times from presentation to diagnosis and the number of interactions required to receive a diagnosis. NHS England is also working with National Health Service trusts to develop bespoke support to improve waiting times.

■ **Care Homes: Energy**

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[45908\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps the Government is taking to support residential and nursing homes with the rise in energy costs.

**Gillian Keegan:**

Local authorities are best placed to understand and plan for the care needs of the local population and develop and build local market capacity. The Local Government Finance Settlement for 2022/23 makes an additional £3.7 billion available to councils.



The Government is committed to working with local authorities to manage the pressures of inflation on adult social care. We understand the impact that challenges such as energy price rises can have on residential care providers.

### ■ **Carers: Respite Care**

**Peter Kyle:**

[\[45036\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to ensure local authorities are using the Better Care Fund to provide respite for carers.

**Gillian Keegan:**

In 2022/23, £291.7 million from the Better Care Fund is earmarked to provide short breaks and respite services for carers and additional advice and support. Local partnerships will also be required to demonstrate how funding is being used to support unpaid carers in Better Care Fund plans. This will provide insight into areas of best practice and which areas would benefit from further support.

### ■ **Chronic Illnesses: Medical Equipment**

**Barbara Keeley:**

[\[44939\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of the support available to help people to manage the rising fuel costs associated with their home-based medical equipment for chronic conditions.

**James Morris:**

On 26 May 2022, the Government announced further support and specific additional payments for the most vulnerable including the elderly, people with disabilities and low-income households. The majority of households, including those home users of medical equipment for chronic conditions, will receive support worth £550 to help with rising cost of living and energy. Almost eight million of the most vulnerable households will receive at least £1,200.

While some local commissioners may provide additional support relating to home treatments, there is not currently a uniform national policy for NHS England to reimburse additional utility costs. However, the Government is considering further measures to help those facing rising energy costs and further information will be available in due course.

### ■ **Clinical Trials: Recruitment**

**Judith Cummins:**

[\[44968\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people were recruited into phase (a) one and (b) two clinical trials supported by the National Institute for Health and Care Research for (i) dementia, (ii) cancer, (iii) stroke and (iv) coronary heart disease in each of the last 10 years.



**James Morris:**

A table showing the number of participants recruited into phase one and two clinical trials supported by the National Institute for Health and Social Care Research's Clinical Research Network for dementia, cancer, stroke and coronary heart disease in each of the last 10 years is attached.

**Attachments:**

1. Attachment [TABLE FOR MINISTERIAL CLEARANCE PQ44968 attachment (2).docx]

**■ Compulsorily Detained Psychiatric Patients****Munira Wilson:**[\[45667\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what percentage of patients detained under the Mental Health Act spend over 72 hours in a Section 136 suite or other triage units before being transferred to a specialist mental health ward in (a) South West London, (b) London and (c) England.

**Munira Wilson:**[\[46161\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how long patients detained under the Mental Health Act who are admitted to Section 136 suites spend on average in these units before being transferred to specialist mental health wards in (a) South West London, (b) London and (c) England.

**Gillian Keegan:**

This information is not held in the format requested.

**■ Contraceptives: Coronavirus****Feryal Clark:**[\[46197\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made on the impact of Covid-19 on (a) access to contraceptive provision and (b) the availability of trained long-acting reversible contraception fitters in (i) primary care and (ii) specialist sexual and reproductive health services.

**Maggie Throup:**

No specific assessment has been made. However, we are working with local authorities and partners to understand the specific impact on these services and how it can be addressed. The forthcoming Sexual and Reproductive Health Action Plan will set out plans to develop and strengthen the workforce to meet the needs of the population.

**■ Contraceptives: Females****Feryal Clark:**[\[46198\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to improve women's access to (a) long-acting reversible contraception and (b) other contraceptive provision in (i) primary care, (ii) specialist sexual and reproductive



health services, and (iii) services for disadvantaged groups; and if he will make a statement.

**Maggie Throup:**

We are currently developing an action plan for improving sexual and reproductive health outcomes in England to improve access to contraceptive services, including long-acting reversible contraception, in primary care and specialist services. We are considering access to services for disadvantaged groups can be improved in this process.

The Women's Health Strategy for England commits to encourage the expansion of Women's Health Hubs and other models of 'one-stop clinics', to improve access to essential women's services, including to contraceptive services.

■ **Contraceptives: Finance**

**Feryal Clark:**

[\[46199\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the speech entitled Health and Social Care Secretary speech on Health Reform, published by his Department on 8 March 2022, what steps his Department is taking to provide funding for contraceptive provision in (a) primary care and (b) specialist sexual and reproductive health services.

**Maggie Throup:**

Under the GP Contract, contraceptive services are an essential service which practices must provide or arrange for the provision of to their patients. Practices are paid for providing essential services via the global sum, which is a capitated payment based on practice patient list size, weighted to account for estimated patient workload and unavoidable costs. NHS England is currently piloting the management, review and supply of oral contraception from community pharmacy for people on a regime initiated in general practice or sexual health clinics, providing greater choice and access when considering continuing their current form of contraception.

The Government has provided more than £3.4 billion of ring-fenced funding to local authorities in England in 2022/23 to fund public health services, including contraceptive provision in specialist sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services. It is for individual local authorities to determine spending priorities based on an assessment of local need, including the need for SRH and contraceptive services taking account of statutory duties.

■ **Coronavirus: Immunosuppression**

**Andrew Gwynne:**

[\[45747\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will bring forward an emergency strategy to ensure that (a) clinically vulnerable, (b) clinically extremely vulnerable, and (c) immunosuppressed people acutely vulnerable to covid-19 are protected from that virus.



**Maggie Throup:**

'COVID-19 Response: Living with COVID-19', published in February 2022, sets out the Government's strategy for supporting those most at risk from COVID-19. The success of the vaccination and booster programme and the availability of antiviral and therapeutic treatments has ensured a reduced risk of severe illness or hospitalisation. Testing remains in settings where there are patients at higher risk of complications from COVID-19, such as those who are immunosuppressed who continue to have access to specific testing.

Symptomatic and outbreak testing identifies and manages outbreaks and will continue in settings where individuals are most at risk. This also includes discharge/admissions testing for people into entering care homes and hospices and testing for transfers for immunocompromised patients into and within hospital and will continue throughout the year.

The Government will continue to keep the response to COVID-19 under review to ensure it remains effective and proportionate.

**■ Coronavirus: Vaccination****Andrew Gwynne:**[\[45013\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to (a) help ensure that Learning Disabled people are aware that they are eligible for the booster vaccination and (b) encourage Learning Disabled people to come forward for their booster vaccination.

**Maggie Throup:**

Those aged five to 49 years old in a clinical risk group and individuals aged 50 years old and over will be eligible for an COVID-19 booster vaccination this autumn, including those with learning disabilities. NHS England will contact people with learning disabilities to book their COVID-19 vaccine appointment. To encourage uptake for those with learning disabilities, easy read letter templates and information materials have been developed for the invitation process. NHS England is also developing accessible social media cards.

The National Health Service has worked with partner agencies to provide advice, training and guidance to support the vaccination of people with a learning disability. This includes ensuring all COVID-19 vaccination sites consider communication and access needs, including any reasonable adjustments for individuals and their families.

**■ Dental Services: South East****Caroline Lucas:**[\[41978\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Answers of 25 April 2022 to Question 146593 and 28 March 2022 to Question 116906 on Dental Services: South East, how much of the (a) £50 million and (b) £6.9 million that was



allocated to the South East was spent; and how many appointments that (i) £50 million and (ii) £6.9 million spending delivered (A) in total and (B) for children.

**James Morris:**

Of the £50 million fund, £14,172,074 was spent in England and £1,044,39 in the South East region.

Data on appointments for National Health Service dental appointments is not collected centrally as appointments are managed directly by dental practices.

The additional funding utilised between 14 February and 31 March 2022 generated 62,662 courses of treatment (COT) delivered to 60,318 unique patients. This excludes 7,172 COTs equating to 7,138 unique patients which may have been recorded by error or under local schemes. Of this, 20% of all unique patients were children, 31% were exempt from charges and 49% were fee-paying adults.

■ **Dentistry: Migrant Workers**

**Selaine Saxby:**

[\[45439\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to help increase the number of dental professionals who have qualified outside the EEA who practice in the UK.

**James Morris:**

The Government is currently amending the General Dental Council's (GDC) international registration legislation. This aims to provide greater flexibility for the GDC to improve its existing international registration process and introduce alternative routes to registration for international applicants, whilst maintaining its focus on robust public protection. We aim to introduce these amendments in autumn 2022, subject to Parliamentary approval.

■ **Doctors: Registration**

**Daisy Cooper:**

[\[45643\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many doctors hold a live temporary (a) emergency registration or (b) licence to practise; and how many of those doctors have submitted applications to restore their routine registration or licence to practise, as of 5 September 2022.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The information requested is not held centrally. The General Medical Council is the independent regulator of all medical doctors practising in the United Kingdom, which sets and enforces the standards all doctors must adhere to. In order to practise medicine in the UK, doctors are required to hold a registration with a licence to practise.



## ■ Ear, Nose and Throat Conditions: Children

**Mr Laurence Robertson:** [\[45621\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent discussions he has had with the Chief Executives of NHS Trusts on the availability of (a) grommet and (b) adenoid operations for children; and if he will make a statement.

**Maria Caulfield:**

There have been no specific discussions. Integrated care boards are responsible for commissioning such services locally. The decision whether to offer these treatments in each case is a clinical decision agreed between the patient and clinician.

## ■ Endometriosis: Diagnosis

**Beth Winter:** [\[45221\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 19 July 2022 to Question 36739 on Endometriosis: Diagnosis and with reference to the Women's Health Strategy for England, published on 20 July 2022, when her Department expects NICE to complete its review of guidelines on endometriosis.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence is continuing its review of the guideline on endometriosis and is unable to confirm when this is expected to conclude.

## ■ Endometriosis: Health Services

**Fleur Anderson:** [\[45651\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to amend the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidelines for endometriosis on (a) pain management, (b) mental health and (c) endometriosis outside the pelvic cavity.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is an independent body responsible for whether its published guidelines should be updated in light of new evidence or emerging issues not in the scope of the original guideline.

NICE's guideline 'Endometriosis: diagnosis and management', published in 2017, includes recommendations on pharmacological pain management and organisation of care. It recommends that those patients with suspected or confirmed endometriosis should be provided with information and support that takes into account their psychosexual and emotional needs. NICE amended the guideline in 2021 to highlight that those with endometriosis outside the pelvic cavity should be referred to a specialist endometriosis centre. NICE is undertaking a further review of its guideline to determine whether it should be updated. As part of this review, NICE is considering whether diagnosing and managing thoracic endometriosis is a priority area.



## ■ Endometriosis: Health Services and Research

**Tracey Crouch:** [\[45431\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether she expects NICE to update its guidelines on endometriosis care and research.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is an independent body responsible for whether its published guidelines should be updated in light of new evidence or emerging issues not in the scope of the original guideline. NICE maintains surveillance of new evidence which may affect its published guidance and would consult on proposed changes with a wide range of stakeholders if significant new evidence were to emerge.

NICE carried out a review of its endometriosis guideline in 2021 which was amended to highlight that those patients with endometriosis outside the pelvic cavity should be referred to a specialist endometriosis centre. In light of the continued interest in this topic, NICE is now undertaking a further review of its guideline.

## ■ Epidermolysis Bullosa: Research

**Dame Diana Johnson:** [\[45466\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if his Department will provide £10 million of funding to support DEBRA's drug repurposing programme and to conduct clinical trials with patients affected by Epidermolysis Bullosa to be treated with anti-inflammatory drugs already available within the NHS for other inflammatory conditions, including psoriasis and atopic dermatitis.

**Dame Diana Johnson:** [\[45476\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if the Government will provide £50 million of funding to enable DEBRA to increase research into gene, protein, and cell therapies which offer the potential to (a) correct the molecular and clinical phenotype and (b) identify cures for people affected by Epidermolysis Bullosa.

**James Morris:**

NHS England commissions a national epidermolysis bullosa (EB) service to provide diagnosis and assessment of infants, children, adolescents and adults with suspected or known EB, with treatment and long-term support. NHS England is aware that a number of innovative treatments for EB are either in trials or being considered by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). If any of these treatments are given a positive recommendation by NICE, NHS England will ensure that service provision is in place to deliver these treatments.

The Department funds research through the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR). While the usual practice of the NIHR is not to ring-fence funds for expenditure on particular topics, the NIHR welcomes funding applications for research into any aspect of health or care research, including therapies for rare conditions such as EB. These applications are subject to peer review and judged in



open competition, with awards made on the basis of the importance of the topic to patients and health and care services, value for money and scientific quality. In the past five years, the NIHR has funded two studies into EB with a total award value of £3,022,759 and supported the delivery of over 25 studies via the NIHR's infrastructure.

## ■ Evusheld

**Theresa Villiers:**

[\[45745\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions he has had with the NHS on making the drug Evusheld available for treatment of people with compromised immune systems who are at risk of serious harm from covid-19.

**Maggie Throup:**

The Government has decided not to procure Evusheld for prevention through emergency routes at this time. This is a decision based on independent clinical advice by the multi-agency initiative, RAPID C-19 and a national expert policy working group in the National Health Service. These groups considered a range of evidence, including clinical trial data, in vitro analysis and emerging observational studies and concluded there is currently insufficient evidence of benefit to recommend deployment. The United Kingdom Chief Medical Officers are content that the correct process for providing clinical advice has been followed and agree that this should now be referred to the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence for further evaluation.

The Department wrote to patient groups on 5 September 2022 with information on this decision and evidence considered. The letter summarised the evidence considered by RAPID C-19 which contributed to the decision not to procure and deploy Evusheld and detailed the next steps the Government will take. The Department intends to publish further details of the clinical advice received shortly.

## ■ General Practitioners

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

[\[44982\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether it is legal for practitioners who are not GMC-registered to conduct consultations with patients in the UK.

**Maria Caulfield:**

Doctors practising medicine in the United Kingdom must be registered with the General Medical Council (GMC) and hold a licence to practise. However, the GMC does not legally define what constitutes a consultation, which can depend on the individual purpose of the consultation. Medical practitioners who are not registered with the GMC can, in specific contexts, legally conduct consultations with patients in the UK.



**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

[\[45981\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the median number of full-time equivalent general practitioners is per 10,000 registered patients in (a) Slough, (b) the South East and (c) the UK.

**James Morris:**

The following table shows the median number of full-time equivalent doctors in general practice, including general practitioners, per 10,000 weighted patients in Slough, the South East and England as at July 2022. The information requested for the United Kingdom is not collected centrally.

SLOUGH	4.3
South East	4.9
England	5.3

Note:

This data excludes practices which have no patients or have not provided workforce data.

#### ■ **General Practitioners: Migrant Workers**

**Patrick Grady:**

[\[45886\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for the Home Department on the potential merits of reforming visa regulations to enable more international trainee GPs to remain in the UK after completing their training.

**James Morris:**

Departmental officials are working with the Home Office to increase the number of practitioner (GP) practices registered as sponsors. NHS England is also improving the service to match newly qualified international GPs with practices in England to enable local planning and direct support to international medical graduates to find a recruiting practice.

NHS England is also increasing awareness with international medical graduates with guidance on preparing to enter the workforce, including applying for roles and visas.

#### ■ **General Practitioners: Standards**

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

[\[45019\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions his Department has had with NHS England and NHS Improvement to help ensure equality of access to GPs across England.



**James Morris:**

The Department works with NHS England to monitor and improve access to general practice services and address regional variation. In 2016, we launched the Targeted Enhanced Recruitment Scheme, which has attracted hundreds of doctors to train in hard to recruit locations, including many rural areas, by providing a one-off financial incentive of £20,000. In 2021, there were 550 places available and through additional Government investment, there are 800 places available in 2022.

NHS England is continuing to provide structured support to practices working in the most challenging circumstances via the Accelerate Access Improvement Programme. This is prioritising support to practices delivering care in the areas of highest deprivation and with the greatest health needs.

**■ Health Professions: Migrant Workers****Catherine West:**[\[47624\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has had recent discussions with the NHS on ending repayment clauses in contracts for international healthcare workers.

**Maria Caulfield:**

There have been no specific discussions. The updated Code of Practice states stringent ethical standards for employers to follow when recruiting health and social care staff from overseas. This includes stronger guidance on the use of repayment clauses to ensure these are used by employers in an appropriate and proportionate way.

**■ Health Professions: Vacancies****Sam Tarry:**[\[45052\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to help tackle the shortage of GPs and other healthcare staff.

**Maria Caulfield:**

We are working with NHS England, Health Education England and the profession to increase the general practice workforce in England. This includes measures to increase recruitment, address the reasons why doctors leave the profession and encourage them to return to practice. The 2020 updated GP Contract Framework announced a number of new retention schemes alongside continued support for existing schemes for the general practice workforce. We have also increased the number of general practitioner (GP) training places. In 2021/22, 4,000 trainees accepted a GP training place – an increase from 2,671 in 2014.

To support the recruitment of other healthcare professionals in general practice, the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme provides funding for 26,000 additional roles to create bespoke multi-disciplinary teams. The Scheme is expanding to include more roles to reduce the shortages of non-clinical roles within primary care. While the Scheme initially included five roles, this has increased to 15 in the 2022/23 contract.



As of June 2022, there were 30,824 full time equivalent (FTE) direct patient care staff working in primary care - an increase of 19,305 FTE compared to March 2019.

There are currently 29,500 additional staff working in hospitals and commissioning support than a year ago, including over 9,600 more nurses and almost 4,100 more doctors. We are making good progress on the target to recruit a further 50,000 nurses and have recently expanded the number of medical school places. The Government is investing in and diversifying domestic training pipelines, including through the Learning Support Fund of non-repayable grants for student nurses studying in England, with all eligible students receiving at least £5,000 per year. We have funded an additional 1,500 undergraduate medical school places each year for domestic students in England – a 25% increase over three years. This expansion was completed in September 2020 and has delivered five new medical schools in England.

### ■ Heart Diseases: Diagnosis

**Dr Philippa Whitford:**

[\[45244\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of how breathlessness clinics will support the (a) the detection of and (b) referral into CDCs for diagnosis of heart valve disease.

**Dr Philippa Whitford:**

[\[45246\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to tackle (a) the number of preventable deaths caused by heart valve disease and (b) the variation in quality of diagnostic services for CVDs.

**James Morris:**

People with heart failure will be supported by multi-disciplinary teams in Primary Care Networks and greater access to echocardiography within community diagnostic centres (CDCs). This will improve the investigation of those with breathlessness and the early detection of heart failure and heart valve disease. NHS England is working with the British Heart Foundation to raise awareness of heart valve disease to ensure earlier diagnosis, enable patients to receive treatment and prevent avoidable deaths.

We have committed £2.3 billion to launch at least 100 CDCs by 2024/25, increase the volume of diagnostic activity and further reduce waiting times for patients with cardiovascular disease. In addition, the National Health Service is investing in cardiac networks to support whole pathway improvements. These networks have been developed to take an evidenced based, clinically led, whole pathway approach to improvement from prevention, diagnosis, treatment to end of life care.

**Dr Philippa Whitford:**

[\[45248\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to support the increased use of stethoscopes in (a) primary care settings and (b) CDCs for the detection of heart valve disease.



**James Morris:**

NHS England has assessed that clinical auscultation using a stethoscope is insufficiently sensitive to identify the presence and clinical significance of heart valve disease. Clinicians are expected to consider the history of the patient and undertake an examination to ensure the appropriate test is requested, which would normally include auscultation of the heart, with other assessments such as blood pressure. While some community diagnostic centres may have facilities to examine patients, its aims are to provide diagnostics tests such as echocardiograms.

■ **Heart Diseases: Health Services**

**Dr Philippa Whitford:** [\[45247\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the findings of the Stickels, June 2022 BMJ paper on recovering aortic stenosis waiting lists, whether his Department has plans to use those findings to inform best practice guidance on reducing mortality from that disease.

**Dr Philippa Whitford:** [\[45250\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Stickels June 2022 BMJ paper on aortic stenosis waiting times, what steps his Department plans to take to facilitate the conversion of SAVR to TAVI for aortic stenosis treatment for the purposes of expediting the recovery of the heart valve disease backlog.

**James Morris:**

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) makes recommendations on interventions for aortic stenosis in its guideline 'Heart valve disease presenting in adults: investigation and management'. It has no current plans to review or update this guideline. For adults unsuited to heart valve surgery, NHS England recommends transcatheter aortic valve implantation (TAVI) to treat aortic stenosis.

We have committed £2.3 billion to launch at least 100 community diagnostic centres by 2024/25 to increase diagnostic activity and reduce waiting times for patients with heart valve disease, such as aortic stenosis. In addition, the National Health Service is investing in cardiac networks to support whole pathway improvements. These networks have been developed to take an evidence based, clinically led, whole pathway approach to improving prevention, diagnosis, treatment and end of life care.

■ **Home Births**

**Mr Toby Perkins:** [\[45670\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure hospital maternity services are able to offer home births.

**Maria Caulfield:**

While all trusts providing maternity services in England offer a home birth service, there is occasionally a need for a trust to suspend home births for operational reasons, such as temporary staff shortages.



In March 2022, NHS England announced that more than £50 million would be provided over the next two years to increase the number of staff in maternity and neonatal services. This is in addition to a further £95 million per year for recruitment and training.

#### ■ Hospitals: Children

**Justin Tomlinson:**

[\[45403\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many meals per day are provided to children who are admitted to a NHS hospital.

**Maria Caulfield:**

This information is not collected in the format requested.

#### ■ Hospitals: Temporary Employment

**Feryal Clark:**

[\[40978\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the total cost to NHS hospitals was of using (a) agency staff and (b) bank staff in 2020-21 for each region in England.

**Maria Caulfield:**

A table showing expenditure on bank and agency staff in each region in England in 2020/21 is attached.

**Attachments:**

1. Bank and Agency staff expenditure [FORMATTED TABLE FOR MINISTERIAL CLEARANCE PQ40978 data on regional bank and agency spend.docx]

#### ■ Huntington's Disease: Health Services

**Dr Philippa Whitford:**

[\[45021\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that Integrated Care Systems are able to meet the care and support needs of people who have Huntington's disease.

**Dr Philippa Whitford:**

[\[45340\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if his Department will make an assessment of whether a clinical guideline on care for people who have Huntington's disease is needed.

**Dr Philippa Whitford:**

[\[45350\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of existing guidance to support the diagnosis and management of Huntington's disease.



**Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:**[\[45477\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to help reduce delays in referral to mental health services for people who have Huntington's disease.

**Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:**[\[45502\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the need to ensure people who have Huntington's disease have parity and integration between the support they receive for their physical health and mental health.

**Charlotte Nichols:**[\[46174\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make it his policy to increase funding for research into Huntington's Disease.

**James Morris:**

There are no national guidelines for the diagnosis and management of Huntington's disease. The Department has made no assessment on the clinical guideline on care for people who have Huntington's disease. However, the neuropsychiatry service specification is in development, which when finalised, will outline the multi-disciplinary approach to caring for patients with complex neurological conditions including Huntington's Disease who require specialised assessment and mental health support.

NHS England's neuroscience transformation programme (NSTP) is developing a number of optimal pathways for neurology services which includes Huntington's disease. Following extensive stakeholder engagement, the NSTP is developing a new definition for 'specialised' neurology and a model for neurology services. This will make it easier for integrated care systems (ICSs) to reduce the inequalities of access and bring specialist knowledge and skills into the patient pathway much earlier. It will help speed up the process for initial diagnosis for patients and whenever specialist interventions are indicated along a patient journey, enable that to be made available closer to the patient rather than predominantly at the specialist centres.

The Government remains committed to achieving parity between mental and physical health services and to reducing mental health inequalities with investment in National Health Service mental health services continuing to increase from almost £11 billion in 2015/16 to £15 billion in 2021/22. While no assessment has been made for people with Huntington's disease, there is work underway to review the Clinical Genomic Service Specification which includes the need to strengthen access to mental health support services. The revised specification will be subject to public consultation before receiving final approval. The NSTP includes developing optimal pathways for neurology services, which also includes common principles regarding access to appropriate timely mental health support.

In the last five years, the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) has funded two studies into Huntington's disease with a total award value of £316,267



and supported the delivery of 39 studies relating to Huntington's disease via the Clinical Research Network infrastructure. The Government has also committed to invest at least £375 million in neurodegenerative disease research over the next five years to fund projects into a range of diseases, including Huntington's disease.

#### ■ **NHS Learning Support Fund: Overseas Students**

**Mr Barry Sheerman:**

[\[47362\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make it his policy to expand the NHS Learning Support Fund to provide financial assistance to international students.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The Government has no plans to do so. All Government financial support schemes have eligibility criteria and to be eligible for the NHS Learning Support Fund, students must be eligible for tuition fees and maintenance support from the Student Loans Company.

The Government reviews the funding arrangements for all pre-registration National Health Service health professionals' education to ensure that students are appropriately supported. This must ensure the appropriate use of financial resources to support students and deliver value for money.

#### ■ **NHS Low Income Scheme**

**Mary Kelly Foy:**

[\[46146\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the Government's extra payments to help with the cost of living such as the Energy Bills Support Scheme will be calculated as part of an applicant's income for the NHS Low Income Support Scheme.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The NHS Low Income Scheme is aligned with the Department for Work and Pension's Regulations. The Government is considering how payments made under the Energy Bills Support Scheme should be considered for the purposes of determining eligibility for help under the NHS Low Income Scheme.

#### ■ **NHS Trusts: Standards**

**Michelle Donelan:**

[\[45132\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the performance of NHS trusts demonstrated by the latest data available; and what steps he is taking to help support NHS trusts which are not meeting national targets set for England.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The Department works with NHS England to regularly assesses the performance of National Health Service trusts against national performance standards. NHS England



provides targeted support to hospitals facing the greatest delays in the handover of ambulance patients to identify short and longer-term interventions. NHS England also supports those trusts most at risk of not meeting the elective recovery ambitions set out in the 'Delivery plan for tackling the COVID-19 backlog of elective care'.

## ■ Pharmacy

**Michelle Donelan:**

[\[45369\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans his Department has to help support community pharmacists.

**James Morris:**

The Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework (CPCF) commits £2.592 billion in each of the five financial years between 2019 and 2024 to community pharmacy. It introduces plans to develop new services and expand the role of community pharmacy in prevention, urgent care and medicines safety. Negotiations on what the sector will deliver through the CPCF in 2022/23 are ongoing.

## ■ Primary Health Care: Pharmacy

**Mr Richard Holden:**

[\[45147\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of expanding the primary care services that can be delivered by pharmacists.

**James Morris:**

The Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework 2019-24 sets out how community pharmacy will support the NHS Long Term Plan through greater integration with the National Health Service and providing more clinical services to relieve pressures, including in primary care.

The Community Pharmacist Consultation Service allows general practices and NHS 111 to refer patients to community pharmacies for minor illnesses and the NHS Community Pharmacy Blood Pressure Check Service. Other services have been expanded, such as the New Medicines Service, to support patients who have been prescribed specific new medicines. NHS England is piloting services which could be introduced, including the direct referral of people with potential symptoms of cancer, minor illness referrals from urgent and emergency care settings and the supply of contraception.

New standards for initial education and training will ensure that all new pharmacists will be equipped with the skills and knowledge to deliver these services, such as undertaking clinical checks and becoming independent prescribers upon registration.

**Sir George Howarth:**

[\[45190\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of resources available to pharmacists to enable them to offer self-care advice in conjunction with their dispensing duties.



**Sir George Howarth:**

**[45358]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of introducing a minor ailment and common conditions service, modelled on Scotland's Pharmacy First scheme, that allows pharmacists to dispense expert advice for minor ailments and refer patients on to other health care providers.

**Sir George Howarth:**

**[45475]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what definition of self-care his Department uses when assessing and developing health and social care policy.

**James Morris:**

Self-care is defined as the provision of advice and support to enable people to derive maximum benefit from caring for themselves or their families through enhanced access and by promoting choice.

This aims to allow people to better care for themselves or manage a condition through increased knowledge on the treatment options available. All community pharmacies in England delivering NHS services must provide support for self-care, including for minor ailments. Support for self-care is an essential National Health Service pharmaceutical service funded through the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework (CPCF). Signposting to other healthcare providers is also a requirement for community pharmacies funded through the CPCF. The Department has made no assessment of the adequacy of resources available.

The Community Pharmacy Consultation Service (CPCS) was launched by NHS England to enable convenient access for patients to clinical advice and support from a pharmacist. Under the service, NHS 111 and general practitioner (GPs) can refer patients with a minor illness to a community pharmacist for a consultation, advice and support for self-care and if necessary, an over-the-counter medicine. The service can also provide an emergency supply of previously prescribed medicines.

NHS England is exploring expanding the CPCS to other settings including urgent treatment centres and accident and emergency. The Department is considering how the role of pharmacists in the supply of medication can be expanded to provide treatment for specific conditions without requiring a GP consultation.

## ■ Radiology: Vacancies

**Layla Moran:**

**[45532]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many radiographer vacancies there are in (a) Oxfordshire and (b) England as of 2 September 2022; what recent assessment his Department has made of the potential impact of these vacancies on health services; and what steps his Department is taking to help (i) recruit and (ii) retain radiographers in the NHS.



**Maria Caulfield:**

The information requested on the number of radiographer vacancies is not held centrally.

Health Education England (HEE) is working with NHS England on the recovery and renewal of diagnostics services, including the development of community diagnostic centres and staffing models. This includes new roles and routes into areas such as imaging and is led by a joint HEE and NHS England diagnostic workforce board.

HEE has expanded clinical radiology training placements by 110 in 2020 and 2021, with a total of 333 entry places in 2021. This also allowed an increase in posts in interventional radiology by 20. The enhancement of skills within radiography image interpretation and reporting has seen the development of 150 reporting radiographers annually since 2018.

The NHS People Plan focuses on improving the retention of National Health Service staff through staff health and wellbeing, more support for flexible working and a commitment to tackling inequality. In addition, the NHS Retention Programme aims to understand why staff leave, resulting in targeted interventions to support staff to stay.

**Rare Diseases: Medical Treatments****Alex Sobel:**[\[45602\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to Action 14 in the England Rare Diseases Action Plan 2022, what steps his Department has taken to ensure equity of access to treatments for rare diseases across the country.

**James Morris:**

Action 14 of the 'England Rare Diseases Action Plan 2022' aims to monitor overall uptake of drugs for patients with rare diseases and map geographical access to those drugs. This is being progressed through measuring overall uptake of drugs recommended by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), compared to the expected numbers; and measuring geographical update of drugs recommended by NICE.

NHS England is initially measuring the uptake of drugs recommended through NICE's Highly Specialised Technologies programme. Should either overall uptake be lower than expected or there appear to be geographical inequities, NHS England will investigate the causes. The Department will publish the second England Rare Diseases Action Plan in 2023 and report on progress against the actions set out in the 2022 Action Plan.

**Sickle Cell Diseases: Research****Sir Stephen Timms:**[\[45699\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to increase research into treatments for sickle cell disease.



**James Morris:**

The Department funds research into sickle cell disease through the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR). In the last five years, the NIHR has funded nine studies into sickle cell disease with a total award value of £9,173,716 and supported the delivery of studies via its Clinical Research Network.

The NIHR spends over £1 billion on research each year, with research proposals in all areas competing for the funding available. Applications are subject to peer review and judged in open competition, with awards based on the importance of the topic to patients and health and care services, value for money and scientific quality.

**Smoking: Health Services****Beth Winter:**[\[45214\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the recommendations in The Khan review: making smoking obsolete, published 9 June 2022, whether he has had discussions with the devolved Administrations on the proposals to increase (a) ringfenced funding specifically for stop smoking services and (b) the age of sale for tobacco.

**Maggie Throup:**

Departmental officials regularly meet with the devolved administrations to discuss tobacco control matters in the United Kingdom. This includes discussions on the recommendations in the Khan Review on stop smoking services and the age of sale of tobacco.

**Tobacco****Beth Winter:**[\[45486\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he will publish the Tobacco Control Plan.

**Maggie Throup:**

Following the Khan Review published in June 2022, the Department is considering its recommendations. The Review will inform the new Tobacco Control Plan, which will be published in due course.

**Dan Carden:**[\[45535\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when his Department plans to publish the Tobacco Control Plan.

**Maggie Throup:**

Following the Khan Review published in June 2022, the Department is considering its recommendations. The Review will inform the new Tobacco Control Plan, which will be published in due course.



## HOME OFFICE

### ■ Animal Experiments

**Dr Rupa Huq:**

**[38893]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of beagles being bred for use in laboratory experiments in the UK; and what steps she is taking to phase out animal experiments.

**Tom Pursglove:**

No estimate has been made of the number of beagles being bred for use in laboratory experiments in the UK. Most dogs used for research purposes are for the toxicity and safety testing, including potential new medicines, based on internationally-set requirements for testing in non-rodent mammals, usually dogs or monkeys, to protect human health. The level of breeding is largely determined by the level of safety testing required.

The Government is clear that the use of animals in science is justified, for the benefits it brings to human, animal and environmental health and safety.

The Government is committed to assuring that those animals used in science are protected. The legal framework in the UK requires that animals are only ever used in scientific procedures where there are no alternatives, where the number of animals used is the minimum needed to achieve the scientific benefit, and where the potential harm to animals is limited to that needed to achieve the scientific benefit.

Government policy is to actively support and fund the development and dissemination of techniques that Replace, Reduce and Refine the use of animals in research (the 3Rs). This is achieved through funding UKRI who both fund the National Centre for the 3Rs and fund research through Innovate UK, the Medical Research Council and the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council into the development of alternatives.

### ■ Asylum: Applications

**Kevin Brennan:**

**[45731]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her policy to introduce service standards for the processing of asylum applications.

**Tom Pursglove:**

*[Holding answer 7 September 2022]:* The Home Office does not currently have a target time for processing applications for asylum, but are committed to ensuring asylum claims are considered without unnecessary delay. We have already made progress in prioritising claims with acute vulnerability and those in receipt of the greatest level of support, including Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children. Additionally, we are prioritising older claims and those where an individual has already received a decision, but a reconsideration is required.



Asylum Operations are working to reintroduce a service standard for the processing of asylum applications. It is our intention to reintroduce a service standard aligning with the recommendation from the recent Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration's (ICIBI) published report - An inspection of asylum casework (November 2021).

## ■ **Asylum: Rwanda**

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

**[41962]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the level of potential risk that people deported to Rwanda under the Migration and Economic Development partnership will be required to join that country's armed forces.

**Simon Baynes:**

Rwanda has been recognised globally for their record in welcoming and integrating migrants and asylum seekers, and our own comprehensive assessment found it to be generally a safe and secure country.

Any decision to relocate a person to Rwanda will be made on a case-by-case basis taking into account their individual circumstances and relevant country information.

**Drew Hendry:**

**[45240]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answers of 28 June 2022 to Question 23755 on Central Africa: Armed Conflict and 26 July 2022 to Question 30051 on Asylum: Rwanda, and in the context of the need to deescalate ethnic hate speech and violence occurring in the central African region, what metrics her Department used to determine Rwanda as a safe country for (a) refugees as outlined by her Department's response to Question 30051 and (b) other refugees fleeing central Africa.

**Simon Baynes:**

Rwanda has been recognised globally for their record in welcoming and integrating migrants and asylum seekers, and our own comprehensive assessment found it to be generally a safe and secure country.

The factors considered to form our assessment are outlined in our published 'Review of asylum processing, Rwanda: assessment' which is available on Gov.Uk.

Any decision to relocate a person to Rwanda will be made on a case-by-case basis taking into account their individual circumstances and relevant country information.

## ■ **Care Workers: Visas**

**Stuart C McDonald:**

**[45193]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people have entered the UK on the new Health and Social Care Visa as (a) care workers and home carers and (b) senior care workers since that visa was introduced in August 2020.



**Tom Pursglove:**

*[Holding answer 7 September 2022]:* The Home Office publishes data on visas in the 'Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release'.

Data on the number of granted applications regarding the Health and Care visa are published in table Vis\_D02 of the [entry clearance visas applications and outcomes](#) dataset.

**Domestic Abuse****Sam Tarry:****[45069]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps the Government is taking to help protect women and girls in (a) the home environment and (b) public places who are at risk of domestic violence.

**Amanda Solloway:**

The Government is committed to tackling violence against women and girls in all its forms. The landmark Domestic Abuse Act 2021 established a wide-ranging statutory definition of domestic abuse that incorporates a range of abusive behaviours beyond physical violence, and brings in important new protections including Domestic Abuse Protection Notices (DAPNs) and Domestic Abuse Protection Orders (DAPOs) to provide flexible, longer-term protection for victims from all forms of domestic abuse.

Accompanying this legislation, in July 2022 the Government published detailed statutory guidance outlining the many forms domestic abuse can take to ensure that domestic abuse is properly understood by public agencies seeking to tackle this abhorrent crime and provide adequate support to victims.

In July 2021, the cross-Government Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy was published to help ensure that women and girls are safe everywhere - at home, online and on the streets. In March 2022 we published a complementary Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan in March 2022 which seeks to transform the whole of society's response to prevent offending, support victims, pursue perpetrators. In the Plan, Government committed to:

- Invest over £230 million into tackling domestic abuse. This includes over £140 million to support victims, much of which is multi-year funding, and £47 million of which is ringfenced for community-based support services.
- Trial and, if it is successful, consider a national rollout of the Ask for ANI codeword scheme across Jobcentre Plus offices. The scheme provides discreet emergency support in the community for victims and is already available in over half of UK pharmacies, including Boots.
- Provide up to £3.3 million to support the rollout of Domestic Abuse Matters training to police forces which have yet to deliver it, or do not have their own specific domestic abuse training.

To help protect women and girls in public places and raise awareness of VAWG, in March 2022, the Government launched the 'Enough' communications campaign



which seeks to change public attitudes and tolerance towards crimes such as public sexual harassment and to help create an atmosphere in which women and girls can report such crimes to the police with confidence.

These measures will strengthen protections and support for women and girls at home and in public places, who are at risk of domestic violence and ensure perpetrators are brought to justice.

## ■ Domestic Abuse: Greater London

**Sam Tarry:** [\[45048\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department has taken to tackle the recent increase in violence against women in North East London.

**Sam Tarry:** [\[45099\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what precautionary safety mechanisms her Department is helping to establish and support in London to tackle and prevent violence against women.

**Amanda Solloway:**

The Government is determined to tackle and prevent VAWG wherever it occurs.

To support preventing and tackling these crimes in London, we have:

- Allocated over £1.5 million was allocated to projects in London through the Safer Streets Fund and Safety of Women at Night Fund which support areas to put in place measures such as extra CCTV and streetlighting and projects which work to change attitudes and behaviours;
- Awarded over £300,000 to the London Borough of Redbridge, this financial year to continue funding the Spotlight Programme which seeks to help perpetrators change their abusive behaviour. This forms part of £2.5 million awarded to the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime to fund perpetrator interventions;
- Provided £6.65m to Operation Soteria, which is working with 19 police forces, including the Metropolitan Police Service, to test and develop a new national operating model for the investigation and prosecution of rape.

In addition, the Metropolitan Police are rolling out Domestic Abuse Matters training to their officers, to support their response to domestic abuse incidents.

## ■ Dungavel House Immigration Removal Centre

**Carol Monaghan:** [\[45653\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum seekers are held at Dungavel House Immigration Removal Centre as on 2 September 2022.



**Carol Monaghan:**

[45660]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the countries of origin are of asylum seekers held at Dungavel House Immigration Removal Centre as on 2 September 2022.

**Carol Monaghan:**

[45896]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what average time was for asylum seekers to be held at Dungavel House Immigration Removal Centre in the latest period for which data is available.

**Simon Baynes:**

The Home Office publishes statistics on people in detention on the last day of each quarter and on people leaving detention in the '[Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release](#)'.

Data on people in detention are published in table Det\_D02 of the '[Detention detailed tables](#)', where the data can be broken down by current place of detention (including Dungavel Immigration Removal Centre (IRC)), nationality (which may differ from country of origin), and length of detention.

Data on people leaving detention are published in table Det\_D03 of the '[Detention detailed tables](#)', where the data can be broken down by length of detention. Data on last place of detention are published in table Det\_04c of the '[Detention summary tables](#)', including Dungavel IRC.

Data on people in detention and leaving detention broken down by asylum and non-asylum related detainees are published in table Det\_01 of the '[Detention summary tables](#)'. The latest data relate to the end of June 2022.

Data on people in detention counts the number of people in detention on the last day of the period (e.g. 31 December).

Last place of detention does not show where an individual spent their time in detention. In some cases, an individual may have spent a period of time detained elsewhere before being moved to their last place of detention.

Asylum-related cases refer to those where there has been an asylum claim at some stage prior or during detention. This will include asylum seekers whose asylum claims have been refused, and who have exhausted any rights of appeal, those returned under third country provisions, as well as those granted asylum/protection, but detained for other reasons (such as criminality).

Figures on people in detention and leaving detention at the end of September 2022 will be published on 24 November 2022. Information on future Home Office statistical release dates can be found in the '[Research and statistics calendar](#)'.

**Carol Monaghan:**

[45897]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reasons asylum seekers would be held at Dungavel House Immigration Removal Centre.



**Simon Baynes:**

Migrants, including asylum claimants, may be detained for immigration purposes only in accordance with Home Office detention policy, as set out in the Detention General Instructions, and in accordance with the adults at risk in immigration detention policy. The detention decision must always be made on the basis of the individual's particular circumstances and eligibility for detention. If at any time it is concluded that a particular detained individual's ongoing detention would not be appropriate, the individual must be released, with bail conditions appropriate to their particular circumstances.

Most people detained under immigration powers spend only short periods in detention. In the year ending June 2022, data shows that the overwhelming majority of people (98%) who left detention were detained for less than 6 months, and 82% were detained for 28 days or less. The great majority of asylum claims are processed in the non-detained system, with claimants living in the community. Only a small minority of claimants are detained whilst their claim is considered.

**■ Home Office: Photography****Mr Alistair Carmichael:**[\[39777\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much her Department spent on photography (a) in 2019, (b) in 2020, (c) in 2021 and (d) to date in 2022.

**Tom Pursglove:**

In 2020 there were two occasions external photographers were employed by communications directorate with a total cost of £695 (excluding VAT).

In 2022 £5,520 (excluding VAT) was spent on photography for a Home Office recruitment campaign.

Spend for photography as part of social media, marketing and internal communications is not recorded separately.

**■ Immigration: EEA Nationals****Stuart C McDonald:**[\[45845\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her policy to exempt carriers from section 40 charges under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 in relation to EEA nationals who travel to the UK on a valid passport or national identity card.

**Tom Pursglove:**

*[Holding answer 7 September 2022]:* Carriers are responsible for ensuring that passengers are properly documented for travel to the UK or they may be liable to a carrier's liability charge. These charges never apply to the carriage of correctly documented passengers, regardless of their nationality or the documentation they hold.



Since 1 October 2021, EU, other EEA and Swiss national citizens (with the exception of those who have protected rights under the EU Withdrawal Agreement and equivalent agreements) have been required to use a passport to enter the UK rather than a national identity card. We do not currently impose carriers' liability charges on carriers bringing people to the UK incorrectly travelling on an identity card. This will change in the future as the rollout of our future border and immigration system will increasingly support interactive messaging with carriers to inform them what documentation is acceptable on an individual passenger basis.

## ■ Migrants: Children

**Sir Stephen Timms:**

**[45495]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the judgments *R (W) v SSHD* [2020] EWHC1299 (Admin) of 20 May 2020 and *ST and Anor v Secretary of State for the Home Department* [2021] EWHC 1085 (Admin) of 29 April 2021, what recent assessment her Department has made of the impact of the immigration regulations governing No Recourse to Public Funds and social security support on the families of ethnic minority British children subject to those conditions.

**Tom Pursglove:**

*[Holding answer 7 September 2022]:* Revised No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) guidance was published on 18 October 2021 to ensure the best interests of children are considered when considering whether to lift NRPF conditions.

People with leave under the Family, Private life and Human Rights routes that engage Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, and those who have been granted leave on the Hong Kong British National (Overseas) route can apply, for free, to have their NRPF condition lifted by making a 'change of conditions' application. An individual can apply if they are destitute or at risk of imminent destitution, if the welfare of their child is at risk due to their low income, or where there are other exceptional financial circumstances.

Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 imposes a general duty on local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of "children in need" in their area. Support provided to a child by local authorities under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 is not dependent on the immigration status of the child or their parent(s).

Local authorities may also provide basic safety net support, regardless of immigration status, if it is established there is a genuine care need which does not arise solely from destitution, for example, where there are community care needs, migrants with serious health problems or family cases where the wellbeing of a child is in question.

Status holders who have made the necessary national insurance contributions can also claim contributory benefits such as contribution-based Jobseekers Allowance, statutory sick pay, and the state pension.



## ■ Refugees: Afghanistan

**Kate Hollern:**

**[45837]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Afghan citizen refugees have entered the UK since August 2021; and through which schemes or pathways they have been admitted.

**Kate Hollern:**

**[45838]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Afghan citizens have been referred to Pathway Two of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme as on 2 September 2022; and how many and what proportion of these have been admitted to the UK.

**Tom Pursglove:**

*[Holding answer 7 September 2022]:* Operation PITTING took place in August 2021 – it was the largest UK military evacuation since the Second World War, during which we evacuated around 15,000 individuals to the UK. In the year since the evacuation, around 5,000 more individuals have arrived in the UK via neighbouring countries.

The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) launched in January, and this will provide up to 20,000 women, children, and others at risk with a safe and legal route to resettle and re-build their lives in the UK over the coming years.

The ACRS is not application-based. Instead, eligible individuals will be prioritised and referred for resettlement to the UK through one of three referral pathways.

Through ACRS Pathway 1, some of those already evacuated to the UK under Op PITTING are being granted a place on the scheme. Those eligible who were called forward during the evacuation, but were not able to board flights, will also be resettled through pathway 1 if they subsequently come to the UK.

Under ACRS Pathway 2, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) will refer refugees - who have already fled Afghanistan - for resettlement to the UK. Those referred will be assessed for resettlement by the UNHCR, using their established processes.

We have now begun to receive the first referrals for resettlement under pathway 2 of the ACRS – which opened in June – from the UNHCR. It is anticipated we will receive referrals for up to 2,000 refugees during the first year of this pathway, although this number will be kept under review – and we look forward to welcoming the first new arrivals under this pathway in due course.

Further information on UNHCR referrals is available at:

[UNHCR UK Information and Links on Afghanistan Situation - UNHCR United Kingdom](#)

Under ACRS Pathway 3 eligible British Council and GardaWorld contractors as well as Chevening alumni will be considered for resettlement during the first year of this pathway.



The ACRS is in addition to individuals relocated through the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP). We have relocated around 10,000 eligible Afghan citizens and their family members under the ARAP scheme since it opened in April 2021 – and the scheme remains open.

Work is underway to assure information relating to all the individuals relocated under the ARAP and ACRS on case working systems. Once this work concludes, statistics on both schemes - including the number of people resettled under each - will be included in the published Immigration Statistics.

## ■ Sexual Offences: Trials

**Jess Phillips:** [\[45842\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people awaiting trial for sexual offences charges have been (a) accused of and (ii) charged with further sexual offences during the waiting period in each year since 2018.

**Jess Phillips:** [\[45843\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in the context of delays in cases coming to trial for sexual offences, whether extra police monitoring is currently in place for people accused of sexual offences while they are awaiting trial.

**Amanda Solloway:**

Protecting women and girls from violence and supporting victims and survivors of sexual violence is a key priority for this Government. In June 2021, we published the End-to-End Rape Review Report and Action Plan which outlined a robust programme of work that aims to achieve a significant improvement in the way the criminal justice system responds to rape and sexual offences against adults.

Where the police consider an individual poses a risk which means they require additional monitoring while awaiting trial, there are additional tools available.

The Bail Act 1976 governs the duties resting on a person granted bail in criminal proceedings and the various requirements which may be attached to a grant of bail. The court may impose a wide range of additional requirements by granting bail subject to specific conditions, known as 'conditional bail' (s. 3(6)). Consideration should always be given to the use of appropriate bail conditions if there is a fear of attack, intimidation or harassment.

Individuals who are already convicted of a sexual offence may be subject to the notification requirements for registered sex offenders and/or may have requirements imposed on them via a Sexual Harm Prevention Order (SHPO).

Individuals who have not been convicted of any offence but who pose a risk of harm to the public in the UK and/or children or vulnerable adults abroad may be made subject to a Sexual Risk Order (SRO). Both orders can place a range of restrictions on individuals depending on the nature of the case, including preventing travel abroad. Where appropriate, an interim order may be applied for to manage risk while the court process is ongoing.



The Home Office publishes data on the number of sexual offences with a charge within its 'Police recorded outcomes' Tables. However, it is not possible to identify if the person charged was awaiting a trial.

## JUSTICE

### ■ Coroners

**Barbara Keeley:** [\[45631\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, why Prevention of Future Deaths Reports have not been published on the Chief Coroner's website since May 2022.

**Barbara Keeley:** [\[45665\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what discussions he has had with the Chief Coroner on when Prevention of Future Deaths reports will resume regular online publication.

**Simon Baynes:**

As set out on the Chief Coroner's webpage, publication of PFD reports has been temporarily suspended to facilitate the transition to a new Judiciary website and will resume as soon as practicable following its launch, which is expected later this autumn. It is intended that all PFD reports issued since suspension of publication will be available from the date of the launch.

Where a PFD report is made in relation to a specific inquest, it can be obtained from the coroner and is available to Interested Persons in the context of the inquest, including bereaved families. In addition, there is nothing to prevent organisations that are the subject of a PFD report from sharing and addressing the areas of concern which it sets out.

### ■ HM Courts and Tribunals Service: ICT

**Liz Saville Roberts:** [\[42136\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many and what proportion of cases there were recorded on the Common Platform where the address for the defendant shared the same postcode as the court at which their case was determined.

**Miss Sarah Dines:**

Common Platform does not collate the necessary data to enable a response.

The post code field in Common Platform is mandatory in order to ensure that when important documents such as correspondence, notices, orders or warrants are sent to individuals, they have the best chance of being delivered.

As a temporary measure whilst an update is made to Common Platform, where a defendant is of no fixed abode, the court staff are advised to enter the postcode for the court to enable the case results to be recorded.



## ■ Marriage

**Sarah Olney:** [\[45505\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the Law Commission's recommendations to reform wedding laws in England and Wales.

**Miss Sarah Dines:**

In July 2019, the Government invited the Law Commission to undertake a wholesale review on weddings law in England and Wales. The Law Commission report was published on 19 July 2022 and contains 57 recommendations for wholesale legislative reform.

We must now take the time to consider the report recommendations fully. As has been set out in Parliament, marriage will always be one of our most important institutions, and we have a duty to consider the implications of any changes to the law in this area very carefully. We will publish a response to the report in due course.

## ■ Marriage: Location

**Mr Steve Baker:** [\[45488\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Law Commission's report, Celebrating Marriage: A New Weddings Law, published July 2022, if he will implement the Commission's recommendations on removing restrictions on venues where civil and religious marriages can take place; and if he will make a statement.

**Miss Sarah Dines:**

The Law Commission report contains 57 recommendations for wholesale legislative reform. We must now take the time to consider the report recommendations fully. As has been set out in Parliament, marriage will always be one of our most important institutions, and we have a duty to consider the implications of any changes to the law in this area very carefully. We will publish a response to the report in due course.

## ■ Presumption of Parental Involvement Review

**Sarah Green:** [\[45222\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when the conclusions of his Department's review of the presumption of parental involvement will be published.

**Miss Sarah Dines:**

Work on the research underpinning the review of the presumption of parental involvement, which includes a literature review, a qualitative research project and a case file analysis, is underway and is due to be completed by the end of December 2022. The outcome of the review will be published in due course following the completion of the research.



## ■ Prisons: Drugs

**Grahame Morris:**

[\[45561\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent assessment he has made of the potential impact of drug rehabilitation programmes in prisons on levels of reoffending.

**Stuart Andrew:**

We know that drug treatment can help reduce levels of reoffending. For example, an experimental statistical report found an approximate 19 percentage point reduction in the 2-year reoffending rate for those offenders who successfully completed treatment, compared to those who dropped out.[1]

It is therefore vital that we engage offenders in drug treatment that supports a meaningful recovery, and lasting desistance from crime. The Government is investing a record £780m in treatment and recovery over the 3-year Spending Review period, with the Ministry of Justice investing £120m of this to get more offenders across the Criminal Justice System engaged in treatment. With this investment, we will enhance testing regimes in prison, expand the use of Incentivised Substance-Free Living units where prisoners commit to remain drug-free and undergo regular drug tests, roll out abstinence-only Drug Recovery Wings for those recovering from opiate addiction, and support prisoners to engage with community treatment ahead of their release.

[1]

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/674858/PHE-MoJ-experimental-MoJ-publication-version.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/674858/PHE-MoJ-experimental-MoJ-publication-version.pdf)

**Grahame Morris:**

[\[45777\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of establishing drug rehabilitation programmes within prisons where there are registered drug addicts.

**Stuart Andrew:**

In England, the NHS is responsible for commissioning healthcare services in all prisons including integrated substance misuse services. The Ministry of Justice works with NHS England, the Department of Health and Social Care and the Welsh Government, to ensure all prisoners access treatment that meets their needs and to support a meaningful recovery from drug dependency.

The Government is investing a record £780m in drug treatment and recovery over the 3-year Spending Review period, with the Ministry of Justice investing £120m of this to get more offenders across the Criminal Justice System engaged in treatment. With this investment, we will enhance testing regimes in prison, expand the use of Incentivised Substance-Free Living units where prisoners commit to remain drug-free and undergo regular drug tests, rollout Drug Recovery Wings to support people recovering from opiate addiction, and support prisoners to engage with community treatment ahead of their release.



**LEADER OF THE HOUSE****Older People: Abuse****Helen Hayes:**[\[44940\]](#)

To ask the Leader of the House, what discussions he (a) has had and (b) plans to have with the Prime Minister regarding a response to the letter from Baroness Greengross of 20 June 2020 on supporting older victims of abuse.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

Baroness Greengross was an inspiration to members across the House and it is testament to her that, as she approached the end of her life, her thoughts were still with others. Her legacy is immense and I know all members will want to protect it. I am sure many members of this House will have written to the relevant Government departments to continue to raise the issues she championed.

In March 2022 we published the cross-Government Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan which commits £230 million of new funding and will seek to transform the whole of society's response in order to prevent offending, support victims and pursue perpetrators, as well as to strengthen the systems in place needed to deliver these goals. As the Government continues this work, we should continue to remember Baroness Greengross and her wisdom and ideas.

**LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES****Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities: Agency Workers****Jon Trickett:**[\[41939\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how much his Department has spent on (a) agency workers and (b) agency retainer fees in (i) 2020, (ii) 2021 and (iii) 2022.

**Eddie Hughes:**

Please see below the figures for Agency staff spend

2020 - £4,203,377.57 2021 - £7,785,868.09 2022 - £2,369,262.08

We have interpreted your reference to agency retainer fees as the fees charged at the commencement of the provision of a search recruitment service; this is only applicable when recruiting for a permanent or fixed term post. Agency retainer fees are not applicable to the contingent labour market.

The department does not separate the costs of agency workers, contingent labour, or associated agency retainer fees in our accounts. A breakdown could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.



## ■ Energy Bills Rebate

**Mr Clive Betts:**

**[41927]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what estimate his Department had made of the number of households that did not pay council tax by direct debit by local authority when the Council Tax Energy Rebate was announced.

**Paul Scully:**

The Department did not make any estimates of households that did not pay council tax by direct debit by local authority when the rebate was announced.

## ■ Freeports: Business Rates

**Helen Morgan:**

**[45549]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether his Department plans to reimburse local authorities that experience reduced business rates income following the establishment of freeports.

**Lia Nici:**

Through a generous package of incentives, Freeports will unlock private investment and catalyse job creation within their regions. As part of this package, full business rates relief will be available to eligible business in Freeport tax sites in England, once designated. Relief will be available to all new businesses, and certain existing businesses where they expand, until 30 September 2026. The government will, in line with the eligibility criteria set out in the [business rates relief: local authority guidance](#), reimburse local authorities that use their discretionary relief powers under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (as amended), to grant this relief. Local authorities will also retain business rate growth on Freeport tax sites above an agreed baseline over a 25-year period, empowering them to invest in local economic priorities.

## ■ Rented Housing: Finance

**Mr Clive Betts:**

**[40735]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the £65 million support package for vulnerable renters announced by his Department on 23 October 2021, how much and what proportion of that funding has been distributed by (a) region and (b) local authority as on 20 July 2022.

**Eddie Hughes:**

The Government provided councils with £310 million in funding for the Homelessness Prevention Grant in 2021/22. They can use this funding flexibly to meet their homelessness and rough sleeping strategies – for example, to offer financial support for people to find a new home, to work with landlords to prevent evictions or to provide temporary accommodation, among other preventative measures.



In October 2021 the Government provided a £65 million top-up to this funding to help councils prevent those with rent arrears from becoming homeless. You can find the breakdown of funding by local authority level at this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homelessness-prevention-grant-2021-to-2022>.

The regional breakdown is as follows:

REGION	TOTAL ALLOCATED FUNDING FROM £65M WINTER TOP UP
London	£31,270,590
South East	£9,602,616
East of England	£5,195,237
West Midlands	£4,207,125
South West	£4,089,696
North West	£3,890,791
Yorkshire and the Humber	£2,713,453
East Midlands	£2,458,347
North East	£1,033,367

#### ■ West Cumbria Mining: Planning Permission

**Mark Jenkinson:**

[\[45637\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will publish the Planning Inspector's report for the West Cumbria mining planning application.

**Paul Scully:**

The case remains under consideration and the Inspector's report will be published alongside the final decision, as is the case for all substantive planning decisions made by Ministers.

### NORTHERN IRELAND

#### ■ Northern Ireland Office: Agency Workers

**Jon Trickett:**

[\[41949\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how much his Department has spent on (a) agency workers and (b) agency retainer fees in (i) 2020, (ii) 2021 and (iii) 2022.



**Conor Burns:**

The amount spent by the Department on:

(a) Agency workers is:

(i) **2020** - £741,407

(ii) **2021** - £728,137

(iii) **2022** - £1,634,083; and

(b) Agency retainer fees is nil for each of the three years.

■ **Northern Ireland Office: Termination of Employment**

**Ruth Jones:**

[\[46101\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how many members of staff have left his Department since 12 December 2019.

**Conor Burns:**

The number of staff members who have left the Northern Ireland Office since 12 December 2019 is 153. This figure is made up of 114 members of staff whose loan or secondment came to an end and 39 staff who not only left the department, but also the Civil Service.

TOTAL NUMBER OF LOANS ENDING	TOTAL NUMBER OF ACTUAL EXITS	TOTAL NUMBER OF THOSE WHO HAVE LEFT THE NIO
114	39	153

■ **Research: Northern Ireland**

**Aaron Bell:**

[\[901363\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what steps his Department is taking to support research and development in Northern Ireland.

**Conor Burns:**

This Government is committed to turbocharging innovation in Northern Ireland.

We are increasing investment in R&D outside the South East by at least 40% by 2030; we're investing £617m in digital and innovation through NI City Deals; and there is more to come through the £400m New Deal for Northern Ireland.

■ **UK Internal Trade: Northern Ireland**

**Bob Blackman:**

[\[901364\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what steps his Department is taking to support businesses trading between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK.



**Conor Burns:**

The Government is committed to ensuring businesses can trade freely throughout the United Kingdom. By the end of the year, we will have spent £340m helping traders process 2.3 million customs declarations through the Trader Support Service for trade between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. But this just reduces the burden on NI purchasers and GB suppliers rather than removing it, which is why we need changes to the Protocol to deliver a sustainable solution.

■ **Veterans: Northern Ireland****Ian Levy:**[\[901366\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of support for veterans who served in Northern Ireland.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

The UK Government has developed a comprehensive package of measures, ensuring that those who bravely served during the Troubles can access financial, pastoral and health support, no matter where they live in the UK.

Veterans can also apply to the Troubles Permanent Disablement Scheme - delivered by the NI Executive - which makes acknowledgement payments to permanently injured victims of the Troubles.

**TRANSPORT**■ **Buses: Diesel****Louise Haigh:**[\[45480\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate his Department has made of the amount spent each year on fuel for diesel-emitting buses.

**Karl McCartney:**

The Department does not currently collect data on the amount commercial operators spend each year on diesel fuel that is put into buses.

■ **Buses: Exhaust Emissions****Louise Haigh:**[\[45457\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many orders for zero-emission buses purchased through the Government's grant scheme have been placed outside of the UK.

**Trudy Harrison:**

In March 2021 the Government launched the Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) scheme which was open to local transport authorities who were able to bid for funding to introduce zero emission buses (ZEBs) and the infrastructure needed to support them. The Government has announced nearly £270 million funding from the ZEBRA scheme to support 1,278 ZEBs in 17 areas.



Orders for ZEBs will be placed by local transport authorities or bus operators. A number of UK bus manufacturers are well placed to benefit from funding from the ZEBRA scheme supporting jobs and a green recovery for the sector.

On 31 August 2022 First Bus announced that they had placed an order for 193 electric ZEBs as a result of funding from the ZEBRA scheme. This is the largest electric bus order in the UK outside of London. The order has been placed with UK bus manufacturer Wrightbus, securing high value green jobs in the country. The remaining successful areas are conducting procurement processes and we expect further orders to be placed in the coming months.

### ■ **Electric Scooters: Visual Impairment**

**Bell Ribeiro-Addy:**

**[45400]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of the implications for its policies of Guide Dogs' Scoot Aware report on the impact of e-scooters on people with visual impairments.

**Trudy Harrison:**

The Department has noted the Guide Dogs Scoot Aware report and officials met with Guide Dogs on 18 August 2022 to discuss the recommendations further. Reducing the impact of e-scooters on people with visual impairments, including their safe use and perceptions of safety, is a priority for the Department as we consider regulations for e-scooters. The Scoot Aware report is a useful guide and we will continue to engage with a range of stakeholders representing the needs of blind and visually impaired people, including through a public consultation, before any new arrangements come into force.

### ■ **Electric Vehicles: Vans**

**Louise Haigh:**

**[45203]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many purchases of (a) small and (b) large vans have been supported through the plug-in grant in each year since its inception.

**Trudy Harrison:**

21,218 grants have been awarded for small vans and 11,315 grants for large vans since 2019. A further 5,070 vans were awarded grants between 2012 and 2018.

Data collected on the category of van when applying for a grant has changed over time owing to grant eligibility, and we are only able to differentiate between small and large vans from 2019 onwards.

	SMALL	LARGE
2012	118	
2013	202	
2014	374	



	SMALL	LARGE
2015	950	
2016	859	
2017	1,153	
2018	1,414	
2019	3,185	12
2020	5,334	79
2021	10,954	6,000
YTD 2022	1,745	5,224

## ■ High Speed 2 Line: Leeds

**Virginia Crosbie:** [\[46214\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential impact of the Government's decision not to proceed with the HS2 rail extension to Leeds on commuters from North Wales.

**Trudy Harrison:**

The Eastern Leg of HS2 as previously planned would have gone from the West Midlands to Leeds via the East Midlands. Given the geography of the line, the impact of changes to the route upon commuters in North Wales will be minimal as the new proposed route will go from the West to East Midlands with upgrades to the existing rail network to allow high speed services to reach Nottingham and Sheffield (via Derby and Chesterfield) and a further study of how best HS2 services could reach Leeds.

We will build the Western Leg of HS2 as previously planned, which will allow the Crewe Hub to be realised, helping enhance connectivity to much of the West Midlands, Cheshire and North Wales not directly served by HS2.

## ■ Official Cars: Procurement

**Michael Fabricant:** [\[45702\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when his Department plans to award a contract for the supply of ministerial cars; and what assessment he has made of the potential merits of awarding the contract to a UK-based car manufacturer.

**Trudy Harrison:**

The Government Car Service (GCS) contracts in this financial year have already been let for cars due for replacement.



Contracts were let and delivered by Jaguar Land Rover leaving one outstanding contract with Ford Motor Co. for vehicles needed to fulfil special operational requirements.

GCS recognise the merits of awarding contracts to a UK based manufacturer and the positive effect it has on the supply chain. It is also a great promotion of British manufacturing when Ministers are seen in UK manufacturers products.

#### ■ **Railways: Fares**

**Louise Haigh:** [45368]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate his Department has made of the net cost of the Great British Rail Sale to train operators.

**Trudy Harrison:**

The Great British Rail Sale was run on a commercial basis by the rail industry. The Government worked with industry to develop and deliver the sale.

#### ■ **Railways: Finance**

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [45988]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he plans to publish the Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline.

**Trudy Harrison:**

The Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline will be published in due course.

#### ■ **Railways: Greater London**

**Helen Hayes:** [45143]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, in the context of the proposed reduction in rail service frequency and carriage numbers in London, what estimate his Department has made of the total amount of funding to be returned to the public purse in reduced industry costs in the form of leading payments.

**Trudy Harrison:**

Under the contracts with rail operators, the Department receives revenue collected and pays most operating costs incurred by the train operating companies through a regular franchise payment, made roughly every four weeks. This payment is to fund the ongoing provision of passenger rail services by these operators. For more information on these Departmental payments to passenger rail operators, please see the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dft-payments-to-passenger-rail-operators-under-emergency-agreements>



## TREASURY

### ■ Car Allowances

**Owen Thompson:** [\[45937\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an assessment of the potential financial impact on local authorities of maintaining the present Approved Mileage Allowance Payment rate.

**Owen Thompson:** [\[45938\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the Government will adopt the NHS Agenda for Change mileage reimbursement rates.

**Owen Thompson:** [\[45939\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of increasing Approved Mileage Allowance Payment rates.

**Alan Mak:**

Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (AMAPs) are used by employers to reimburse an employee's expenses for business mileage in their private vehicle.

AMAPs are intended to create administrative simplicity and certainty by using an average rate, which reflects vehicle running costs including fuel, servicing and depreciation. Fuel is therefore only one component.

The AMAP rate is advisory and employers can choose to pay more or less than the advisory rate – it is therefore ultimately up to employers to determine the rate at which they reimburse their employees. Employees who receive less than the AMAP rate can claim tax relief on the difference. Employees who receive more will be taxed on the difference.

Like all taxes and allowances, the Government keeps the AMAP rate under review.

### ■ Financial Services and Markets Bill

**Fleur Anderson:** [\[45024\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he make will make it his policy to pause the Financial Services and Markets Bill.

**Richard Fuller:**

Second Reading of the Financial Services and Markets Bill will take place on Wednesday 7 September. The Government is committed to progressing the Bill.

### ■ NHS: Pensions

**Dan Carden:** [\[44979\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the British Medical Association briefing entitled NHS Workforce and the Pension Taxation Crisis, published in June 2022, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of that report's recommendation on



introducing a tax unregistered scheme for those impacted by pension taxation in the NHS.

**Richard Fuller:**

The Government is aware of interactions between the NHS Pension Scheme and pension tax. Limits on pensions tax relief apply broadly across both the public and private sectors and it is important that these arrangements are fair. Regarding a tax unregistered pension scheme for the NHS, the Government's position continues to be that the judiciary is in a unique constitutional position and has historically had access to a tax unregistered pension scheme. The majority of NHS staff are better off from being within the current registered pension scheme as they receive tax relief on their pension contributions. The Government has no plans to set up a tax unregistered scheme for the NHS.

■ **Northern Ireland Protocol: Costs**

**Mr Gregory Campbell:**

[\[45732\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the total cost to the public purse of the Trader Support Scheme operated under the Northern Ireland Protocol between 1 January and 1 July 2022.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The total cost of the Trader Support Service from 1 January 2022 to 1 July 2022 is £63 million.

■ **Off-payroll Working**

**Stewart Malcolm McDonald:**

[\[45213\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will take steps to provide (a) individuals and (b) companies with a certificate of compliance to prove they are IR35 compliant.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The off-payroll working rules (commonly known as IR35) have been in place for over twenty years and are designed to ensure that individuals working like employees but through their own company, usually a personal service company (PSC), pay broadly the same Income Tax and National Insurance contributions (NICs) as those who are directly employed.

Following reforms in 2017 and 2021, public authorities and medium and large-sized clients in the private sector are responsible for deciding if the off-payroll working rules apply to an engagement.

Organisations must take reasonable care when making status determinations under the rules and are already required to issue a Status Determination Statement (SDS) for all contractors determined to be working like an employee. Failure to take reasonable care will result in the organisation becoming responsible for the worker's Income Tax and National Insurance Contributions.



HMRC has undertaken extensive activity to support organisations in operating the rules correctly and have published their [compliance strategy](#) for dealing with non-compliance.

## ■ Public Sector: Inflation

**Dan Carden:** [\[45447\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment he has made of the effect of higher levels of inflation on spending on public services.

**Chris Philp:**

The plans announced at Spending Review 2021 mean that total departmental spending is set to rise to £566 billion in 2024-25 – a cash increase of £150bn per annum over the Parliament.

It is standard practice for the government to set cash budgets, and for departments to manage the risk of inflation. However, the government is also driving a renewed focus on efficiency, to ensure that departments can continue to deliver on their commitments and make their resources go further.

The government is taking important steps to get inflation under control through strong, independent monetary policy, responsible tax and spending decisions, and reforms to boost our productivity and growth.

The Government will be announcing measures shortly to address energy price costs.

## ■ Tax Allowances

**Alex Cunningham:** [\[45818\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has plans to (a) review inheritance policy and (b) increase the annual allowance for gifts.

**Lucy Frazer:**

As with all taxes, the Government keeps this under review.

## WALES

## ■ High Speed 2 Line: North Wales

**Virginia Crosbie:** [\[46215\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, with reference to the paper entitled Integrated Rail Plan for the North and Midlands, CP 490, published on 18 November 2021, what recent assessment he has made of the potential economic merits of the proposed HS2 route to the north of Wales.

**Sir Robert Buckland:**

By improving regional connectivity, the Integrated Rail Plan will unify labour markets, so that people can access a much wider range of jobs; bring businesses closer together; and improve access to key international gateways and markets so they



become even more attractive locations for business investment. Crewe Northern Connection would significantly improve connections from North Wales to the HS2 network, bringing many North Wales passengers within 2 hours 15 minutes of London.

## WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

### ■ Period Poverty

**Cat Smith:** [\[45284\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, whether it remains her Department's policy to end period poverty by 2025.

**Ruth Jones:** [\[45367\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, whether it remains her Department's policy to end period poverty by 2025.

**Peter Dowd:** [\[45383\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, whether it remains her Department's policy to end period poverty by 2025.

**Amanda Solloway:**

Period poverty is an issue the government takes very seriously and has taken a number of steps to address the problem.

Since January 2020, a Department for Education scheme provides free period products in schools and 16-19 education institutions in England. 94% of eligible secondary schools had accessed this scheme by December 2021. We are pleased to confirm that the continuation of free period products in schools in England for all learners who need them until 2024. We have expanded the range of products included to ensure more environmentally friendly and sustainable products, based on user feedback.

Additionally, from 1 January 2021, the 'tampon tax' has been abolished - with a zero rate of VAT applying to all period products. Prior to the abolition of the tax, a Tampon Tax Fund was in place to allocate the funds generated from the VAT on period products, to projects which improve the lives of disadvantaged women and girls. A final round of £11.25 million in grant funding was awarded in November 2021 to distribute the VAT collected on period products in the final nine months of the 2020/21 financial year, before the tax ended.

As well as these steps, in 2019, NHS England announced that it would offer period products to every hospital patient who needs them and the Home Office changed the law to ensure that all people in custody are provided with health and hygiene products for free, to include period products.

In March 2020, in light of COVID-19, the work of the Period Poverty Taskforce was paused to free up resources to focus on the pandemic.



## WORK AND PENSIONS

### ■ ASW: Workplace Pensions

**Liz Saville Roberts:** [\[45501\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will make an assessment of how much (a) Allied Steel and Wire pensioners have received collectively as of 2 September 2022 and since their pension deal was agreed in 2007 and (b) those pensioners would have received collectively as of 2 September 2022 in the even that their pension deal been fully linked to inflation.

**Liz Saville Roberts:** [\[45969\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will make an assessment of the real-terms change in the value of pension payments that were not index linked for Allied Steel and Wire pensioners under the FAS in each of the last five years as a result of inflation.

**Guy Opperman:**

The information required to carry out each assessment is not readily available and to obtain it would incur disproportionate costs. The Secretary of State has therefore made no such assessment and does not intend to do so at this stage.

### ■ Bereavement Benefits

**Ruth Cadbury:** [\[45438\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether she expects that the draft Bereavement Benefits Remedial Order will be laid before Parliament for a second period before December 2022.

**Guy Opperman:**

This issue remains an absolute priority for this department, and we are working at pace to lay the Order as soon after the return to Parliament as possible.

### ■ Bereavement Support Payment

**Ruth Cadbury:** [\[45422\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many unsuccessful applications for Bereavement Support Payments have been made since 2018.

**Guy Opperman:**

The published Bereavement Support Payments claims received statistics are easily accessible on [Stat-Xplore](#), which provides a breakdown of those claims allowed and disallowed monthly back to Apr 17.

The total number of Disallowed Bereavement Support Payment claims from January 2018 to March 2022 was 22,447. Data in Stat-Xplore is only available until March 2022.



**Peter Grant:**

[\[45898\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when her Department plans to publish the remedial order on the eligibility criteria for bereavement support payments.

**Guy Opperman:**

This issue remains an absolute priority for this department, and we are working at pace to lay the Order as soon after the return to Parliament as possible.

#### ■ **Canada: British Nationals Abroad**

**Patricia Gibson:**

[\[45890\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the recent incident where state pensions paid to UK pensioners living in Canada was suspended.

**Guy Opperman:**

We understand that some customers in Canada did not receive life certificate forms sent to them by the Department. Our outbound postal supplier has confirmed that the life certificates were issued and dispatched from the UK.

In line with the process for all overseas state pension recipients, the Department suspended payment for those customers who did not return their form within the 16-week window. After being alerted to the failure to deliver within Canada, we reinstated all suspended payments and issued any arrears owed.

We have also extended the time period for Canadian customers to return their life certificate forms, having confirmed that certificates are now being delivered.

#### ■ **Canada: Social Security**

**Patricia Gibson:**

[\[45888\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of Canada's recent request to discuss a reciprocal social security agreement.

**Guy Opperman:**

There are two separate social security arrangements in place between the UK and Canada, made in 1995 and 1998. The UK Government has no plans to change the social security relationship with Canada.

#### ■ **Children: Maintenance**

**Sarah Green:**

[\[45518\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if her Department will make an assessment of the adequacy of the powers of the Child Maintenance Service to help prevent financial coercion through the non-payment of child maintenance.

**Julie Marson:**

The Child Maintenance Service seeks to constantly review and improve its processes and services including the approach it takes to supporting customers who are



experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse, including financial coercion. Through mandatory domestic abuse awareness training, the service undertakes to train all its caseworkers to be aware of and if possible identify any instances of abuse and signpost these customers to specialist domestic abuse organisations and to a range of information and advice about staying safe. This is supported through additional guidance related to domestic abuse.

There are no specific powers related to financial coercion. However, where 'receiving parents' are not receiving the full maintenance they are entitled to, a case can be moved from the Direct Pay part of the scheme onto the Collect and Pay service, whereby we can then use our administrative and legal powers up to and including enforcement activity to secure payment.

It is important to note new powers under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 extends the offences of controlling coercive behaviour to post separation. We will be reviewing how we change and align our processes to the requirements of the Act.

It may also be useful to mention that CMG has recently been subject to an independent review of its approach to domestic abuse.

#### ■ **Department for Work and Pensions: Telephone Services**

**Jonathan Edwards:**

[R] [\[45155\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when she plans for the Welsh language telephone service to be fully functioning.

**Guy Opperman:**

The Department for Work and Pensions has made a commitment in our Welsh Language Scheme to treat the Welsh and English languages equally and ensure that all services provided for the public in Wales are available in Welsh, as well as English.

All DWP customers are able to access telephony services in Welsh either directly through a dedicated Welsh language helpline or by selecting the required Interactive Voice Response option. Callers to Carer's Allowance (CA) and Attendance Allowance (AA) helplines who wish to speak to someone in Welsh currently receive a call-back from a Welsh speaker. A Welsh language option will be implemented on these telephone helplines in October 2022.

All our service line telephone numbers are available on GOV.UK.

#### ■ **Employment and Support Allowance**

**Ben Lake:**

[\[45546\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many and what proportion of people affected by the underpayment of benefits after transitioning from incapacity benefit to employment and support allowance have (a) applied for and (b) received compensation; and whether her Department has contacted every person eligible for compensation.



**Chloe Smith:**

The information requested is not collated centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

**Household Support Fund: Rented Housing****Mr Clive Betts:**[\[40736\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much and what proportion of the Household Support Fund has been used to help renters pay off rent arrears by (a) region and (b) local authority as on 22 July 2022.

**David Rutley:**

We do not hold this information.

Local Authorities have discretion on how their funding is used within the scope set out in the fund guidance and the accompanying grant determination. Support with rent arrears is not the primary intent of the Household Support Fund and should not be the focus of spend.

**Members: Correspondence****Rosie Cooper:**[\[45031\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when she plans to respond to the letter of 31 May 2022 from the hon. Member for West Lancashire in relation to ESA deductions, reference ZA59073.

**Julie Marson:**

A reply was sent to the hon. Member by the Director for Disability Services, Decision Making and Working Age, on behalf of the Secretary of State, on 6 September 2022.

**Gerald Jones:**[\[45955\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when she plans to respond to the correspondence of 11 July 2022 from the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney, reference POSCMP2022/53996.

**Guy Opperman:**

DWP provided a telephone response to the office of Gerald Jones MP on 5 September 2022 in relation to his constituent's enquiry and a full written response has also been issued today.

**Pension Credit****Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[\[45028\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether her Department has any plans to increase the take up of Pension Credit in light of the cost of living crisis.

**Guy Opperman:**

We have already undertaken a range of actions this year to raise awareness of Pension Credit and increase take-up including a comprehensive multi-channel paid



advertising campaign, launched on 3 April. This has included newspaper, social media and website advertising, as well as radio promotion, messaging on public transport and messages on screens in hundreds of medical centres across Great Britain.

We have provided charities and other stakeholders working across local communities with updated information and resources, to help them to promote Pension Credit.

The Pension Credit campaign is aligned to the broader Cost of Living branding to ensure people understand its association with the Government's Cost of Living support package. In addition to this, Pension Credit is highlighted on the Help for Households website to maximise visibility and drive additional visitors and help encourage claims.

Our campaign has also focussed on encouraging the private sector to help drive up claims, and to reach those who may have been reticent about claiming Pension Credit. On 15 June DWP held a second Pension Credit Day of Action with broadcasters, regional and national newspapers and other partners encouraging them to reach out to pensioners and their family and friends, through their channels. Our internal management information suggests it has been highly effective – with over 10,000 Pension Credit claims made across Great Britain that week – an increase of 275% compared to the same week the year before, which included the 2021 Pension Credit day of Action.

It is more important than ever before to ensure that eligible pensioners claim Pension Credit, because a successful claim qualifies them for the Cost of Living payments. Our messaging highlighted that Pension Credit claims can be backdated 3 months so claims made by 18 August and successfully backdated would also be eligible for the first Cost of Living payment. Ongoing awards will also qualify for the second Cost of Living payment.

The work to raise awareness of Pension Credit and increase take-up is ongoing.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

**[45986]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the average processing time was for new Pension Credit claims made between 1 March 2022 and 1 September 2022.

**Guy Opperman:**

The Average Actual Clearance Time for Pension Credit New Claims between March 2022 and July 2022 is 39.73 days. August data is not yet available.

Source: Customer Account Management System

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

**[45987]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent steps her Department has taken to ensure claims for Pension Credit are processed in a timely manner.



**Guy Opperman:**

The success of the recent Pension Credit campaign together with the Cost of Living Crisis is driving the volume of Pension Credit claims being submitted to an all time high.

Additional resources are being deployed to ensure we deal with the increase as quickly as possible. We are also working closely with stakeholders and service providers to identify potential process enhancements that will drive efficiency and reduce processing times.

Successful claims and arrears are backdated and paid accordingly, to ensure those who are entitled do not miss out.

**■ Personal Independence Payment and Universal Credit: Terminal Illnesses****Vicky Foxcroft:****[45950]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the current average processing time is for applications for (a) Personal Independence Payment and (b) Universal Credit under the end-of-life criteria.

**Julie Marson:**

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) processing times are available as part of the PIP Official Statistics quarterly release. The latest release, with data available to April 2022, is available here: [tables-pip-statistics-to-april-2022.xlsx \(live.com\)](#)

Table 2A provides processing time for New Claims made under for Special Rules for End of Life.

The new 'end of life' process was introduced from April 2022, analysts are currently developing and quality assuring the methodology for identifying UC end of life claims. We are therefore not yet in a position to provide average processing times for Universal Credit applications under the end-of-life criteria.

**■ Social Security Benefits: Disability****Sir Stephen Timms:****[45317]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate she has made of the number of claimants of disability benefits who miss hospital appointments through being unable to afford to attend them; and if she will make a statement.

**Chloe Smith:**

PIP is designed to help claimants with extra costs arising from needs due to their disability. Individuals may use the benefit in the best way they see fit to support them.

Information concerning missed hospital appointments is not available.



## ■ Universal Credit

**Catherine West:**

**[45417]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if her Department will make it its policy to collect data on what sectors Universal Credit claimants work in, including the number of claimants who are (a) gainfully self-employed and (2) in the start-up period.

**Julie Marson:**

The Department does not routinely collect data on the sectors in which Universal Credit claimants work, including self-employed work. However, we are currently exploring what additional information we could collect to help Work Coaches support claimants in their search for work.

## ■ Workplace Pensions

**Valerie Vaz:**

**[45798]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what support for pension tracing she is providing to people who are (a) about to retire and (b) unaware of the details of the employers they have worked for the purposes of ensuring that they have access to their full pension entitlement.

**Guy Opperman:**

The Government has existing provision to assist people in finding contact details of schemes they may have pensions with. 'Find pension contact details' is a customer-facing, self-service system on GOV.UK. This service will trace the administrator of a specific pension scheme and provide contact details to the individual so they can contact that scheme to help reconnect with a pension pot. There is also a DWP agent service, the Pension Tracing Service, which provides the same information via the telephone for individuals who are unable to use the 'Find Pensions Contact Details' service.

Furthermore, when parliamentary time allows, regulations to introduce pensions dashboards will be laid before Parliament, with dashboards subsequently launching to the public in the coming years. Pensions dashboards will make it easy for people to see their pensions information, including their State Pension, in one place online at the touch of a smartphone, laptop, or computer at home. This will put people in control and reconnect them with their lost pension pots, transforming how they think and plan for retirement.