



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 3 November 2022 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:33 P.M., 03 November 2022). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

ATTORNEY GENERAL

■ Attorney General: Email

Emily Thornberry: [\[74597\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what assessment she has made of whether her predecessor forwarded official documents from her government email to her personal email address from (a) 13 February 2020 to 2 March 2021 and (b) 10 September 2021 to 6 September 2022; and what was the outcome of that assessment.

Emily Thornberry: [\[74598\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, whether her Department has carried out checks to determine if any classified documents were forwarded by her predecessor from her government email to her personal email address from (a) 13 February 2020 to 2 March 2021 and (b) 10 September 2021 to 6 September 2022.

Victoria Prentis:

There is a place for the use of a variety of digital channels in fast moving modern environments. Ministers will have informal conversations from time to time, in person or remotely, and relevant content from such discussions is passed back to officials. They will also use a variety of digital communications channels for personal, political, and Parliamentary matters.

■ Serious Fraud Office: Standards

Matt Vickers: [\[69842\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what recent assessment he has made of the performance of Serious Fraud Office on complex cases of fraud.

Michael Tomlinson:

THE LAW OFFICERS REGULARLY MEET THE DIRECTOR OF THE SERIOUS FRAUD OFFICE (SFO) AND THE SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM TO DISCUSS THE SFO'S PROGRESS IN TACKLING THE TOP-LEVEL OF SERIOUS OR COMPLEX FRAUD, BRIBERY, AND CORRUPTION. THE SFO IS CONTINUING TO DELIVER SIGNIFICANT RESULTS IN CASES OF COMPLEX FRAUD. THE 2022/23 FINANCIAL YEAR WILL SEE THE SFO PROSECUTE SEVEN CASES IN COURT, FIVE OF WHICH INVOLVE COMPLEX FRAUD. THREE OF THESE TRIALS HAVE ALREADY CONCLUDED, RESULTING IN FOUR FRAUDSTERS BEING CONVICTED AND SENTENCED TO A TOTAL OF 48 YEARS IN PRISON AND JUSTICE BEING DELIVERED TO THOUSANDS OF VICTIMS. I HAVE INCLUDED FURTHER DETAILS BELOW: ANDREW SKEENE AND JUNIE BOWERS, WHO WERE BEHIND A FRAUDULENT "GREEN" INVESTMENT SCHEME THAT TOOK IN APPROXIMATELY £37 MILLION OF FRAUDULENT INVESTMENTS FROM AROUND 2,000 VICTIMS, WERE CONVICTED AND SENTENCED TO 11 YEARS' IMPRISONMENT. DAVID AMES, WHO WAS BEHIND A £226 MILLION FRAUD THAT DECEIVED OVER 8,000 UK INVESTORS, WAS CONVICTED AND SENTENCED TO 12 YEARS' IMPRISONMENT. TIMOTHY SCHOOLS, WHO WAS BEHIND A "NO-WIN-NO-FEE" FRAUD THAT SCAMMED £100 MILLION FROM AROUND 500 INVESTORS, WAS CONVICTED SENTENCED TO 14 YEARS' IMPRISONMENT.

■ Sexual Offences: Privacy

Alex Sobel:

[\[72444\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what steps she is taking to protect the privacy rights of survivors of sexual offence cases in a court of law by ensuring the non disclosure of their counselling records.

Michael Tomlinson:

IN MAY, THE GOVERNMENT PUBLISHED THE REVIEW OF DISCLOSURE AND AMENDED THE DISCLOSURE GUIDELINES, IN ORDER TO FURTHER SUPPORT VICTIMS OF CRIME. UPDATED PRINCIPLES ON ACCESSING THIRD PARTY MATERIAL HAVE STRENGTHENED PROTECTIONS FOR VICTIMS AND RESTRICT ACCESS TO SUCH MATERIAL ONLY WHERE IT IS NECESSARY, PROPORTIONATE AND LINKED TO A REASONABLE LINE OF INQUIRY IN THE CASE. THE POLICE MUST HAVE CLEAR, WRITTEN REASONS IN PLACE BEFORE ACCESSING ANY MATERIAL SUCH AS THERAPY NOTES. THIS IS A NEW REQUIREMENT WHICH IMPROVES TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY. THE CROWN PROSECUTION SERVICE (CPS) HAS ALSO ISSUED CLEAR GUIDANCE ON ACCESSING PRE-TRIAL THERAPY NOTES. THIS MAKES CLEAR THAT VICTIMS SHOULD GET THE HELP THAT THEY FEEL THEY NEED AND THAT NEITHER INVESTIGATORS NOR PROSECUTORS WILL STAND IN THE WAY OF THIS.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY■ **Boiler Upgrade Scheme: Small Businesses****Seema Malhotra:**[\[72277\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much public money has been made available to small and medium-sized enterprises through the Boiler Upgrade Scheme.

Graham Stuart:

The Boiler Upgrade Scheme has a budget of £450m over three years. Installers certified by the Microgeneration Certification Scheme can apply on behalf of homeowners and small business owners for grants of up to £6,000 on a first come, first served basis. Further analysis on the size of installer businesses that are benefiting from the scheme will be undertaken as part of the evaluation of the scheme.

■ **Business: Closures****Seema Malhotra:**[\[72282\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many business deaths there were in (a) the UK and (b) each of the G7 countries excluding the UK in the last quarter.

Kevin Hollinrake:

In Q3 2022, there were 95,315 business closures in the UK.

Source – Business demography, quarterly experimental statistics (ONS)

The table below provides the latest figures on the number of business exits for each of the G7 countries, where available:

COUNTRY	BUSINESS EXIT	TIME PERIOD
Canada	118,736	Q3 2021
France	Data not available	
Germany	155,233	Q1 2022
Italy	66,814	Q2 2022
Japan	Data not available	
United States	390,000	Q2 2021

Source - Timely Indicators of Entrepreneurship by Enterprise Characteristics - [Number of enterprise exits](#)(OECD)

■ Climate Change Convention and Energy Charter Treaty

Ruth Cadbury:

[\[74722\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 31 October 2022 to Question 72291 on Climate Change Convention and Energy Charter Treaty, by what method did the Government assess the compatibility of the Energy Charter Treaty with the Paris Agreement.

Graham Stuart:

The UK approach to the Treaty's modernisation has been to ensure compatibility between the ECT and modern international agreements, including the Paris Agreement.

Modernised provisions extend the scope of the Treaty to protect investment in green technologies required for the global energy transition, such as carbon capture, utilisation and storage, and low carbon hydrogen. New provisions allow ECT Contracting Parties to phase-out their investment protection for fossil fuels in line with their own decarbonisation targets. The modernised treaty also reaffirms and strengthens Contracting Parties' right to introduce measures for legitimate policy objectives, including to mitigate climate change.

Ruth Cadbury:

[\[74723\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will publish the assessment carried out by his Department in relation to the Energy Charter Treaty's compatibility with the Paris Agreement.

Ruth Cadbury:

[\[74724\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 31 October 2022 to Question 72291 on Climate Change Convention and Energy Charter Treaty, whether the explanatory memorandum will include the assessment carried out by his Department in relation to the compatibility of the Energy Charter Treaty with the Paris Agreement.

Graham Stuart:

The Explanatory Memorandum, which will be laid in Parliament with modernised Treaty text once further decisions have been taken about the adoption and ratification of the modernised Treaty, will set out the outcome of negotiations. This will include the Government's assessment of how climate provisions have been strengthened to ensure compatibility between the ECT and modern international agreements, including the Paris Agreement.

■ Consumer Goods: Safety

Gerald Jones:

[\[74797\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he plans to bring forward legislative proposals on holding online marketplaces responsible for the safety of products sold on their platforms.

Kevin Hollinrake:

The Government recognises that whilst the growth of eCommerce has brought benefits for consumers and businesses, it has also brought new challenges, including the sale of non-compliant and unsafe products via online marketplaces, often by third-party sellers.

This is one of the reasons the Government is conducting a review of the Product Safety framework. The Government Response to the Call for Evidence published in November 2021 is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/uk-product-safety-review-call-for-evidence>. A consultation, including proposals to take further steps to address unsafe products sold online, is currently being finalised.

■ Coronavirus: Vaccination**Jim Shannon:**[\[72266\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department is taking steps to help support proactive and predictive immunology research into second and third generation covid-19 vaccinations.

George Freeman:

UKRI will be committing at least £21m in 2023 to support major new research consortia addressing key challenges to underpin development of second and third generation COVID-19 vaccinations. These consortia will provide sustained funding to address key issues in understanding viral evolution, future variant risks, immune responses to infection and vaccination and how to drive sustained, mucosal immune responses. The consortia will be multidisciplinary and cross-institutional, will be supported for 5 years and are encouraged to engage with industry partners.

■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Recruitment**Florence Eshalomi:**[\[75000\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much his Department spent on external recruitment consultants in 2021.

Kevin Hollinrake:

The Department spent £398,138 on external recruitment consultants in 2021.

BEIS external recruitment consultants expenditure is published on GOV.UK [here](#), under the expense type 'Recruitment Consultancy Costs'.

■ Energy Bill Relief Scheme: Retail Trade**Bill Esterson:**[\[73833\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 27 October 2022 to Question 68531 on Retail Trade: Energy, if he will make an estimate of the number of high street businesses that will be eligible for the Energy Bill Relief Scheme.

Graham Stuart:

The Energy Bill Relief Scheme will provide a price reduction to ensure that all eligible businesses and other non-domestic customers are protected from excessively high energy bills over the winter period. It will be for individual energy suppliers to identify which of their customers meet the eligibility criteria, and to apply EBRS discounts. It is therefore not possible to provide an estimate of how many high street businesses may be eligible for the scheme.

Bill Esterson:[\[73834\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 27 October 2022 to Question 68531 on Retail Trade: Energy, if he will make an estimate of the average payment that will be made to eligible high street businesses through the Energy Bill Relief Scheme.

Graham Stuart:

The Energy Bill Relief Scheme provides a discount on non-domestic energy bills for eligible customers, rather than providing a payment. The discount received is dependent on the type of contract a business was on when the contract was agreed, and the amount of energy consumed. This is calculated by each business's energy supplier and applied automatically. It is therefore not possible to provide an average payment figure for high street businesses.

Energy Bills Rebate**Mike Amesbury:**[\[72452\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department made an assessment of the potential implications of variations in regional energy distribution costs for the Energy Bills Support Scheme.

Graham Stuart:

The Energy Bills Support Scheme is a broad based scheme which recognises that the high costs of energy are being felt by many households across the UK this winter. The Government has worked at pace to ensure the benefits are felt this winter. No assessment has been made of the implications of variations in regional energy distribution costs.

Simon Lightwood:[\[73174\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department will take steps to provide support for people who do not have electricity provided through a domestic electricity supply contract and cannot access the Energy Bills Support Scheme.

Graham Stuart:

As announced on 29 July, the EBSS Alternative Funding will be available to provide equivalent support of £400 for energy bills for households that will not receive the EBSS. This includes those who do not have a domestic electricity meter or a direct relationship with an energy supplier.

The Government is finalising the details of the Alternative Funding to ensure the process is up and running for applications this winter.

■ Energy Bills Rebate: Northern Ireland

Carla Lockhart: [\[74996\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he expects households in Northern Ireland to receive Energy Bill Support Scheme payments.

Graham Stuart:

Households in Northern Ireland will receive a £400 discount on their energy bills through the Northern Ireland Energy Bills Support Scheme (NI EBSS) this winter.

This will offer the same level of support as households in Great Britain are receiving under the Energy Bill Support Scheme (EBSS). The Government is working at pace to deliver a solution which accounts for the Northern Ireland market and to provide the support as soon as possible.

■ Energy: Prices

Charlotte Nichols: [\[72472\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department has taken to reduce the cost of energy since 1 January 2022.

Graham Stuart:

The Government has announced unprecedented support within its Growth Plan to protect households and businesses from high energy prices. The Energy Price Guarantee will save a typical British household around £700 this winter. This is on top of existing government plans to give all households £400 off their energy bills through the Energy Bill Support Scheme. The Alternative Fuel Payment (AFP) will provide a one-off payment of £100 to households that use alternative fuels for heating instead of mains gas. Eligible households in Great Britain will receive £100 credit on their electricity bill this winter.

■ Equal Pay: Ethnic Groups

Sir Stephen Timms: [\[74492\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans he has to introduce obligatory pay gap reporting with respect to ethnic minority employees.

Kevin Hollinrake:

The Government responded to the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities' report and recommendations with the "Inclusive Britain" report which was published in March 2022. In this report, Government set out that ethnicity pay reporting will be voluntary and we will not be legislating for mandatory ethnicity pay reporting at this stage.

■ EU Law

Jim Shannon:

[\[71075\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he is taking steps to mitigate against the reductions in regulations envisaged by the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The powers included in the Bill will strengthen the Government's ability to amend, repeal and replace Retained EU Law (REUL) contained in secondary legislation. This is not about reducing protections, but will provide a more efficient and effective route for consolidating, amending and removing unnecessary REUL.

■ Fireworks: Scotland

Patrick Grady:

[\[74744\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the potential implications for his policies of changes to fireworks regulations in Scotland.

Kevin Hollinrake:

The Scottish Government has introduced legislative changes on fireworks in response to issues specific to Scotland. The Government continues to monitor these changes and work closely with all Devolved Administrations to ensure the safety of the public across the UK.

■ Fracking: Licensing

Mark Jenkinson:

[\[74921\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what impact a presumption against issuing any further Hydraulic Fracturing Consents on the basis of potential seismic events may have on (a) sourcing geothermal energy and (b) exploration for lithium and other minerals.

Mark Jenkinson:

[\[74922\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what impact a presumption against issuing any further Hydraulic Fracturing Consents on the basis of potential seismic events may have on (a) sourcing geothermal energy, (b) exploration for lithium and other minerals and (c) other planning consents that may result in seismic activity.

Graham Stuart:

The Infrastructure Act 2015 set out provisions for 'associated hydraulic fracturing' where it is defined as hydraulic fracturing of shale or strata encased in shale for the purposes of searching for or extracting petroleum or natural gas. The presumption against issuing any further Hydraulic Fracturing Consents on the basis of potential seismic events should therefore have no impact on sourcing geothermal energy or the exploration for lithium and other minerals.

The control and mitigation of induced seismicity for deep geothermal projects is based on the British Standard BS 6472-2 (BSI, 2008), which defines limits for acceptable levels of ground vibrations caused by blasting and quarrying, and other local planning authority guidelines for blasting, quarrying, and mining. These thresholds are defined in terms of measured ground velocity rather than seismicity.

■ **Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme: North West**

Bill Esterson:

[\[74647\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 24 October 2022 to Question 65714 on the LAD2 Scheme in Sefton, for what reason the LAD2 scheme in the North West region was closed.

Graham Stuart:

The LAD2 scheme in the North West region was closed on 30 September 2022 in accordance with the closure of the LAD Scheme in all regions. LAD 2 was originally part of the economic stimulus package in response to COVID19 which had a limited timeframe for delivery.

■ **Heat Pumps**

Bill Esterson:

[\[74645\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 25 October 2022 to Question 71041 on heat pumps, what his Department's plans are to increase the installation rate of heat pumps in homes.

Graham Stuart:

Heat pumps have a critical role to play in decarbonising how we heat our homes and businesses. Therefore the Government has set an ambition to grow the market to 600,000 heat pump installations per year by 2028, as set out in the Ten Point Plan. To support this ambition, the Government is undertaking a comprehensive package of policy measures, including targeted regulation, a new market-based mechanism and public investment, through programmes such as the £450 million Boiler Upgrade Scheme.

■ **Heat Pumps: Sefton Central**

Bill Esterson:

[\[74646\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 25 October 2022 to Question 71041 on heat pumps, how many heat pumps have been installed in homes in Sefton Central constituency as of 31 October 2022.

Graham Stuart:

The Microgeneration Certification Scheme Installations Database shows that as of 31 October 2022, thirty-three heat pump installations were registered in the Sefton Central constituency.

The database does not include heat pumps installed without Government funding support, such as in new buildings, which are not typically recorded in the Microgeneration Certification Scheme Installations Database.

■ Hydrogen: Production

Bill Esterson:

[\[74648\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the policy paper entitled Hydrogen Strategy Update to the Market: July 2022, published in July 2022, what the UK's low carbon hydrogen production capacity is.

Graham Stuart:

Very few low carbon hydrogen production projects are currently in operation. However, up to 20GW of potential low carbon hydrogen capacity has been identified in the UK pipeline. The Government has set its ambition for up to 10GW of hydrogen production capacity in the UK by 2030, with at least half being electrolytic hydrogen. The £240m Net Zero Hydrogen Fund and Hydrogen Business Model were launched to kickstart investment in UK low carbon production. The first Hydrogen Strategy update, published in July 2022, included a summary of existing UK hydrogen production.

■ Iron and Steel: Finance

Bill Esterson:

[\[74644\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 26 October 2022 to Question 67891 on Iron and Steel: Finance, what were the conclusions of his discussions with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the development of the steel sector since the UK's exit from the EU.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

My Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy took up his role on 25 October and will engage with my Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer as a priority, to consider the best way to work together to secure the best outcomes for our steel industry.

The Government is working with industry on its transition to a low carbon future. Our ongoing support for the sector's low-carbon development includes access to over £1 billion to support industry with energy efficiency, decarbonisation, low carbon infrastructure and research and development. This is in addition to the £780m we have provided the steel sector since 2013 to help with energy costs.

■ Medical Equipment: Regulation

Chi Onwurah:

[\[72253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to his Department's Policy Paper entitled Life Sciences Vision, published in July 2021, what steps he is taking to support the medical technology sector through the regulatory system.

George Freeman:

Since Life Sciences Vision publication, the Government has made some significant progress in improving standards for medical technologies (MedTech). The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has been actively engaging with industry to implement the future Medical Device Regulations. On 25 October, MHRA published an implementation plan to support the MedTech sector through the changes. The current standstill period will be extended by 12 months to July 2024. The final legislation will introduce transitional arrangements and be accompanied by guidance to support industry. MHRA is working towards designating more UK Approved Bodies.

■ **Parental Pay****Sir Stephen Timms:**[\[74491\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans he has to increase the rate of income replacement for maternity, paternity, and parental leave.

Kevin Hollinrake:

My Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions is currently conducting his statutory annual review of state pensions and benefits rates, this includes statutory parental payments such as maternity and paternity pay. The outcome of that review will be announced in due course.

■ **Post Offices: ICT****Mr Jonathan Lord:**[\[71059\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent steps he has taken to support postmasters affected by the Horizon scandal.

Kevin Hollinrake:

The Government is providing substantial funding to help Post Office give postmasters affected by the Horizon scandal the compensation they deserve.

Post Office is negotiating compensation with wrongly convicted postmasters, paying interim compensation of up to £100,000; as of 17 October, £7.6 million has been paid.

The Government is funding additional compensation to those non-convicted postmasters who took Post Office to the High Court. As of 24 October, interim payments of £15.9 million had been made.

The Historical Shortfall Scheme is compensating other non-convicted postmasters. As of 26 October, offers totalling £57 million had been made to 85% of eligible HSS claimants.

■ Renewable Energy: Prices

Mr Alistair Carmichael: [\[74542\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he plans to take to ensure that community-owned wind farms, solar farms and hydro schemes that reinvest their surplus back into local communities are exempted from any new regulations created or implemented under section 16 of the Energy Prices Act 2022.

Graham Stuart:

The role of community and locally owned renewable energy schemes is supported by the Government and policy developments will reflect this.

■ Science: Research

Chi Onwurah: [\[72254\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what support the Government provides to foreign (a) companies and (b) scientists seeking to collaborate with UK scientists on a specific policy or research area.

George Freeman:

We want world-leading innovators, businesses and scientists to collaborate with and see the UK as the place to make their ideas reality.

We have committed £750m of funding, across this spending review period, to supporting international partnerships focused both on development challenges and wider research goals. We also fund a range of fellowships which attract world-class researchers and are supporting implementation of visa routes to make it as simple as possible for talented individuals to come to the UK.

■ Small Businesses: Climate Change

Seema Malhotra: [\[72278\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much public funding his Department has made available to SMEs through the Climate Change Agreements Scheme in each financial year since 2019-2020.

Graham Stuart:

The Climate Change Agreements scheme provides participating organisations with significant reductions to the Climate Change Levy rates paid on their energy consumption in return for meeting energy efficiency or carbon reduction targets. The estimated costs of non-structural reliefs are published by HM Revenue and Customs.

These estimate that the Climate Change Agreements Scheme provided reductions in Climate Change Levy to participating organisations of £245m in 2019-20, £210m in 2020-21 and £255m in 2021-22. Organisations of all sizes have been able to participate in the scheme provided they operate an eligible process. Estimates of the total benefit for SMEs only are not available.

■ Small Businesses: Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Renewable Energy

Seema Malhotra:

[\[72279\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much public funding his Department has provided to SMEs to (a) transition to renewable energy and (b) reach net zero since December 2019.

Graham Stuart:

The Government is continuing to support UK businesses to meet their net zero commitments via the UK Business Climate Hub. Alongside providing advice and guidance on net zero, small UK businesses are encouraged to join the UN's 'Race to Zero' initiative – a global effort to reduce the amount of greenhouse gases to zero by 2050. Currently, more than 3,639 UK small businesses have joined the Race to Zero.

The new £450 million [Boiler Upgrade Scheme \(BUS\)](#) offers grants up to £6,000 towards heat pumps and, in limited circumstances, biomass boilers. The scheme is open to both domestic and small non-domestic properties.

■ Small Modular Reactors

Alberto Costa:

[\[72308\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to support UK-based engineering companies in developing Small Modular Nuclear reactors.

Graham Stuart:

The Government is providing £210m of funding for Rolls-Royce SMR, which will be matched by industry. Rolls-Royce SMR is the largest engineering collaboration the UK has seen and the UK is working towards maximising British content, creating new intellectual property, reinvigorating supply chains and positioning our country as a global leader in innovative nuclear technologies.

The application window for the £120million Future Nuclear Enabling Fund opened on the 2nd of September. This fund will provide targeted support to potential new and advanced nuclear projects seeking to enter the UK nuclear market and will be open to all nuclear fission technologies.

■ Technology: Competition

Mr David Davis:

[\[72200\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department has made an assessment with the Competition and Markets Authority of the implications for their policies of mobile phone policies that (a) remove functionality when using third party components and (b) other potentially anti-competitive practices by (i) Apple and (ii) other companies in the technology sector.

Kevin Hollinrake:

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) is the independent non-Ministerial department responsible for investigating competition issues in the UK. The

Government has ensured that the CMA has significant powers to investigate and act if it finds that companies are behaving anti-competitively in a market.

■ Tuberculosis: Medical Treatments and Vaccination

Jim Shannon:

[72270]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much of the £20 billion in funding for research and development announced in the Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021 will be allocated to new Tuberculosis treatments and vaccines.

George Freeman:

BEIS published its funding allocations for UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) in May 2022. The total UKRI allocation as published was £25.1 billion for 2022-25, providing UKRI and its constituent councils with the funding needed to deliver world class research and innovation.

UKRI funds a range of research programmes and activities focussed on respiratory diseases. Over a recent 5-year period (2016-17 to 2020-21), UKRI's Medical Research Council spent over £155.6 million on research relevant to respiratory health and disease. This figure includes over £45 million spent on research specifically relevant to Tuberculosis. Figures do not include spend on research relating to Covid-19.

■ Wind Power: Seas and Oceans

Bill Esterson:

[73831]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much his Department has invested in offshore wind in the Liverpool City Region.

Graham Stuart:

The Department does not hold this data.

Bill Esterson:

[73832]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many jobs have been created in the Liverpool City Region through Government investment in offshore wind.

Graham Stuart:

The Department does not record this data. The Office for National Statistics publishes annually the number of jobs in offshore wind, with the last data relating to 2020^[1].

^[1]<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/datasets/lowcarbonandrenewableenergyeconomyfirstestimatesdataset>

CABINET OFFICE■ **10 Downing Street: Costs**

Matt Western: [\[73115\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the cost to the public purse was of the move-in operation of the former Prime Minister into Number 10 Downing Street.

Jeremy Quin:

As with previous administrations, the cost of moving-in or removing personal property from a Ministerial residence is funded by the incoming or departing Minister.

■ **Cabinet: Ministers**

Angela Rayner: [\[73010\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what advice the Prime Minister sought from the Government Security Office on the appointment of Ministers to his Cabinet.

Jeremy Quin:

All Ministerial appointments follow established processes.

■ **Civil Service: Recruitment**

Angela Rayner: [\[74700\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what his policy is on the future of the Civil Service Fast Stream.

Jeremy Quin:

The Prime Minister is committed to retaining the Fast Stream and ensuring it continues without missing a year.

The Fast Stream reform programme has reached the 18-month milestone with significant progress achieved. Over the last few months we have intensified efforts on improving the current Fast Stream programme by implementing a more efficient and effective delivery model alongside a refresh of the core training offer to align to the Curriculum for Government.

We will deliver on our bold reform ambitions for the Fast Stream, placing greater emphasis on rigorous training, best-in-class assessments and developing our future ways of working to be even more efficient and effective.

We will go live with a recruitment campaign in December 2022 with candidates to start in September and October 2023.

This opportunity enables us to attract, recruit, and train talented people from all backgrounds to ensure a capable and skilled Civil Service

■ Former Ministers: Redundancy Pay

Claire Hanna: [\[73160\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will reassess the criteria for ministerial severance payments.

Jeremy Quin:

The entitlement to severance payments for those who cease to hold ministerial office is set out in the Ministerial and other Pensions and Salaries Act 1991. The Government has no current plans to amend the Act.

■ Ministers: Disclosure of Information

Angela Rayner: [\[74703\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many investigations have been conducted by (a) the Government Security Group and (b) the Propriety and Ethics Team into potential leaks of sensitive information by Ministers during the last 12 months.

Jeremy Quin:

It is government policy not to comment on the details of leak investigations.

DEFENCE

■ Armed Forces: Housing

John Healey: [\[74515\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much his Department has spent on maintenance for Service Family Accommodation managed by (a) Amey, (b) Serco and (c) Mears in the 2021-22 financial year.

Alex Chalk:

The maintenance spend on Service Family Accommodation (SFA) managed by Amey, through the National Housing Prime contract, for financial year 2021-22 was £34,233,860.

Serco did not manage SFA during the period in question and Mears holds the contract for Substitute SFA which is provided to families from the private rental market where there is no available SFA.

■ AWE: Finance

Chris Evans: [\[74639\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much his Department paid to AWE Management Limited when Atomic Weapons Establishment was returned to Government control as an Arm's Length Body on 1 July 2021.

Alex Chalk:

The decision taken by the Ministry of Defence to trigger the Termination for Convenience clause with AWE Management Limited to transition AWE plc into an Arms-Length Body did not incur a penalty cost.

■ **AWE: Pay**

Chris Evans: [\[74638\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department has set a limit on the consolidated pay offer for staff at the Atomic Weapons Establishment.

Alex Chalk:

As a public sector arms-length body, a pay mandate has been agreed with Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) plc. The AWE plc Board have responsibility for negotiating pay arrangements with its employees. It would not be appropriate to comment on specific terms of the mandate.

■ **China: Armed Forces**

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[70994\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the answer of 19 October to Question 66920 on China: Armed Forces, whether the issue was raised by US officials.

Mr Ben Wallace:

No.

Mr Tobias Ellwood: [\[74576\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what serving British military personnel are posted in China.

James Heappey:

The Defence Section in British Embassy Beijing currently consists of four serving British military personnel led by the Defence Attaché, Air Cdre Mike Blackburn, who is supported by a Deputy Defence Attaché and two Non-Commissioned Officer support staff. There are no other serving British military personnel deployed to China.

■ **Courts Martial**

John Healey: [\[74514\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many cases of (a) murder, (b) manslaughter, (c) rape and (d) sexual assault were tried through Court Martial last year; and how many convictions were made.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

Defence has been clear that unacceptable behaviour and criminality has no place in the Armed Forces and will not be tolerated. Those who fail to meet our values and standards will be dealt with appropriately.

The requested information can be found in the Murder, Manslaughter and Sexual Offences in the Service Justice System statistical publication, available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/murder-manslaughter-and-sexual-offences-in-the-service-justice-system-2021>

■ Defence Business Services: Offices

Dan Carden: [72440]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent discussions he has had with trade unions on plans to close Defence Business Services offices at Cheadle Hulme and Walker House, Liverpool, and move these posts to Blackpool.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

Officials have kept Trade Unions apprised of progress at all stages of the programme and been engaged in positive negotiations, including the conclusion of a collective agreement on a non-standard move package for all staff with no unagreed redundancies. The Chief Executive most recently met with Trade Unions on 26 October and officials will continue to engage and consult with the Trade Unions in line with the Ministry of Defence's Employment Relations Framework Agreement.

■ Fleet Solid Support Ships: Shipbuilding

Chris Evans: [61035]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on ensuring that Frigate support ships are built in Britain.

Mr Ben Wallace:

This Government is firmly committed to the UK's shipbuilding enterprise. In my role as Shipbuilding Tsar, and chair of the Shipbuilding Inter-Ministerial Group, I regularly discuss with my Cabinet colleagues how we can put in place the conditions for success in the sector.

The Fleet Solid Support (FSS) ship programme seeks to maximise the social value contribution shipbuilding can make in the UK, including encouraging investment in domestic shipyards, whilst balancing the need to deliver value for money. As stated previously, the final contract for the manufacture of the FSS ships will be awarded to a UK business, either solely or as part of a consortium. I would like to reiterate that a significant proportion of the build work will be carried out in the UK: the entire final assembly of the ship will take place in a UK shipyard and that FSS is an exciting opportunity for UK workers.

■ Hunting: Licensing

John Healey: [74522]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many licences his Department has issued to allow trail hunts to be permitted on the Defence Estate in each year since 2010.

John Healey:

[\[74523\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many trail hunts have taken place on the defence estate each year since 2010.

Alex Chalk:

The number of licences issued by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation allowing trail hunts on the Defence Estate, and the number of trail hunts which have taken place on the Defence Estate since 2010 can be found in the table below:

SEASON	NUMBER OF LICENCES ISSUED	NUMBER OF TRAIL HUNTS WHICH TOOK PLACE
2009-2010	Information not held	Information not held
2010-2011	Information not held	Information not held
2011-2012	32	269
2012-2013	30	273
2013-2014	Information not held	Information not held
2014-2015	29	252
2015-2016	30	223
2016-2017	30	210
2017-2018	28	192
2018-2019	28	184
2019-2020	26	136
2020-2021	20	154
2021-2022	30	246
2022-2023	18	225

■ Ukraine: Antitank Missiles

Dave Doogan:

[\[74915\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what estimate his Department has made of the cost of replacing the (a) NLAW, (b) Brimstone, (c) Javelin and (d) any other anti-armour military hardware the UK has donated to Ukraine.

Dave Doogan:

[\[74917\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, which of the stockpiles of weapons systems supplied to Ukraine from the UK have been replenished to their 2014 levels; for which

systems are there active contracts in place to full replenish stockpiles of donated equipment; which stockpiles his Department plans to fully replenish for which no replenishment contract is currently in place; and for which stockpiles are there no plans to replace donated equipment.

Alex Chalk:

The UK is proud to be a leading provider of support to Ukraine. A wide variety of military equipment and munitions has been granted in kind to the Armed Forces of Ukraine, some provided directly from UK stocks and some procured rapidly from industry suppliers. The Ministry of Defence remains fully engaged with industry, allies and partners to ensure both the continuation of supply to Ukraine, and that all equipment and munitions granted in kind from UK stocks are replaced as expeditiously as possible. It is not possible to comment on the progress of establishing individual contracts, nor on the costs associated with those contracts, as this information is both commercially and operationally sensitive.

■ **Ukraine: Military Aid**

Dave Doogan:

[\[74916\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what allocation has been made from procurement budgets for the replenishment of military hardware stockpiles donated to Ukraine; and whether replenishment of those stocks, where planned, will be funded from existing budget allocations or via increased funding allocations from the HM Treasury.

Alex Chalk:

The Department has made no allocation from procurement budgets for replenishment.

Where military equipment has been donated to Ukraine and Defence needs to replace the capability, funding to replenish this equipment is allocated from HM Treasury reserves, subject to their approval.

■ **Veterans: Identity Cards**

Gavin Robinson:

[\[74715\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when the application process for Veteran's ID cards for those who left the armed forces prior to 2018 will be introduced.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 31 October 2022 to Question 68602 to the hon. Member for Warrington North (Charlotte Nichols).

Attachments:

1. Veterans: Identity Cards [\[UJIN 68602.docx\]](#)

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ Charities: Lotteries****Alex Davies-Jones:**[\[74986\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, when she plans to raise the charity lottery annual sales limit.

Paul Scully:

The society lottery annual sales limit was last increased as part of a wider package of reforms in 2020. These were reviewed 12 months after they were implemented, and the results of the review were published in March 2022. It concluded that it was too soon to reach any firm view on the impact of the changes, especially during a time when the effect of the Covid pandemic made any evaluation more difficult, and that more data on annual growth of the sector was required before considering any further changes. My officials will continue working with the Gambling Commission, as part of its regulatory role, to keep the sector under review.

■ Gambling**Scott Benton:**[\[72467\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to Public Health England's Gambling-related harms evidence review: the economic and social cost of harms, whether her Department has received representation from the Gambling Commission on that review's findings, including on suicides associated with problem gambling.

Paul Scully:

DCMS officials have regular discussions with the Gambling Commission on a range of issues relating to gambling regulation and the evidence on gambling. The Commission has given the Department no formal advice relating to the findings and estimates in Public Health England's (PHE) evidence review on gambling related harm. The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities is reviewing the evidence published in the PHE's review of the social and economic costs of gambling, and plans to publish an update.

Protecting people from gambling harms remains a priority for the government and the Gambling Commission, and we will be led by the best evidence to ensure the right protections are in place.

■ Gambling: Reviews**Kim Leadbeater:**[\[75003\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, when she plans to publish the gambling review white paper.

Paul Scully:

The Gambling Act Review is a comprehensive and evidence-led review of gambling regulation to ensure it is fit for the digital age. We will publish a White paper setting out our conclusions in the coming weeks.

■ Holiday Accommodation and Second Homes: Public Consultation**Tim Farron:**[\[72974\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, when his Department's consultation on second homes and holiday lets will be complete.

Julia Lopez:

The Government has not yet carried out a consultation on developing a tourist accommodation registration scheme in England.

In June, DCMS issued a Call for Evidence with the aim to develop a fuller understanding of the current market, and the benefits and challenges presented by the rise in short-term and holiday letting seen in England over the last 10 to 15 years.

The Call for Evidence closed in September 2022, and DCMS are now carefully analysing the 4000 responses that were received. This will help inform our next steps on potential evidence-based and proportionate policy responses.

■ Lilleshall National Sports and Conferencing Centre**Mark Pritchard:**[\[72971\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what plans her Department has for the future (a) use and (b) expansion of Lilleshall Hall National Sports Centre; and if she will make a statement.

Stuart Andrew:

Lilleshall National Sports Centre provides opportunities for elite and talent pathway athletes as part of National Governing Body (NGB) programmes. The centre is part of the national Elite Training Centre network of facilities which also provide support through the English Institute of Sport (EIS) athlete rehabilitation programmes. These activities are provided alongside opportunities for local people and community organisations/clubs to take part in a range of activities.

UK Sport, Sport England, EIS and stakeholders including British Gymnastics, GB Archery and the Royal British Legion Battleback programme collaborate and combine to provide a range of activities on site.

An element of commercial activity such as conferences take place at Lilleshall and this helps to underpin the financial viability of the site and enables the provision of sporting activity. There are no plans for this to change.

The centre has benefitted from investment over recent years, including state of the art gymnastics facilities, renovation of the Lilleshall Main House listed building, new hockey pitches and office accommodation for NGB's. Future plans for investment

include improved archery facilities and the expansion of the Royal British Legion Battleback programme which include the hosting of the Invictus Games programme.

■ Semiconductors

Patricia Gibson: [\[74747\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps the Government is taking to (a) increase self-reliance and (b) source suppliers of semiconductors and advanced chips alternative to those in Taiwan in response to Chinese aggression against that state.

Paul Scully:

The UK and global economy is dependent on a resilient supply of semiconductors across a wide range of applications. The global supply chain for these semiconductor chips is complex and globalised, with long lead-times on new manufacturing capabilities making it difficult to quickly respond to exogenous supply chain shocks.

The Government is reviewing its approach to the UK's global semiconductor sector, working with industry experts, representative bodies and the wider global community. We recognise that the issues facing the semiconductor sector cannot be solved by the UK alone, and are considering how best to ensure that the UK is resilient to disruptions to semiconductor supply chains. This will include considering how to strengthen the UK's own semiconductor sector and work with international partners to improve long term resilience within the global semiconductor ecosystem.

■ Television Licences: Non-payment

Kerry McCarthy: [\[72945\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether the Government has made an assessment of the potential merits of preventing TV Licensing from prosecuting people who are unable to pay their TV licences during the period of increased cost of living.

Chris Elmore: [\[73099\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how much his Department collected in TV licensing fines in the last year; and what proportion of that money was from over 75s.

Chris Elmore: [\[73100\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what estimate she has made of the potential lost revenue in TV licensing fines if non-payment prosecutions were paused during the cost-of-living crisis.

Julia Lopez:

The BBC is responsible for the collection and enforcement of the licence fee, not the government. The Government is therefore not involved in TV Licensing operations. HM Courts & Tribunals Service is responsible for collecting and enforcing financial

penalties imposed by the courts which includes fines imposed for the non-payment of a TV licence.

In 2021, 49,126 people were proceeded against by HM Courts & Tribunals Service for non-payment of the licence fee, and 44,364 were fined. The BBC has recently confirmed that no enforcement or prosecution action has been taken against over-75s who previously held a free licence and therefore no over-75s have been fined. The Department does not hold data on the amount collected from TV licensing fines and will engage with relevant departments to follow up with this information.

The Government is independent from the BBC, and any decision to suspend enforcement action by TV Licensing, or assessment of the impact of this decision, would be a matter for the BBC. Given the BBC's independence it would not be appropriate for the government to seek to intervene in operational decisions on enforcement action. Nonetheless, the government expects the BBC to collect the licence fee in an efficient and proportionate manner, and to treat all vulnerable people with sensitivity in doing so.

■ Youth Services

Rachael Maskell:

[\[72324\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what her policy is on the provision of youth services in the next 12 months.

Stuart Andrew:

The Government has committed to a National Youth Guarantee: that by 2025, every young person will have access to regular clubs and activities, adventures away from home and opportunities to volunteer. This is supported by a three year £560 million investment in youth services, reflecting young people's priorities and addressing the inconsistencies in national youth spending, with a firm focus on levelling up.

In addition to central government funding, DCMS is committed to working with Youth Sector organisations and Local Authorities to review the Statutory Duty on Local Authorities to provide positive activities for young people.

EDUCATION

■ Childcare

Rachael Maskell:

[\[72329\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she will take to restore childcare to adult ratios in childcare and nursery settings.

Claire Coutinho:

The department has a statutory obligation to consult on any potential changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, including any proposed changes to ratios. The department consulted on moving to the Scottish ratios for two-year-olds, from a ratio of 1:4 (one adult to four children) to 1:5 (one adult to five

children), as well as how we can provide greater flexibility within ratios for childminders. This consultation closed on 16 September 2022, and the department will respond in due course.

■ **Childcare: Derby North**

Helen Hayes: [\[72355\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, on average in the Derby North constituency, what proportion of income are parents of children aged (a) under 5 and (b) 5-11 spending each year on childcare including holiday clubs.

Helen Hayes: [\[72356\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of income are parents of children aged (a) under 5 and (b) 5-11 spending each year on childcare including holiday clubs on average in the Stroud constituency.

Helen Hayes: [\[72357\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of income are parents of children aged (a) under 5 and (b) 5-11 spending each year on childcare including holiday clubs on average in the Warrington South constituency.

Helen Hayes: [\[72358\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of income are parents of children aged (a) under 5 and (b) 5-11 spending each year on childcare including holiday clubs on average in the Truro and Falmouth constituency.

Helen Hayes: [\[72359\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of income parents of children aged (a) under 5 and (b) 5-11 spend each year on average on childcare including holiday clubs in the Bury North constituency.

Helen Hayes: [\[72360\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of income parents of children aged (a) under 5 and (b) 5-11 spend each year on average on childcare including holiday clubs in the City of Chester constituency.

Claire Coutinho:

The department does not hold the data requested. However, the most recent parents survey of childcare and early years provides some data on parental spend on childcare. For example, the survey shows the average cost of childcare per week for parents of 0-14-year-olds by region. It also shows the cost by day for school-aged children during holiday periods. This data is not available at local authority/constituency level specified in the question. The survey can be found here: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/childcare-and-early-years-survey-of-parents/2021>.

The department knows that childcare is a key concern for parents and that is why we are committed to improving the cost, choice, and availability of childcare. We continue to look at ways to make childcare more affordable and to encourage families to use government-funded support they are entitled to.

The department has spent over £3.5 billion in each of the past three years on early education entitlements and continue to support families with the cost of childcare through Tax Free Childcare and Universal Credit.

The department is investing over £200 million a year in the Holiday Activities and Food programme, which provides enriching activities and healthy meals for disadvantaged children during school holidays.

We have also announced a new £1.2 million campaign via the childcare choices website to ensure every parent knows about the government funded support they are eligible for. The website can be found here: <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>.

■ Childcare: South Swindon

Helen Hayes: [72345]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many childcare providers have stopped operating in South Swindon constituency since 2010; and how many childcare places does this represent.

Helen Hayes: [72346]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many childcare providers have stopped operating in Chingford and Woodford Green constituency since 2010; and how many childcare places does this represent.

Helen Hayes: [72347]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many childcare providers have stopped operating in Bishop Auckland constituency since 2010; and how many childcare places does this represent.

Helen Hayes: [72348]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many childcare providers have stopped operating in Penistone and Stocksbridge constituency since 2010; and how many childcare places does this represent.

Helen Hayes: [72349]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many childcare providers have stopped operating in Burnley constituency since 2010; and how many childcare places does this represent.

Helen Hayes: [72350]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many childcare providers have stopped operating in Erewash constituency since 2010; and how many childcare places does this represent.

Helen Hayes: [\[72351\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many childcare providers have stopped operating in Shipley constituency since 2010; and how many childcare places does this represent.

Helen Hayes: [\[72352\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many childcare providers have stopped operating in Bassetlaw constituency since 2010; and how many childcare places does this represent.

Helen Hayes: [\[72353\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many childcare providers have ceased stopped operating in Southampton Itchen constituency since 2010; and how many childcare places does this represent.

Helen Hayes: [\[72354\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many childcare providers have stopped operating in West Lancashire constituency since 2010; and how many childcare places does this represent.

Helen Hayes: [\[72362\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many nurseries have closed in the City of Chester constituency since 2010; and of these how many are (a) maintained nursery schools (b) not-for-profit nurseries (c) for-profit nurseries.

Helen Hayes: [\[72363\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many childcare providers have stopped operating in the City of Chester constituency since 2010; and how many childcare places does this represent.

Claire Coutinho:

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

■ English Language and Mathematics: GCSE

Mr Jonathan Lord: [\[69620\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to improve levels of attainment in GCSE (a) English and (b) maths.

Nick Gibb:

The Schools White Paper includes a vision for a school system that helps every child to fulfil their potential by ensuring that they have the right support, in the right place, at the right time, founded on achieving world class literacy and numeracy.

This includes increasing the national GCSE average grade in both English language and in mathematics from 4.5 in 2019 to 5 by 2030, backed up by an ambition that, by

the end of primary school, 90% of children will achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

The Department has already invested over £5 billion through its multi-year recovery plan. To date, over two million courses have been started since the launch of the National Tutoring Programme in November 2020. To help teachers, the Oak National Academy has been established as a public body, which will provide free, optional, adaptable digital curriculum resources, including in English and mathematics. The Department has established Education Investment Areas, prioritising support to the areas of the country with the most entrenched underperformance.

Alongside this, the Department's ongoing investment in English and mathematics curriculum hub programmes is supporting children to benefit from high quality teaching in early reading and mathematics respectively, including through phonics and assessment and support programmes.

■ **Russell Scott Primary School: Repairs and Maintenance**

Andrew Gwynne: [\[74591\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will meet with the Rt. hon. Member for Denton and Reddish to discuss building conditions at Russell Scott Primary School.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[74592\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions she has had with her colleagues on Russell Scott Primary School in Denton since her appointment.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[74593\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of whether the current school building conditions at Russell Scott Primary School require emergency assistance from her Department.

Nick Gibb:

The Department is aware of the condition of Russell Scott Primary School. Departmental officials have been engaging with Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council to understand the Council's capital maintenance programme for the school and advise on these issues. My Noble Friend, the Minister for the School System, also met with the hon. Member to discuss the school in June.

The Department provides local authorities with an annual School Condition Allocation (SCA) to invest in priorities across their maintained schools. The Department looks to local authorities to allocate these funds to what they identify to be the most urgent priorities across the school estate, ensuring schools are kept safe and operational.

For the 2022/23 financial year, Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council has been allocated £1,545,072 in SCA funding. In addition to annual condition funding, the Department has also launched a ten-year School Rebuilding Programme. The Department has announced the first 100 schools that will benefit from the programme as part of a commitment to 500 projects over the next decade. Russell Scott Primary School has been nominated for the School Rebuilding Programme under the

exceptional route. Assessment is ongoing and further information will be available in due course.

■ School Choice

Janet Daby: [\[69784\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has made an assessment of the impact of the changes to the publication of secondary school and college results data on parents ability to choose a school place for their children.

Nick Gibb:

Parents are being provided with secondary school and college data on a similar timetable to previous years. Secondary school performance data was published on 20 October 2022 and 16-18 school and college data will be published on 2 February 2023.

While it is important that the Department returns to publishing such data, we also recognise that a school or college's performance data may be affected by the uneven impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. For this reason, the Department has removed the comparison tables, added caveats about treating the data with caution and changed the name of the website to Find School and College Performance Data to reduce the emphasis on comparison.

These changes were informed by the Department's user research with parents of students in years 5, 7, 12 and 13. This showed parents understood that data from this year should be considered alongside a range of other information about the school or college and its individual circumstances.

■ Students: Energy Bills Rebate

Wera Hobhouse: [\[72405\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps students who have their bills included in rent can take to access from the Energy Bills Support Scheme.

Wera Hobhouse: [\[72407\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent discussions her Department has had on tailored support for students during the cost of living crisis.

Robert Halfon:

The government recognises the additional cost of living pressures that have arisen this year and impacted students. Many higher education providers have hardship funds that students can apply to for assistance.

There is £261 million of student premium funding available this academic year to support disadvantaged students who need additional help. The department has worked with the Office for Students to ensure universities support students in hardship by using hardship funds and drawing on the student premium.

In addition, all households will save on their energy bills through the Energy Price Guarantee and the £400 Energy Bills Support Scheme discount. Students who buy their energy from a domestic supplier are eligible for the energy bills discount. The Energy Prices Bill introduced on 12 October includes the provision to require landlords to pass benefits they receive from energy price support, as appropriate, onto end users. Further details of the requirements under this legislation will be set out in regulations.

Students whose bills are included in their rent, including energy charges, will typically have agreed their accommodation costs upfront when signing their contract for the current academic year. Businesses, including those that provide student accommodation, are covered by the Energy Bill Relief Scheme which provides energy bill relief for non-domestic customers in Great Britain.

A HM Treasury-led review will be launched to consider how to support households and businesses with energy bills after April 2023.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Air Pollution

Geraint Davies:

[\[70938\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when he will publish the draft National Air Quality Strategy for consultation.

Rebecca Pow:

The department is working at pace to deliver the draft National Air Quality Strategy.

■ Animals: Exports

Cat Smith:

[\[69671\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to help ensure the welfare of kept animals (a) imported into and (b) exported from the UK.

Mark Spencer:

HM Government published a wide-reaching and ambitious Action Plan for Animal Welfare on 12 May 2021, setting out current and future work on animal welfare. Now that we have left the EU, we are making significant changes to domestic law through the Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill, bringing into legislation manifesto commitments to end the export of live animals for fattening and slaughter and to crack down on puppy smuggling.

Through the Bill, HM Government will be banning exports of cattle, sheep, pigs, goats, and equines for slaughter and fattening on journeys that begin in or transit through the United Kingdom to a third country. The Bill also protects the welfare of pet animals, addressing low welfare movements of pets into Great Britain, including

powers to introduce new restrictions, via secondary legislation, on pet travel and the commercial import of pets on welfare grounds.

HM Government is committed to improving the welfare standards of all animal journeys. We have consulted on proposals for improvements to animal welfare in transport and we published the summary of responses and HM Government's response to this consultation in August 2021. We are now working closely with all interested partners on the detailed issues and evidence, to create workable solutions and good welfare outcomes.

■ **Asthma: Medical Equipment**

Derek Twigg: [\[74533\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what advice her Department provides to people with asthma on the safe and environmentally-friendly disposal of used inhalers.

Rebecca Pow:

HM Government is committed to reducing and managing waste safely and carefully. Defra supports Recycle Now, the national recycling campaign for England and Northern Ireland, which advises the public on what items can be recycled and where they can be recycled. The Recycle Now website makes clear that inhalers should be returned to pharmacies to be disposed of safely.

■ **Chemicals: EU Law**

Bim Afolami: [\[71235\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether UK REACH will seek to maintain alignment with EU Chemicals Regulations (EU REACH) beyond 31 December 2023.

Rebecca Pow:

UK REACH retains the fundamental approach and key principles of EU REACH, ensuring a high level of protection of human health and the environment. Having our own independent regulatory framework for chemicals allows us to identify the most pressing priorities which best reflect the specific circumstances in GB. The decisions we take are based on the best available evidence, including looking at approaches taken by chemical regimes across the world, including the EU.

■ **Chemicals: Health Hazards**

Bim Afolami: [\[71236\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether UK authorities routinely monitor all scientific literature for studies that show deleterious effects of hazardous chemicals.

Rebecca Pow:

The Environment Agency (EA) has developed a Prioritisation and Early Warning System (PEWS) for chemicals of emerging concern to ensure consideration of the potential risks of emerging chemicals including to surface waters (both freshwater and saline waters), groundwater and soils. The EA routinely monitors a sub-set of the scientific literature for determining which chemicals of emerging concern we should focus on as part of this work. The system allows the EA to sift and to screen any chemical substance nominated using, where available, hazard data and environmental monitoring data to prioritise whether a substance may be a possible chemical of concern in England.

Bim Afolami:[\[71237\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will make it his policy to ensure a cross government approach on chemicals management which involves a commitment to (a) reducing exposure in the general population and (a) acknowledging the links between chemical exposure in the population and increased cancer risk.

Rebecca Pow:

Our goal is to protect human health and the environment while enabling economic growth through managing the production, use and disposal of chemicals. We already have robust systems to identify the impact of chemicals, and to regulate them. We are currently developing our approach further to build on the commitment in the 25 Year Environment Plan to set out our strategy to tackling chemicals of concern and to significantly reduce the levels of harmful chemicals entering the environment. Defra continues to work closely with other government departments, arms-length bodies, and the Devolved Administrations to ensure a joined-up and UK-wide approach.

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) plays a key role in protecting against and reducing exposure to chemical and environmental hazards thereby preventing cancer from exposure to chemicals. The primary focus of UKHSA's work is on hazard characterisation and risk assessment including:

- research into the potential human health effects including carcinogenic properties of fibre and particles, biocides, volatile organic plus other chemicals used in consumer products or present in the environment.
- biomonitoring to determine the overall exposure to man-made and natural chemicals which is essential to evaluate risk.
- advising Defra, the Health and Safety Executive and other Government departments on the human health effects of chemicals in respect of their public health risks.

Bim Afolami:[\[71238\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will take steps to introduce hazard-based protection measures for reducing exposures to endocrine disrupting chemicals; and if he will amend the classification, labelling and

packaging regulations to introduce new hazard classes on endocrine disruptors and suspected endocrine disruptors.

Rebecca Pow:

The issue of endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs), which have been linked to numerous human health and wildlife impacts, is scientifically complex. There is uncertainty surrounding the effects of EDC exposure from both an environmental and human health perspective, and we are contributing to international efforts to address the evidence gaps. We are considering the evidence available and drawing on a range of expertise with the aim of improving testing and identification of EDCs and assessing measures to further understand and manage the risks they pose.

The identification of intrinsic chemical hazards is a principal requirement of the classification, labelling and packaging regulation (CLP). The hazard classes in CLP cover physical, human health and environmental hazards. Endocrine disrupting properties are not captured by a specific CLP hazard class because they are a result of a mode of action rather than an intrinsic hazardous property. However, chemicals with human health endocrine disrupting properties are effectively covered in CLP by the closely related CMR (carcinogenic, mutagenic, toxic to reproduction) hazard classes.

The hazard classification of a chemical is often used as a starting point for specific controls or protective measures and is the basis for many regulatory and legislative provisions in the risk management of chemicals. Endocrine disrupting properties are specifically taken into account by the regulatory regimes covering the use of pesticides and biocides, where identification of such properties prompts specific control measures.

■ **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Public Expenditure**

Alex Sobel:

[\[73125\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much funding (a) his Department allocated to and (b) was spent by the (i) Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund, (ii) Nature Recovery Network, (iii) Countryside Stewardship scheme, (iv) CS Capital Grants, (v) Nature for Climate Fund and (vi) Landscape Recovery scheme in each year since 2010; and how much funding his Department has allocated to each project in each of the next five years.

Trudy Harrison:

HM Government has fully committed £10 million to deliver and evaluate the Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund (NEIRF). Of this funding, £7.5 million will have been spent by the end of the 2022-23 financial year, with a further £2.5 million allocated for the 2023-24 financial year.

Natural England is supporting delivery of projects that will contribute to the Nature Recovery Network. This includes a budget in 2022/23 of £1.9 million for 12 landscape-scale Nature Recovery Projects and £680,000 in seed-corn funding to

local projects. Wider work, such as for protected sites and species recovery, will also contribute.

Spend under the 2007-13 and 2014-20 Rural Development Programme for England (which includes the delivery of Countryside Stewardship and CS Capital Grants) is detailed below:

FINANCIAL YEAR	RDPE SPEND (£M)
2010-11	565.9
2011-12	575.9
2012-13	553.6
2013-14	542.3
2014-15	538.0
2015-16	469.6
2016-17	413.7
2017-18	386.9
2018-19	492.5
2019-20	512.2
2020-21	507.9
2021-22	424.4
2022-23*	97.4

*Spend to September 2022

Landscape Recovery launched earlier this year (2022), and as such no funding has been spent in 21-22 or in any prior year. We have confirmed the 22 projects selected for the first round of project development phase and these will be awarded a share of circa £12 million to help finalise their delivery plans over the next two years. Learning from the initial rounds will help us refine the full scheme design.

We will not have fixed future allocations (or 'pillars', as they were known whilst we were in the EU) of money ring-fenced to different schemes. Instead, we will learn as we go and find the best ways to manage the overall farming budget to respond to demand in a way that helps us achieve our intended outcomes. This means we will keep the allocation of funding between different schemes under review over time.

The £750 million Nature for Climate Fund will support peat restoration, woodland creation and management until 2025. Nature for Climate Fund deployment in future

years is dependent on analysis of previous year's performance across projects and workstreams.

Funding is agreed parliament to parliament via spending review periods, so beyond 2025 when the Nature for Climate Fund draws to a close, funding is yet to be agreed and determined.

■ Deposit Return Schemes

Charlotte Nichols: [\[69816\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when the Deposit Return Scheme will commence.

Rebecca Pow:

Further details on when a Deposit Return Scheme will be introduced will be set out in the Government response to the 2021 consultation. We are working towards publication in late 2022.

Wera Hobhouse: [\[71205\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department is planning to introduce a Deposit Retention Scheme in the UK.

Rebecca Pow:

In its 2019 manifesto, HM Government committed to introduce a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) for drinks containers to incentivise people to recycle more and to reduce littering of in-scope containers. HM Government has consulted twice on the introduction of a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) and further details will be set out in the Government response to the 2021 consultation. We are working towards publication of the Government response in late 2022.

Selaine Saxby: [\[72488\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when she plans to introduce the new Deposit Return Scheme in England and Wales; what progress she has made on setting up an administrator for that scheme; and if she will make a statement.

Rebecca Pow:

In its 2019 manifesto, HM Government committed to introduce a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) for drinks containers to incentivise people to recycle more and to reduce littering of in-scope containers. HM Government has consulted twice on the introduction of a DRS and further details will be set out in HM Government's response to the 2021 consultation. We are working towards publication of HM Government's response in late 2022.

The DRS will have a central organisation to manage its operation which will be a new not-for-profit body established for the purpose of running the scheme - the Deposit Management Organisation (DMO). We are currently developing secondary legislation which will set out the obligations imposed on the DMO. Once the secondary legislation is in place, we will progress with selecting the DMO.

■ Deposit Return Schemes: Digital Technology

Wera Hobhouse:

[\[71204\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department has taken to evaluate and trial Digital DRS technologies.

Rebecca Pow:

Digital DRS is an approach to DRS that is in its infancy and is still being tested and trialled, and for that reason it is not the right time to commit to a full scale digital DRS.

We do recognise the benefits of a digital model and remain interested in seeing the continued testing of the feasibility for introducing a digital scheme in the future.

■ Dogs: Smuggling

Rachael Maskell:

[\[72314\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when she will bring forward legislative proposals on ending puppy smuggling.

Mark Spencer:

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

The Bill allows us to further protect the welfare of pets by introducing restrictions to crack down on the low welfare movements of pets into Great Britain and includes powers to introduce new restrictions on pet travel and the commercial import of pets on welfare grounds, via secondary legislation.

■ Electronic Cigarettes: Waste

Ruth Jones:

[\[69790\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the impact of single use vapes on waste levels in England.

Rebecca Pow:

The Department has not undertaken an assessment of the environmental impact of disposable vapes in the UK, including on waste levels.

■ Environment Protection: Standards

Jim Shannon:

[\[71073\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to ensure that the UK's environmental standards are protected in the context of the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill.

Trudy Harrison:

Defra is in the process of analysing its REUL stock and determining what should be preserved as part of domestic law, as well as REUL that should be repealed, or amended. Our aim is to ensure that environmental law is fit for purpose and able to

drive improved environmental outcomes, whilst also ensuring regulators can deliver efficiently. This will ensure the United Kingdom regulatory framework is appropriate and tailored to the United Kingdom.

The United Kingdom is a world leader in environmental protection and HM Government has clear environmental and climate goals, such as those set out in the Environment Act, the 25 Year Environment Plan and the Net Zero Strategy respectively. We are committed to delivering our legally binding target to halt nature's decline by 2030. Any changes to environmental regulation will need to support those goals as well as our international commitments including those with the EU.

■ Environmental Land Management Schemes

David Warburton:

[\[72390\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that farmers are consulted on expansions to the Environment Land Management Scheme.

Mark Spencer:

Farmers and land managers are at the heart of our Environmental Land Management (ELM) schemes. We use a range of methods including social science research, user testing, and co-design to make sure that schemes are developed with and tested by farmers. Their input is ensuring our schemes are accessible, attractive, and fit for purpose.

We have learnt a lot about how to successfully introduce new schemes from our experience developing the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI). For example, the application process and guidance for SFI were made simpler in direct response to the farmers who tested these. To date, our work with farmers and other stakeholders has included:

- Practitioner Working Groups, running since March 2022, where farmers directly shape elements of policy, standards and service design.
- Monthly meetings with 40 stakeholders on specific policy design related to Local Nature Recovery and Sustainable Farming Incentive.
- Fortnightly stakeholder meetings to provide technical updates on the Sustainable Farming Incentive application service and receive feedback.
- Testing and trialling components of the scheme and launching in a controlled way to ensure farmers receive the support they need.
- Piloting our schemes like SFI with farmers to learn from their experiences to improve before schemes go live.

As the ELM scheme offer expands, we will continue to shape our proposals with farmers and land managers – including those with specific requirements, such as tenants, commoners, and those with sites of Special Scientific Interest on their land.

■ Food: Public Sector**Kerry McCarthy:** [\[74577\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when she expects to publish the results of her Department's consultation on public sector food and catering which closed on 4 September 2022.

Mark Spencer:

We are analysing the responses received during the recent public sector food and catering policy consultation. We will publish a summary of these responses and the Government response in due course.

■ Greyhounds: Animal Welfare**Alex Sobel:** [\[71258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent steps he has taken to reduce the number of deaths of dogs in greyhound racing.

Alex Sobel: [\[71259\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department has taken steps to ensure care for racing greyhounds once those animals retire.

Rebecca Pow:

Defra's policy has been to work with the main industry regulatory body, the Greyhound Board of Great Britain (GBGB), to address welfare concerns about the care of greyhounds once they retire, as well as reducing the number of deaths of greyhounds. The GBGB has introduced initiatives such as the Injury Recovery Scheme which provides financial support to trainers to treat career-ending injuries to greyhounds where otherwise they might be put to sleep; and the Greyhound Retirement Scheme which attaches a £400 bond to each greyhound at the point of registration, paid for jointly by the owner and GBGB, in order to pay for rehoming costs at the end of a dog's racing life. HM Government has welcomed these initiatives and the latest set of retirement and fatality figures published by GBGB in May this year, showed the lowest ever reported number of track fatalities (120 or 0.03% of total dog runs) and the percentage of dogs homed/retained at the end of their racing careers remaining at approximately 94% (some 6014 greyhounds out of 6373 that ceased GBGB racing in 2021). HM Government wants to see this progress continue.

■ Hunting: Dogs**Dr Rupa Huq:** [\[73088\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether she has made an assessment of the potential merits of updating the Hunting Act 2004 to ban hunting with dogs completely.

Trudy Harrison:

The Hunting Act 2004 already makes it an offence to hunt a wild mammal with dogs, except where it is carried out in accordance with the exemptions in the Act. Those found guilty of non-compliance are subject to the full force of the law. HM Government has made a manifesto commitment not to change the Hunting Act.

■ **Livestock: Animal Housing****Patrick Grady:**[\[69670\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will publish a consultation on the law surrounding the use of cages for farmed animals.

Mark Spencer:

The Government is committed to exploring the phasing out of confinement systems, supporting the industry to do so in a way which underpins UK food security. We need to work carefully and sensitively with all sectors, ensuring any move towards cage free systems does not have unintended animal welfare or business impacts.

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, and for the general public who are faced with significant challenges around the cost of living. The poultry sector is also dealing with the largest ever avian influenza outbreak.

Any decisions by Government on the timing of public consultation around this issue must be carefully considered in light of these wider priorities. We will progress with plans to consult on the use of cages in farming systems as soon as the time is right.

■ **Microplastics: Blood****Alberto Costa:**[\[72310\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of recent research examining the presence of microplastics in human blood.

Rebecca Pow:

HM Government is taking decisive action to fight plastic waste including through minimum charges on single-use items; a Deposit Return Scheme for drinks containers; and ensuring producers cover the costs of collecting and managing plastic packaging waste.

In 2021, the UK Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COT) published an [overarching statement on potential risks from exposure to microplastics](#). The COT made a number of proposals for research priorities to aid risk assessment of microplastics, and concluded that "based on the available data, it is not yet possible to perform a complete assessment for the potential risks from exposure to micro- and nano-plastics via the oral and inhalation routes". Subsequently, COT has published a sub-statement focusing on the oral route and a sub-statement on the inhalation route is in preparation.

As set out in the [2022-2023 UK REACH Work Programme](#), we are reviewing intentionally added microplastics and the risks they pose to human health and the environment. The results will help to inform HM Government's approach to managing any risks whether through UK REACH or other routes.

■ Per- and Polyfluorinated Alkyl Substances

Alberto Costa:

[\[72311\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if her Department will take steps to publish a chemicals strategy on the potential impact of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances.

Rebecca Pow:

Perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) represent a group of thousands of chemicals, with hundreds used commercially across many sectors of industry and society. There is increasing evidence of the occurrence of PFAS in the environment and, once in the environment, PFAS are persistent. There is also growing concern regarding the risks to human health. Action has already been taken to ban or highly restrict specific PFAS both domestically and internationally. However, PFAS represent a very diverse group of chemicals with a wide range of uses for which safer and more sustainable alternatives are not yet available - making this a very challenging issue to tackle.

Work is underway across government to help us assess levels of PFAS occurring in the environment, their sources and potential risks to inform future policy and regulatory approaches. In the UK REACH Work Programme for 2021-22, Defra asked the EA and HSE to examine the risks posed by PFAS and develop a 'Regulatory Management Options Analysis' (RMOA). The RMOA will be published in early 2023 and will make recommendations for risk management measures. Defra and the Devolved Administrations will carefully consider its recommendations to inform future PFAS policy.

We have also been engaging closely with external partners over the past few months to inform policy development across a range of chemicals issues, including on PFAS. This builds on the commitment in the 25 Year Environment Plan to set out our strategy to tackling chemicals of concern. No publication date for a Chemicals Strategy has yet been set.

■ Plastics: Pollution Control

Ben Lake:

[\[72415\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, in the context of the Environment Plan's target to eliminate all avoidable plastic waste by 2042, what assessment his Department has made of the potential impact of that proposed plastic reduction target on reducing the level of plastic pollution.

Rebecca Pow:

The ambition in the 25 Year Environment Plan to eliminate all avoidable plastic waste by 2042 is for England only as this is a devolved matter.

No overall assessment has been made; however, if we can achieve the ambition, including through policies set out in the Resources and Waste Strategy for England, it will significantly reduce the amount of plastic pollution.

My department is carrying out an evaluation of the policies in the Resources and Waste Strategy to establish their effectiveness and identify where we might need to go further to achieve our ambitions.

■ **Sewage****Alex Sobel:**[\[71261\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many sewage treatment works are operated by each water company in England; and how many of these have temporary storm storage tanks with sufficient capacity to prevent overloading of the treatment works.

Rebecca Pow:

At some sewage treatment works, where the permitted treatment capacity may be exceeded due to rainfall, storm tanks form part of the treatment process to limit spills of storm sewage (mixture of sewage and rainfall) to the water environment. These discharges are permitted by the Environment Agency under the [Environmental Permitting Regulations](#).

The number of sewage treatment works and permitted storm tanks at sewage treatment works for each water and sewerage company in England are set out in the table below:

NAME OF WATER COMPANY	NUMBER OF SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS ¹	NUMBER OF STORM TANKS AT SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS ²
Anglian	1120	363
Northumbrian	358	121
Severn Trent	975	372
South West Water	628	163
Southern	382	181
Thames	379	235
United Utilities	562	187
Wessex	397	189
Yorkshire	594	177

NAME OF WATER COMPANY	NUMBER OF SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS ¹	NUMBER OF STORM TANKS AT SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS ²
Welsh Water (England)	104	19

1. Information from the Environment Agency Water Information Management System
2. Information from the Event Duration Monitoring – storm overflow – annual returns published by the Environment Agency [Event Duration Monitoring - Storm Overflows - Annual Returns - data.gov.uk](#)

The requirement for storm tanks is that they must settle out solids and have a minimum capacity of 68litres/head served or a storage equivalent of 2 hours at the maximum flow rate to the storm tanks.

In the current water company investment programme for the period 2020 to 2025 there are 534 sewage treatment works where there will be upgrades to storm tanks to meet the requirements. Information on these upgrades from the published Environment Agency [Water Industry National Environment Programme](#) is summarised in the table below:

NAME OF WATER COMPANY	NUMBER OF STORM TANK IMPROVEMENTS
Anglian	217
Northumbrian	24
Severn Trent	39
South West Water	74
Southern	Not Available
Thames	64
United Utilities	4
Wessex	31
Yorkshire	69
Welsh Water (England)	12

■ Sewage: Southampton

Royston Smith:

[61988]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will take steps to help prevent the discharge of raw sewage into (a) the River Itchen and (b) other waters near Southampton.

Rebecca Pow:

We have been clear that the failure of water companies to adequately reduce sewage discharges is totally unacceptable. Our recently launched Storm Overflows Discharge Reduction Plan will require water companies to deliver the largest infrastructure programme in water company history - £56 billion capital investment over 25 years. Our plan will protect biodiversity, the ecology of our rivers and seas, and the public health of our water users for generations to come.

Robust enforcement action against illegal breaches of storm overflow permits is taken. Since 2015, the Environment Agency has brought 54 prosecutions against water companies, securing fines of almost £140million. This includes a £90million fine imposed on Southern Water last year.

Following regulatory intervention by the Environment Agency, Southern Water were required to commission and construct a new sewage treatment works at Woolston. This sewage treatment works became operational in June 2018 and serves almost 70,000 people in and around Southampton. The sewage treatment works has successfully improved water quality in the lower river Itchen, and Southampton.

■ Sewage: Storage**Alex Sobel:****[71260]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the capacity is of temporary storm storage tanks at each sewage treatment works in England.

Rebecca Pow:

At some sewage treatment works, where the permitted treatment capacity may be exceeded due to rainfall, storm tanks form part of the treatment process to limit spills of storm sewage (mixture of sewage and rainfall) to the water environment. These discharges are permitted by the Environment Agency under the [Environmental Permitting Regulations](#).

The requirement for storm tanks is that they must settle out solids and have a minimum capacity of 68litres/head served or a storage equivalent of 2 hours at the maximum flow rate to the storm tanks.

There are over 2,000 storm tanks at sewage treatment works. The required capacity of the storm tank is included within the permit, along with other requirements such as monitoring and reporting.

Alex Sobel:**[71262]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how Ofwat and the Environment Agency establish whether wastewater treatment works have sufficient temporary storm storage to prevent unnecessary discharges of raw sewage.

Rebecca Pow:

At some sewage treatment works, where the permitted treatment capacity may be exceeded due to rainfall, storm tanks form part of the treatment process to limit spills of storm sewage (mixture of sewage and rainfall) to the water environment. These

discharges are permitted by the Environment Agency under the [Environmental Permitting Regulations](#).

The permit conditions typically define the assets that control the storm tanks' performance, for example:

- Storage volume
- Environment.
- Screening
- Monitoring for event duration (how often and how long the storm overflows operate)
- Reporting

Permits also include a management system condition that requires the water to have a written management system that identifies and minimises risk of pollution, so far as is reasonably practicable, along with reporting and notification conditions. The Environment Agency then undertakes compliance assessments for the permits and the conditions they include. These assessments can include the use of monitoring data, reports provided by the water companies and inspections of the sewage treatment works themselves.

■ Sewage: Waste Disposal

Royston Smith:

[\[61990\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the requirements under sections 141A to 141D of the Environment Act 2021 for annual reports on storm overflows, when he expects the next reports to be published.

Rebecca Pow:

Section 80 of the Environment Act 2021, which came into force in January this year, inserted sections 141A to 141E into the Water Industry Act 1991. Section 141A places a duty on HM Government to publish a plan to reduce sewage discharges and their impact. This plan has now been published, setting strict new targets for water companies that will make sure the ecology of our waterbodies is protected for generations to come. Our plan will require water companies to deliver the largest infrastructure programme in water company history - £56 billion capital investment over 25 years. Under Section 141B HM Government must publish a progress report 3 years following the publication of the Plan, and every 5 years thereafter. The first progress report will be published in 2025.

Section 141C sets out a duty on water companies to publish annual reports on discharges from storm overflows. Water companies are required to publish their annual reports relating to sewage discharge data from 2022 by 1st April 2023. Under Section 141D the Environment Agency is also required to publish annual reports in relation to the operation of storm overflows in England, by 1st April each year. The most recent report was published on 31st March 2022, and updated on the 14th May 2022. The next report relating to discharge data from 2022 will be published by 1st April 2023.

■ Solid Fuels: Air Pollution

Geraint Davies:

[\[70939\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when he will publish the results of his Department's study to measure pollutant emissions from burning solid fuels in a range of domestic appliances under real-world conditions.

Rebecca Pow:

The project is currently expected to run until August 2023, after which a project report will be published. The Emissions Factors for Domestic Combustion project aims to develop our understanding of real-world emissions from solid fuel burning in domestic stoves. It is likely that this information and the results of other improvement projects will feed into the formal inventory in future years. The methodologies used to compile the formal inventory follow (or go beyond) the international guidance specified in the latest EMEP/EEA Guidebook. We publish the methods we use in the Informative Inventory Report and methods document ('Methods and quality processes for UK air pollutant emissions statistics') on an annual basis.

■ Southern Water: Sewage

Royston Smith:

[\[61989\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent discussions his Department has had with Southern Water on tackling the illegal discharge of untreated sewage into waterways.

Rebecca Pow:

HM Government has been repeatedly clear that the current frequency of sewage discharges is unacceptable, and water companies must do much more to protect our environment. We will continue to work with water companies including Southern Water in the coming months to explore the acceleration of infrastructure projects to deliver the environmental improvements that we want to see.

Southern were handed a record £90 million fine after pleading guilty to thousands of illegal discharges of sewage which polluted rivers and coastal waters in Kent, Hampshire and Sussex. The regulators (the Environment Agency and Ofwat) have also recently launched the largest criminal and civil investigations into water company sewage discharges ever, at over 2200 treatment works, following new data coming to light as a result of increased monitoring. HM Government will not hesitate to use all options for robust enforcement action against breaches of storm overflow permits.

We have also recently announced that we will bring forward plans to consult on increasing the amount the Environment Agency can directly fine water companies who pollute the environment by 1000-fold, from £250,000 up to £250million.

■ Water: Southampton

Royston Smith:

[\[61991\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to improve water quality near Southampton.

Royston Smith:

[\[61992\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to improve water quality in the River Itchen.

Rebecca Pow:

Protecting our rivers and water bodies is a top priority for HM Government. We are taking action to address pollution from a variety of sources to improve water quality.

To tackle pollution to waterbodies from agriculture we have almost doubled the funding available for our Catchment Sensitive Farming programme over the next three years. Our new £30 million budget will expand the programme to cover 100% of farmland. We have also made extra budget available this year to the Environment Agency (EA) for 50 extra inspectors to be recruited in this financial year to visit farms posing a risk of water pollution and ensure action is taken.

The EA is working specifically across Hampshire catchments with farmers and landowners to ensure they are compliant with Environmental Regulations. This includes work via the Agriculture Regulatory Taskforce (ART), funded by Defra, to tackle diffuse pollution. On farm visits, EA officers issue actions for farmers to reduce pollution risk and improve the environment.

Chalk streams are both incredibly rare and a hugely important part of our environmental heritage. To protect the iconic chalk streams of the Test & Itchen, the EA is working with regional water resource planning groups to make sure these habitats are rightly prioritised, while delivering a resilient water supply to this growing area.

To tackle water pollution from sewage discharges, we have recently published our Storm Overflows Discharge Reduction Plan. Our Plan sets new strict targets on water companies to reduce sewage spills and will secure the largest infrastructure programme in water company history - £56 billion capital investment over 25 years. Water companies are also required under the Environment Act to monitor the water quality impact up and downstream of all their assets. This monitoring data will be used by the EA to assess compliance with permits.

■ Weather

Selaine Saxby:

[\[60196\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the recent extreme weather; and whether his Department is taking steps to provide advice to the horticulture industry on urban (a) greening and (b) cooling.

Trudy Harrison:

We have extensive plans in place and underway to adapt to and mitigate the risks of a warming climate. This includes our work being delivered through our landmark Environment Act to protect and increase biodiversity, protect and restore our peatlands, wetlands and natural environment, and improve air quality. We are working closely with responsible departments to ensure they are addressing the risks posed by extreme weather and will respond to the Climate Change Committee's assessment of climate risks in our next National Adaptation Programme, due to be published in 2023.

We have engaged with a number of initiatives to better understand and respond to the effects of climate change on food production. We provide advice to farmers via the Farming Advisory Service, which includes advice for water abstraction and consumption in the drier extremes of the year which are likely to become more common.

Our climate risk assessments and adaptation policies are underpinned by research from the Met Office Hadley Centre for Climate Science and Services. This includes efforts to better align our crop breeding work with pressures identified in climate projections.

Whilst no specific assessment of Government policy or its implication for the horticulture industry has been made at this time, we are aware that the recent extreme weather has had an impact on the industry, effecting yield, growth and quality of crops, and that this continues to be of concern to growers in many parts of the country. We are fortunate in this country to have a highly resilient food supply chain and are able to meet much of our domestic needs supplementing this supply with imports from overseas to meet consumer demand. Any disruption from risks such as adverse weather is unlikely to affect the overall security of the UK's supply chain. We will continue to keep the situation and any impact on the domestic sector under close review and have increased engagement with the industry to supplement HM Government analysis with real-time intelligence.

We recognise the contribution urban greening can make to climate adaptation. New guidance is being developed by Natural England as part of the Green Infrastructure Framework on how to deliver cooling and other benefits.

■ Wild Futures: Finance**Ruth Jones:**[\[62106\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will hold discussions with Cabinet colleagues on supporting Wild Futures' Monkey Sanctuary in Looe Cornwall with rising monthly costs.

Rebecca Pow:

The Energy Bill Relief Scheme (EBRS) will provide a price reduction to ensure that all eligible businesses and other non-domestic customers are protected from excessively high energy bills over the winter period. Non-domestic customers do not

need to take action or apply to the scheme – support will automatically be applied to bills.

The EBRS is available to all business, voluntary sector and public sector organisations which are:

- on existing fixed price contracts (agreed on or after 1 December 2021 irrespective if the contract has commenced before 1 October 2022)
- signing new fixed price contracts
- on deemed/out of contract or variable tariffs, or
- on flexible purchase (or similar) contracts.

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

■ **Balkans: Conferences**

Stephen Doughty:

[\[73844\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what role the UK will have in the EU-Western Balkans summit in Tirana on 6 December 2022.

Leo Docherty:

We work closely with the governments of the Western Balkans, the EU, and other partners, to support the Euro-Atlantic integration of the Western Balkans states. On 21 October, I attended the Berlin Process Foreign Ministers' meeting in Germany, and emphasized the need for a coordinated approach in response to Russian destabilising actions in the Western Balkans, including through Euro-Atlantic integration, imposition of sanctions against Russia and support for energy transition.

Like other partner countries which are not EU Member States, the UK will not be attending the upcoming EU-Western Balkans Summit.

■ **Bermuda and Cayman Islands: Marriage**

Dan Carden:

[\[74871\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has had discussions with LGBT activists and organisations from the (a) Cayman Islands and (b) Bermuda where the right to marriage for same-sex couples is refused by their respective Governments.

David Rutley:

The inhabited British Overseas Territories are separate, largely self-governing jurisdictions with their own democratically elected representatives. The relationship with the Overseas Territories is based on partnership. Policy on marriage law is an area of devolved responsibility.

The majority of Overseas Territories have legal recognition and protection for same sex relationships, either through marriage or through civil partnerships as is the case in Bermuda. In 2020, the Governor of the Cayman Islands enacted civil partnership

legislation to recognise same-sex partnerships in order to comply with the Cayman Islands Court of Appeal. The UK Government continues to engage with and encourage remaining Territories that have not put in place arrangements to recognise and protect same sex relationships, to do so.

The UK Government remains open to further engagement with LGBT+ activists and organisations across the Overseas Territories to support increased recognition and protections for same-sex relationships in the Overseas Territories.

■ **British Overseas Territories: Marriage**

Stephen Doughty:

[\[74690\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what the Government's policy is on equal marriage in the Cayman Islands and the other UK Overseas Territories where it is currently not permitted.

David Rutley:

The inhabited British Overseas Territories are separate, largely self-governing jurisdictions with their own democratically elected representatives. The relationship with the Overseas Territories is based on partnership. Policy on marriage law is an area of devolved responsibility.

The majority of Overseas Territories have legal recognition and protection for same sex relationships, either through marriage or through civil partnerships as is the case in Bermuda. In 2020 the Governor of the Cayman Islands enacted civil partnership legislation to recognise same-sex partnerships in order to comply with the Cayman Islands Court of Appeal. The UK Government continues to engage with and encourage remaining Territories that have not put in place arrangements to recognise and protect same sex relationships, to do so.

The UK Government remains open to further engagement with LGBT+ activists and organisations across the Overseas Territories to support increased recognition and protections for same-sex relationships in the Overseas Territories.

■ **Bulgaria: Ukraine**

Stephen Doughty:

[\[74691\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Bulgarian counterpart on support to Ukraine to counter Russian aggression.

Leo Docherty:

The UK and our international partners, including Bulgaria, stand united in condemning Russia's unprovoked, barbaric attack on Ukraine and its egregious violation of international law and the UN Charter.

We engage regularly with Bulgarian counterparts at all levels in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, including on our diplomatic responses, energy diversification, joint working on countering disinformation and humanitarian support to Ukraine. The

Foreign Secretary, in his role as Minister of State for Europe, discussed these issues when he visited Sofia in March, and met with representatives of the then Bulgarian government, Parliament and with civil society actors.

■ **Developing Countries: Humanitarian Aid**

Layla Moran:

[\[74891\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether the Government has programmed any of the funding that it pledged as part of the UK-led G7 Famine Prevention and Humanitarian Crises Compact that it launched in May 2021.

David Rutley:

The UK played a pivotal role in securing the G7 Famine Prevention Compact, which included a commitment of \$1.5 billion in funding by the G7 to prevent famine in Yemen, South Sudan and Nigeria. The UK's contribution to support in these countries was all disbursed in the financial year 2021/22. Details of the FCDO's spend in financial year 2021/22 can be found on the FCDO Development Tracker.

■ **Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria**

John McNally:

[\[73032\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will make it his policy to increase funding to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Mr Andrew Mitchell:

Global health remains a high priority for the UK. We are a founding donor of the Global Fund and its third largest donor historically, investing over £4.4 billion to date. At the seventh replenishment pledging conference, the UK committed to remain a strong supporter of the Global Fund, continuing to provide significant financial and political leadership and to announce our pledge shortly.

■ **Israel: Palestinians**

Alex Cunningham:

[\[72251\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his Israeli counterpart on the imprisonment of Palestinian children in Israeli military detention.

David Rutley:

We call on Israel to abide by its obligations under international law and have a regular dialogue with Israel on legal issues relating to the occupation, including the treatment of Palestinian children. We are committed to working with Israel to secure improvements to the practices surrounding children in detention and raise this with the Israeli Ministry of Justice.

■ Kyrgyzstan: Tajikistan**Stephen Doughty:**[\[74694\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps are being taken to facilitate a lasting and peaceful settlement to ongoing border clashes between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

Leo Docherty:

The UK welcomes the ceasefire reached between the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan following border clashes in September and we continue to urge both sides to pursue a lasting solution by peaceful and diplomatic means. We regret the significant loss of life that occurred and express our condolences to the families of those who died. Having set out our support for peaceful settlement at the OSCE Permanent Council on 23 September, we are also engaging with partners on ways in which we can support this objective.

■ Mediterranean Region: Energy Supply**Stephen Doughty:**[\[74693\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with countries in the Eastern Mediterranean on potential co-operation in energy security.

Leo Docherty:

We must end Europe's reliance on Russian hydrocarbons and it is right that we talk with our European allies about how we do this. The Foreign Secretary and I routinely raise energy security and supply with our European counterparts when we meet. The Foreign Secretary raised this with the Greek Foreign Minister on 14 October and the Turkish Foreign Minister on 25 October. The former Prime Minister made energy a top priority when she met European leaders in Prague on 6 October.

■ Moldova: Russia**Stephen Doughty:**[\[73846\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what conversations he has had with his counterparts in Moldova on their security concerns arising from continued Russian aggression.

Leo Docherty:

The Foreign Secretary met Moldovan Foreign Minister Popescu in London on 26 October to discuss the security situation in Moldova. I [Leo Docherty MP] visited Moldova on 4 October where I met President Sandu and other members of the Moldovan government. I discussed the impact Russia's invasion of Ukraine is having on Moldova and the UK's wider support to Moldova.

■ Russia: Serbia**Stephen Doughty:**[\[74692\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the recent agreements signed between Serbia and Russia; and if he will make a statement.

Leo Docherty:

On 21 October, I attended the Berlin Process Foreign Ministers' meeting, and emphasized the need for coordination in response to Russian destabilising actions in the Western Balkans, including through Euro-Atlantic integration and support for energy transition. Our Ambassador in Belgrade has welcomed Serbia's condemnation of Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine, and encouraged further measures to align with European partners, including by imposing sanctions.

■ Russia: Ukraine**Stephen Doughty:**[\[73848\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications of the declaration by Russia of martial law in annexed Ukrainian territories.

Leo Docherty:

As agreed by 143 countries in the United Nations, the UK has made clear that Russia has no legal claim to these sovereign, Ukrainian territories. These territories are, and always will be, Ukrainian. Martial law likely serves to justify ongoing efforts forcibly to deport and conscript Ukrainians in the region and impose further repression on civilians. The UK will continue to play a leading role upholding Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and will work with the global community so that those responsible are held to account.

■ Shipping: Cereals**Stephen Doughty:**[\[73845\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussion he has had with the United Nations on delays to the passage of grain ships near the Bosphorus Strait.

Leo Docherty:

We are in regular contact with United Nations officials on the implementation of the Black Sea Grain Initiative. It is clear that the current delays in the Bosphorus are a direct result of Russia suspending its involvement in the Initiative. The UK strongly urges Russia to resume its cooperation under the agreement so that shipments of grain can continue to leave Ukrainian Black Sea ports for countries around the world. The UK also continues to support UN led efforts to bring the parties together to extend the agreement beyond 19 November.

■ Ukraine: Energy

Stephen Doughty:

[\[73847\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps he is taking to support the Ukrainian Government in increasing mobile power points to help protect vital energy supplies.

Leo Docherty:

The UK is a leading donor in support of Ukraine, with support totalling approximately £3.8 billion. To date, that assistance includes £22 million of support in the energy sector. This includes £7 million for over 850 generators to ensure vital facilities, such as hospitals, have power; £10 million to the Energy Community's support fund to help Ukraine's efforts to repair infrastructure and reconnect households and key facilities to electricity and gas supply; and £5 million for safety and security equipment for the civil nuclear sector.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ Abortion: Young People

Dame Diana Johnson:

[\[65665\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, in the context of the International Safe Abortion Day 2022 which took place on 28 September 2022, what steps her Department is taking to help ensure young people can access early medical abortion via the telemedicine pathway; and what recent assessment she has made of the extent to which young people are supported to consent, if they have capacity to do so, to early medical abortion via the telemedicine pathway.

Maria Caulfield:

In March 2022, Parliament voted in favour of making the temporary approval allowing home-use of both pills for early medical abortions a permanent measure for women and girls in England and Wales. The Abortion Act 1967 does not set a legal age limit for access to early medical abortion via the telemedicine pathway. The Department continues to work with NHS England, the Care Quality Commission and abortion providers to ensure that children and young people have timely access to all abortion services, including telemedicine abortion services.

While no recent assessment has been made, the Department commissioned the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health to develop independent safeguarding guidance for children and young people under 18 years old accessing early medical abortion services, which was published in August 2022. The guidance states that young people have an evolving capacity to make decisions about their lives and to consent to medical treatment and recommends that early medical abortion services assess whether a young person is able to consent using national frameworks and the services' own internal guidance.

■ Agency Social Workers

Rachael Maskell: [\[73057\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department is taking steps with Cabinet colleagues to help reduce the (a) use and (b) costs of (i) locum and (ii) agency social workers by local authorities.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 1 November 2022]: We are working with the Department for Education and principal social workers to support local authorities to recruit and retain social workers.

■ Allied Health Professions and Educational Psychology: Children

Munira Wilson: [\[72466\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to help increase the number of (a) educational psychologists, (b) speech and language therapists and (c) occupational therapists working with school-age children in England.

Neil O'Brien:

Since 2020, the Department for Education (DfE) has increased the number of educational psychologist trainees that they fund from 160 per annum to over 200 per annum now.

They have invested £30 million to train three more cohorts of educational psychologist trainees for the 2020, 2021, and 2022 academic years, to reflect increased demand. The first cohort will enter the workforce in 2023 to provide crucial support to children and young people, schools, families, and local authorities.

On 29 March 2022, DfE announced a further investment of over £10 million to train over 200 more educational psychologists. These trainees will begin their courses in September 2023, and graduate in 2026.

To support the supply of more speech and language therapists and occupational therapists to the NHS, since September 2020 all eligible nursing, midwifery and allied health profession students have been able to apply for a non-repayable training grant of a minimum of £5,000 per academic year, with further financial support available for childcare, accommodation, and travel costs. It is the responsibility of individual employers, including schools and hospitals, to plan their staffing levels in line with their local service priorities.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision Green Paper sets out our proposal to commission analysis to ensure that the health needs of children and young people with SEND are supported through effective workforce planning. We propose to work with Health Education England, NHS England and the Department for Education to build on existing evidence and build a clearer picture of demand for support for children and young people with SEND from the therapy and diagnostic workforce.

■ Ambulance Services: Standards**Sarah Olney:** [\[69752\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the average ambulance response time was in each response time category in each region in each of the last five years.

Will Quince:

[Holding answer 27 October 2022]: The attached tables show the mean average ambulance response times in hours, minutes and seconds for each regional National Health Service ambulance trust in each response category since 2018/19, the first year of data available since the introduction of the current operational standards.

Attachments:

1. Mean average ambulance response time in hours [\[FORMATTED TABLE FOR MINISTERIAL CLEARANCE.docx\]](#)

Mr Jonathan Lord: [\[71051\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to improve ambulance response times.

Will Quince:

NHS England has allocated an additional £150 million for ambulance service pressures in 2022/23, supporting improvements to response times through additional call handler recruitment, retention and other requirements. The National Health Service is also investing £20 million to upgrade the ambulance fleet in each year to 2024/25, reducing the age profile and emissions of the fleet and increasing productivity.

The NHS will increase bed capacity by the equivalent of at least 7,000 general and acute beds to improve patient flow through hospital and reduce long waiting times in transferring ambulance patients to accident and emergency. NHS England is also providing targeted support to some hospitals facing the greatest delays in the handover of ambulance patients to the care of hospitals, to identify short and longer-term interventions.

Dr Rosena Allin-Khan: [\[72399\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to help reduce ambulance waiting times.

Will Quince:

NHS England has allocated an additional £150 million for ambulance service pressures in 2022/23, supporting improvements to response times through additional call handler recruitment, retention and other requirements. The National Health Service is also investing £20 million to upgrade the ambulance fleet in each year to 2024/25, reducing the age profile and emissions of the fleet and increasing productivity.

The NHS will increase bed capacity by the equivalent of at least 7,000 general and acute beds to improve patient flow through hospital and reduce long waiting times in transferring ambulance patients to accident and emergency. NHS England is also providing targeted support to some hospitals facing the greatest delays in the handover of ambulance patients to the care of hospitals, to identify short and longer-term interventions.

■ Antibiotics

Charlotte Nichols:

[\[68018\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if she will make an assessment of the (a) dangers and (b) legality of sharing antibiotics; and if she will make a statement.

Will Quince:

All use of antimicrobials can drive resistance, so they should only be used when necessary. The Government supports various initiatives to strengthen the stewardship and support the appropriate use of antimicrobials. Sharing prescription medications, including antibiotics, is against the law.

■ Autism: Health Services

Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:

[\[72398\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the national strategy for autistic children, young people and adults: 2021 to 2026, updated on 22 July 2021, whether it is his policy to invest £92 million in this strategy between 2021 and 2026.

Maria Caulfield:

We published our refreshed national autism strategy, on 21 July 2021 and remain committed to realising the ambition set out in the strategy. The strategy was backed by over £74 million of funding in the first year to improve understanding in society, reduce diagnosis waiting times and improve access to high quality health and social care for autistic people. This included funding to reduce numbers of autistic people admitted to mental health hospitals.

We are continuing to invest in actions to implement the strategy. In 2022/23 NHS England are investing £40 million to continue to improve the capacity and capability of 7-day specialist multidisciplinary and crisis support for autistic people and people with a learning disability in every area of the country and £30 million of funding to continue putting keyworkers in place for children and young people with the most complex needs. This includes autistic children.

They are also investing £2.5 million in 2022/23, to test and implement the most effective autism diagnostic assessment pathways.

■ Breast Cancer: Plastic Surgery

Tracey Crouch: [\[61839\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the average waiting time for breast reconstruction was in each hospital trust in each financial year since 2017.

Will Quince:

A table showing a count of elective finished admission episodes with a main operative procedure of breast reconstruction by hospital provider, and the mean and median waiting time to admission for each year from 2017/18 to 2021/22 is attached.

Attachments:

1. A count of Elective Finished Admission Episodes [\[FORMATTED TABLE FOR MINISTERIAL CLEARANCE PQ61839.xlsx\]](#)

■ Cancer: Radiotherapy

Chris Bryant: [\[69541\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans she has to improve access to radiotherapy for patients waiting for cancer treatment.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 1 November 2022]: Since 2016, NHS England has invested over £160m in radiotherapy equipment, resulting in around 100 ageing linear accelerators being replaced or upgraded and meaning that every part of the NHS in England has local access to advanced and innovative radiotherapy techniques and treatments like Stereotactic Ablative Radiotherapy, for which the list of commissioned clinical indications continues to expand driven by evidence of benefit.

■ Care Homes: Coronavirus

Thangam Debbonaire: [\[61962\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether her Department plans to take steps to end the requirement for staff working in care homes to wear face masks.

Helen Whately:

At present, adult social care guidance continues to recommend that all care home staff and visitors wear masks to provide protection for residents from COVID-19. The guidance allows for masks to not be used if, as part of a risk assessment, they are considered particularly challenging for the resident. We continue to keep this under review. Further personal protective equipment may also be recommended to carry out specific tasks.

The Department continues to work with the UK Health Security Agency to review relevant guidance to ensure it reflects the latest available evidence and safe and proportionate infection prevention and control principles.

■ Care Homes: Luton South

Rachel Hopkins: [\[69891\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate her Department has made of the number of residential care homes that have closed in Luton South constituency since 2010.

Helen Whately:

Since 2010, 13 care homes in Luton South have been 'deactivated'. The Care Quality Commission records care homes which have closed as 'deactivated'. The 'deactivated' locations exclude care homes where the provider continues to operate under a new, separate registration. This could be due to a legal entity change or a change in the provider.

■ Contraceptives

Rushanara Ali: [\[67024\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to Office for Health Improvement and Disparities' findings that the total prescribed long acting reversible contraception excluding injections rate in Tower Hamlets decreased from 34.7 per 1,000 women in 2018 to 22.3 per 1,000 women in 2020, published 2022, whether her Department is taking steps to improve access to contraceptive provision in (a) primary care and (b) specialist sexual and reproductive health services in (i) Tower Hamlets and (ii) England.

Neil O'Brien:

National Health Service and local authority commissioners are responsible for planning services to meet the needs of local communities, including appropriate access to contraceptive services. The Women's Health Strategy for England encourages local commissioners and providers to consider adopting models of care which improve access to services, including contraceptive services, such as women's health hubs.

From January 2023, NHS England will introduce Tier 1 of a Pharmacy Contraception Service, enabling community pharmacists to provide ongoing management of routine oral contraception which was initiated in general practice or a sexual health clinic. This will allow greater choice and access for those considering continuing their current form of contraception. We will set out further plans to improve sexual and reproductive health in England, including access to specialist services, in due course.

■ Contraceptives: Finance

Feryal Clark: [\[67250\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer on 7 September 2022 to Question 46199 on Contraceptives: Finance, what steps her Department is taking to tackle regional variation in funding in the delivery of local enhanced contraceptive services in primary care.

Neil O'Brien:

Integrated care boards are responsible for decisions on the funding and provision of health services, including enhanced contraceptive services, beyond the essential contraceptive services that general practitioner practices are required to provide. Commissioners plan services to meet the needs of local communities, including appropriate access to contraceptive services.

Coronavirus and Influenza: Vaccination**Rachael Maskell:**[\[71127\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps she will take to (a) increase uptake of vaccination and (b) raise greater awareness of the risks of being unvaccinated in areas where there has been a low level of uptake for the (i) covid-19 and (ii) flu vaccine.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 28 October 2022]: We continue to work with the National Health Service to provide information on the benefits of COVID-19 and flu vaccination. We have launched a national communications campaign to encourage eligible people to receive a COVID-19 booster and flu vaccination.

The COVID-19 vaccination programme continues to use mobile clinics, vaccine ambassadors and partnerships with faith and community organisations to encourage uptake. NHS England has also recommissioned a national call and recall service for the flu vaccine in the 2022/23 season, providing an invitation service for targeted groups.

Coronavirus: Disease Control**Sir Edward Leigh:**[\[63920\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what support her Department is providing to immunosuppressed people to help prevent the spread of covid-19; what progress the government has made on approving Evusheld for use by those people; and if she will make a statement.

Will Quince:

Those at higher risk from COVID-19 due to their immune system continue to be supported by a number of interventions. Interventions for this group include:

- Prioritisation for vaccinations and boosters
- Priority access to Covid-19 therapeutic and antiviral treatments
- Advice on protective behaviours
- Guidance for this cohort can be found on gov.uk

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-people-whose-immune-system-means-they-are-at-higher-risk/covid-19-guidance-for-people-whose-immune-system-means-they-are-at-higher-risk>)

Although Evusheld was granted conditional marketing approval from the MHRA in March 2022, the decision not to procure Evusheld at this present time is based on independent clinical advice by the multi-agency initiative RAPID C-19 and a national expert policy working group, following a review of a range of evidence including clinical trial data. Their conclusion is that there is insufficient evidence of benefit to recommend deployment at this time. The Chief Medical Office for England is content that the correct process for providing clinical advice has been followed and it has now been referred to the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence for further evaluation.

■ **Coronavirus: Sick Pay**

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[59502\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether her Department is taking steps to provide financial support to health and social care workers who have been required to self-isolate by their employer without sick pay as a result of having (a) covid-19 and (b) covid-19 symptoms.

Will Quince:

The Department introduced temporary non-contractual COVID-19 sickness guidance at the start of the pandemic, to ensure National Health Service staff received full pay should they be advised to self-isolate or become ill with COVID-19. This temporary non-contractual guidance has been withdrawn as we return to the normal sickness arrangements set out in the NHS terms and conditions.

We expect all care providers to support good health and safety practice, with staff staying away from the workplace where there would be a health risk to those in their care, as before the pandemic.

■ **Coronavirus: Vaccination**

Chi Onwurah:

[\[65759\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the regulatory approval of covid-19 vaccine Nuvaxovid, what plans she has for the usage of this vaccine as (a) a covid-19 booster vaccination or (b) other uses.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 21 October 2022]: On 3 February 2022, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency approved Nuvaxovid for use as a COVID-19 primary course vaccination. The Government accepted advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) that in exceptional circumstances, Nuvaxovid may be used when no clinically suitable United Kingdom-approved COVID-19 vaccine alternative is available. The JCVI's advice allows its use in either COVID-19 primary course vaccination or off-label as a COVID-19 booster dose. In line with the JCVI's advice, the Nuvaxovid vaccine is the current alternative for those who are clinically intolerant to and are unable to receive the COVID-19

mRNA vaccines manufactured by Pfizer and Moderna. Deployment of Nuvaxovid began on 28 September 2022.

■ Dairy Products: Children

Carla Lockhart: [\[64394\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether she is taking steps to promote the inclusion of dairy in children's diets.

Neil O'Brien:

Dairy is an important source of a range of nutrients, including calcium, in a child's diet. The Government therefore promotes the consumption of milk and dairy products, or fortified alternatives, as part of a healthy balanced diet.

The Eatwell Guide encourages the population to consume some milk and dairy products, choosing lower fat and lower sugar varieties where available. The Eatwell Guide's healthy eating principles, including those promoting milk and dairy products, are communicated through channels including GOV.UK, NHS.UK and social marketing campaigns, such as Healthier Families and Better Health.

■ Dental Services: Bradford

Judith Cummins: [\[72295\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many children under the age of (a) four and (b) eleven were admitted to hospital for a tooth extraction in Bradford constituency in each of the last five years.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 1 November 2022]: This information is not held in the format requested.

■ Dental Services: Children

Rachael Maskell: [\[72315\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he will take to ensure that all children will have access to an NHS dentist.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 31 October 2022]: In September, we announced 'Our plan for patients', which outlines how we will meet oral health needs and increase access to dental care, including children. The plan includes improvements to ensure dentists are remunerated fairly for more complex work, allowing greater flexibility to reallocate resources and to utilise dentists with greater capacity to deliver National Health Service treatment, whilst enabling full use of the dental team. The plan also includes streamlining processes for overseas dentists and holding the local NHS to account for dentistry provision. In addition, Health Education England is also reforming dental education to improve the recruitment and retention of dental professionals.

NHS 111 can also provide assistance for parents on locating a dental practice for their child's treatment.

■ **Dental Services: Coronavirus**

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[59504\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, (a) what covid-19 guidance remains in place for dentists, (b) for what reason it continues to apply following the pandemic, and (c) what plans she has to (i) update or (ii) rescind said guidance.

Neil O'Brien:

On 28 June 2022, NHS England wrote to dental practices to advise that the UK Health Security Agency's guidance on infection prevention and control (IPC) for seasonal respiratory infections for winter 2021/22 and the accompanying dental appendix would be withdrawn. NHS England confirmed the return to usual contracting arrangements from Quarter 2 2022/23, when all National Health Service dentists were asked to deliver 100% of contracted activity.

■ **Dental Services: Easington**

Grahame Morris:

[\[74624\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many children under the age of (a) four and (b) 11 were admitted to hospital for a tooth extraction due to decay in Easington constituency in each of the last five years.

Neil O'Brien:

This information is not held in the format requested.

■ **Dental Services: Integrated Care Systems**

Rachael Maskell:

[\[72316\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether NHS England is taking steps to ensure that integrated care systems will provide NHS dental services from April 2023.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 31 October 2022]: Since 1 July 2022, nine integrated care boards (ICBs) have responsibility for the commissioning of one or more pharmaceutical services, general ophthalmic services and dental services. NHS England plans to delegate commissioning responsibility to all remaining ICBs for all pharmaceutical, general ophthalmic and dental services from 1 April 2023.

■ **Dental Services: Nottingham East**

Nadia Whittome:

[\[58914\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to address the shortage of NHS dentists, particularly in Nottingham East constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

In September, we announced 'Our plan for patients', which outlines how we will meet oral health needs and increase access to dental care, including in Nottingham East.

The plan includes improvements to ensure dentists are remunerated fairly for more complex work, allowing greater flexibility to reallocate resources and to utilise dentists with greater capacity to deliver National Health Service treatment, whilst enabling full use of the dental team. The plan also includes streamlining processes for overseas dentists and holding the local NHS to account for dentistry provision. In addition, Health Education England is also reforming dental education to improve the recruitment and retention of dental professionals.

■ Dental Services: Somerset**David Warburton:**[\[72392\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to increase the (a) recruitment, (b) training and (c) retention of NHS dentists in Somerset.

Neil O'Brien:

The Government continues to monitor the number of dental school places in England to ensure that the NHS has the necessary dental workforce to meet future demand.

The Department worked with NHSE and negotiated with the BDA on a package of improvements to the NHS dental systems which was announced on 19 July 2022. These improvements, which are supported by the sector will mean dentists are more fairly rewarded for the NHS care that they deliver, making NHS dentistry a more attractive place for dentists and their teams to work. The Department is now working with NHS England and the sector on longer-term improvements to NHS dentistry.

Health Education England (HEE) have undertaken a three-year Advancing Dental Care Review of education and training which they are now implementing through their Dental Education Reform Programme to improve recruitment and retention including in Somerset constituency.

■ Dental Services: Somerton and Frome**David Warburton:**[\[72391\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of the NHS dentistry provision in Somerton and Frome constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

No specific assessment has been made. However, NHS England asked dental practices to return to full delivery of contracted activity from July 2022 including in Somerton and Frome constituency. In September, we announced 'Our plan for patients', which outlines how we will meet National Health Service (NHS) dental needs and increase access to dental services, including in Somerton and Frome constituency.

The plan includes improvements to ensure dentists are remunerated fairly for more complex work, allowing greater flexibility to reallocate resources and to utilise dentists with greater capacity to deliver National Health Service treatment, whilst enabling full use of the dental team. The plan also includes streamlining processes for overseas dentists and holding the local NHS to account for dentistry provision. In addition, Health Education England is also reforming dental education to improve the recruitment and retention of dental professionals.

■ Department of Health and Social Care: Departmental Responsibilities

Cat Smith:

[\[58968\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, which Minister in her Department holds responsibility for (a) medicine regulation and (b) patient safety.

Will Quince:

I have Ministerial responsibility for medicine regulation, while the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Maria Caulfield MP) has responsibility for patient safety.

■ Department of Health and Social Care: Trade Unions

Wes Streeting:

[\[73876\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many meetings his Department held with (a) Unison, (b) GMB, (c) the Royal College of Nursing, (d) the British Medical Association and (e) the Royal College of Midwives in the period between 5 July 2022 and 6 September 2022.

Will Quince:

The information is not available in the format requested and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

■ Department of Health and Social Care: Written Questions

Judith Cummins:

[\[72297\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to answer Question 63059 on General Practitioners: Bradford South, tabled by the Hon. Member for Bradford South on 12 October 2022, on what steps his Department is taking to help support the (a) recruitment and (b) retention of GPs in Bradford South constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 27 October to Question [63059](#).

■ Dermatitis

Jim Shannon:

[\[69639\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to Allergy UK's report entitled Not Just Skin Deep: Getting under the skin of eczema, published in November 2022, what steps her Department is taking to improve guidance on diagnosing patients with atopic dermatitis.

Jim Shannon:

[\[69640\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to findings of the report by Allergy UK entitled Not Just Skin Deep, published in November 2021, on the proportion of clinical commissioning groups that had an adult eczema commissioning policy in 2021, whether her Department is taking steps to help ensure that integrated care systems develop (a) referral and (b) commissioning policies for (i) atopic dermatitis and (ii) other skin conditions.

Helen Whately:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) publishes guidance on atopic dermatitis and other skin conditions, which commissioners are expected to take into account. The guideline for atopic dermatitis in those aged under 12 years old is being updated, with draft recommendations to be published in April 2023. A referral has also been made to NICE to develop a new guidance on atopic dermatitis in adults.

Integrated care boards (ICB) are responsible for working with local commissioners and organisations to understand the needs of the local population and commission services to meet those needs, including for patients with atopic dermatitis and other skin conditions. ICBs have a legal duty to have due regard to NICE's guidelines.

■ Diabetes and Eating Disorders

Sir Charles Walker:

[\[72216\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Answer of 13 April 2022 to Question 140404 on Diabetes and Eating Disorders, where the five additional pilot sites areas will be; and if he will make a statement.

Maria Caulfield:

[Holding answer 31 October 2022]: Five additional new treatment sites are to open in 2022/23 in the following areas:

- Coventry and Warwickshire;
- Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutlands;
- Norfolk and Waveney;
- Cheshire and Merseyside;
- Humber and North Yorkshire.

■ Diabetes: Children

Wes Streeting:

[\[51852\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many children presented to NHS GP surgeries with Type 2 diabetes symptoms in each of the last five years.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 23 September 2022]: The data is not held in the format requested.

■ Digital Technology and Health Services: Regulation

Mr Virendra Sharma:

[\[63997\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if she will support the healthtech sector by prioritising the development of domestic assurance routes that will allow recognition of approvals in the (a) Medical Device Single Audit Programme (MDSAP), (b) ACCESS consortium and (c) other trusted jurisdictions.

Will Quince:

[Holding answer 20 October 2022]: On 21 April 2022, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) was made a full member of the International Medical Device Regulators Forum. The MHRA is currently an official observer of the Medical Device Single Audit Programme. In January 2021, the MHRA joined the Access Consortium and has appointed experts to the majority of working groups.

■ Diseases: Drugs

Jim Shannon:

[\[64096\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many and what proportion of eligible patients are receiving a biologic for (a) rheumatoid arthritis, (b) dermatology, (c) immunology, (d) multiple sclerosis and (e) severe asthma as of 17 October 2022.

Will Quince:

The information requested is not held centrally.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has made recommendations on the use of the biological medicines for the treatment of a range of conditions. Further information is available on the NICE website at www.nice.org.uk

NHS commissioners in England are legally required to make funding available for NICE recommended treatments so that they are available for clinicians to prescribe to patients, normally within three months of NICE's guidance.

■ Doctors: Registration

Helen Hayes:

[\[74807\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the announcement on 22 September 2022 that the General Medical Council will extend the temporary emergency registration scheme, what steps he is taking to ensure data on the number of working doctors (a) remains accurate and (b) does not include doctors who re-registered during the pandemic but are now no longer practising.

Will Quince:

The Department does not collect or hold data on the number of practising doctors in the United Kingdom.

The General Medical Council is an independent healthcare regulatory body not subject to Government oversight. As such, it is responsible for the maintenance of its

registers and associated data collection. As part of maintaining the temporary emergency register, the General Medical Council wrote to all doctors on the register to confirm they wished to maintain their temporary registration.

■ Dyslexia

Jim Shannon: [\[69638\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people have been diagnosed with dyslexia in the UK in each of the last five years.

Helen Whately:

The information requested is not held centrally.

■ Electronic Cigarettes

Mary Glendon: [\[67004\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether she is taking steps with the Devolved Administrations on developing a consistent approach to vaping regulations as part of her Tobacco Control Plan for England.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 24 October 2022]: Officials have regular discussions with their counterparts in the Devolved Administrations to develop a consistent approach to vaping regulations.

Mary Glendon: [\[67007\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if she will bring forward legislative proposals to extend the application of the Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016 to include non-nicotine vaping products.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 24 October 2022]: We are exploring a range of regulatory options to support the ambition for England to be smoke-free by 2030. This includes extending regulations to include non-nicotine vaping products.

Peter Dowd: [\[74725\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he has taken to equip clinicians with accurate information about the benefits of smokers switching to vaping as recommended by Dr Javed Khan's recent independent review into tobacco control policies.

Peter Dowd: [\[74726\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to Nicotine vaping in England: 2022 evidence update, published on 29 September 2022 by the Office of Health Improvement and Disparities, whether he has held discussions with that Office on the steps that could be taken to encourage adult smokers to switch to less harmful alternatives.

Neil O'Brien:

Since 2014, we have provided evidence-based information and guidance for clinicians and healthcare professionals on vaping. This includes guidance from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, online training and printed advice, blogs, videos and the publication of 'Nicotine vaping in England: 2022 evidence update main findings' in September 2022. We also recently published online information on the benefits of smokers switching to vaping, which is available at the following link:

<https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/vaping-to-quit-smoking>

The Office of Health Improvement and Disparities is based within the Department of Health and Social Care. The Department is currently considering the recommendations made in 'The Khan review: making smoking obsolete', including those related to vaping. This includes encouraging adult smokers to switch to vaping.

■ Evusheld

Zarah Sultana: [\[64412\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when she expects the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence to conclude its appraisal of Evusheld.

Will Quince:

[Holding answer 19 October 2022]: On 10 August 2022, the Department referred Evusheld to the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) to evaluate its clinical and cost effectiveness for preventing COVID-19. From 29 July to 12 August 2022, NICE consulted with provisional stakeholders on the suggested remit, draft scope and provisional stakeholder list of consultees and commentators.

NICE has begun its evaluation and currently expects to publish draft guidance in April 2023 with final guidance in May 2023. In discussion with the manufacturer AstraZeneca, NICE is expediting the appraisal process by bringing forward the deadline for the company's evidence submission in order to issue guidance to the National Health Service as soon as possible.

Matt Vickers: [\[72480\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the Government has made an assessment of the impact of delaying the procurement of covid-19 treatment Evusheld on people who are immunocompromised; and if he will review the decision not to procure Evusheld for use in treatment of vulnerable people during winter 2022-23.

Will Quince:

Based on the evidence and after careful analysis and consideration, the UK Government has decided not to procure Evusheld for prevention through emergency routes at this time. However, the UK Government has referred Evusheld to the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) for evaluation, which provides evidence-based, rigorous evaluation of the clinical and cost effectiveness of medicines for use in the NHS. This is a decision based on independent clinical advice

by RAPID C-19 (a multi-agency group) and a UK National Expert Policy Working Group and reflecting the epidemiological context and wider policies in our pandemic response and recovery. RAPID C-19 considered that there remained uncertainty that Evusheld would prevent symptomatic COVID-19 caused by current Omicron variants in the vulnerable population who would potentially be eligible. There are no current plans for any further review of the decision. RAPID C-19 will continue to keep Evusheld (and other COVID-19 treatments) under active review.

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[73803\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department plans to meet with patient groups, charities and clinicians representing the #Forgotten500k campaign.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 2 November 2022]: Ministers and officials regularly engage with charities and organisations which represent and support immunocompromised and immunosuppressed groups. The Enhanced Protection Programme stakeholder forum was held on 23 September 2022. The forum was chaired by Professor Dame Jenny Harries, the Chief Executive of UK Health Security Agency and attended by officials and charities and groups representing immunosuppressed patients. In addition, officials meet with individual charities representing these patients.

■ Food: EU Law

Rachael Maskell:

[\[63272\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether she plans to introduce new regulations to replace EU regulations on food safety.

Neil O'Brien:

Through the Retained EU Law (Reform and Revocation) Bill, we will preserve and incorporate the necessary retained European Union law into domestic legislation prior to the proposed 2023 expiry.

The independent Food Standards Agency (FSA), working with Food Standards Scotland, is participating in the review of all retained EU law within its responsibilities. The FSA advises the Government, Welsh Ministers and the Northern Ireland Executive as appropriate. Consumer safety or the ability of business to trade during this review will not be compromised.

■ General Practitioners: York

Rachael Maskell:

[\[62877\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate her Department has made of the number of full-time equivalent fully qualified GPs, excluding GPs in Training Grade, practicing in (a) York and (b) York Central constituency (i) on 13 October 2022 and (ii) in 2013.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 18 October 2022]: This information is not collected in the format requested.

■ General Practitioners: Bradford East**Imran Hussain:** [\[72299\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many and what proportion of GP appointments in Bradford East were conducted face-to-face in the last 12 months; and what that figure was in 2013.

Imran Hussain: [\[72300\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate her Department has made of the total number of GP appointments in Bradford East in the last 12 months; and what that number was in 2013.

Neil O'Brien:

This information is not collected in the format requested.

Imran Hussain: [\[72301\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate her Department has made of the number of FTE fully-qualified GPs excluding GPs in a training grade that were practicing in Bradford East constituency (a) on 26 October 2022 and (b) in 2013.

Neil O'Brien:

This information is not collected in the format requested.

Imran Hussain: [\[72302\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate her Department has made of the number of GP practices open in Bradford East; and what that number was in 2013.

Neil O'Brien:

In September 2013, there were 21 practices registered in Bradford East. In October 2022, 19 practices were registered in this region.

Practices close for a variety of reasons, including practice mergers or retirement. A reduction in practice numbers does not indicate a reduction in the quality of care. When a practice closes, patients are informed and advised to register at another local practice of their choice. Practices and commissioners must put in place appropriate measures to ensure that affected patients have access to general practitioner services.

■ General Practitioners: Bradford South**Judith Cummins:** [\[63218\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate her Department has made of the number of GP practices that were open in Bradford South constituency (a) in 2013 and (b) on 14 October 2022.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 19 October 2022]: In September 2013, there were eight practices registered in Bradford South and seven practices registered in October 2022.

Practices close for a variety of reasons, including practice mergers or retirement. A reduction in practice numbers does not mean a reduction in the quality of care. When a practice does close, patients are informed and advised to register at another local practice of their choice. Practices and commissioners must put in place appropriate measures to ensure that the affected patients have access to general practitioner services.

■ General Practitioners: Brentford and Isleworth**Ruth Cadbury:**[\[63214\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if her Department will make an estimate of the number of GP appointments there were in Brentford and Isleworth constituency in (a) the last 12 months and (b) in 2013.

Neil O'Brien:

This information is not collected in the format requested.

■ General Practitioners: Easington**Grahame Morris:**[\[74626\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate her Department has made of the number of GP practices that were open in Easington constituency on (a) 31 October 2022 and (b) in 2013.

Neil O'Brien:

In September 2013, there were 15 practices registered in Easington, with 10 practices registered in October 2022.

Practices close for a variety of reasons, including practice mergers or retirement. A reduction in practice numbers does not indicate a reduction in the quality of care. When a practice closes, patients are informed and advised to register at another local practice of their choice. Practices and commissioners must put in place appropriate measures to ensure that affected patients have access to general practitioner services.

■ General Practitioners: Edmonton**Kate Osamor:**[\[72374\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate her Department has made of the number of GP practices open in Edmonton today; and what that number was in 2013.

Neil O'Brien:

In September 2013, there were 24 practices registered in Edmonton, with 17 practices registered in October 2022.

Practices close for a variety of reasons, including practice mergers or retirement. A reduction in practice numbers does not indicate a reduction in the quality of care. When a practice closes, patients are informed and advised to register at another local practice of their choice. Practices and commissioners must put in place appropriate measures to ensure that affected patients have access to general practitioner services.

Kate Osamor: [\[72375\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate her Department has made of the number of FTE Fully qualified GPs, excluding GPs in training grades, practicing in Edmonton in (a) 2022 and (b) 2013.

Neil O'Brien:

This information is not collected in the format requested.

Kate Osamor: [\[72376\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate her Department has made of how many GP appointments took place in Edmonton in the last 12 months; and what that number was in 2013.

Kate Osamor: [\[72377\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate her Department has made of the proportion of GP appointments in Edmonton conducted face-to-face in (a) the last 12 months and (b) 2013.

Neil O'Brien:

This information is not collected in the format requested. In the 12 months to September 2022, there were 7.36 million general practice appointments in the NHS North Central London Integrated Care System area, excluding COVID-19 vaccinations. Of these, 57.5% were conducted face-to-face.

■ **General Practitioners: Eltham**

Clive Efford: [\[61707\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that surgeries in Eltham constituency can fill GP vacancies.

Neil O'Brien:

We are working with NHS England, Health Education England and the profession to increase the general practice workforce in England, including in Eltham. This includes measures to improve recruitment, address the reasons why doctors leave the profession and encourage them to return to practice.

The updated GP Contract Framework announced a number of new schemes, alongside continued support for existing recruitment and retention schemes for the general practice workforce. This includes the GP Retention Scheme, the GP Retention Fund, the National GP Induction and Refresher, the Locum Support Scheme, the New to Partnership Payment and the Supporting Mentors Scheme. We

made £520 million available to improve access and expand general practice capacity during the pandemic. This is in addition to at least £1.5 billion to create an additional 50 million general practice appointments by 2024 by increasing and diversifying the workforce.

■ General Practitioners: Fees and Charges

Ruth Cadbury: [\[74716\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to review the policy of permitting General Practices to charge individuals for letters confirming a patient's health condition.

Neil O'Brien:

There are no current plans to do so. The General Medical Services and Personal Medical Services Regulations sets out those medical evidence letters, certificates or reports which practices may charge for. While there is no statutory limit to the level of such a fee, NHS England would expect practices to charge a reasonable sum appropriate for the workload involved. The British Medical Association's Professional Fees Committee publishes guidance for practices on setting these fees. Where it is necessary for general practitioners to provide medical evidence and charge for that evidence, charges should be clear, fair and consistent.

■ General Practitioners: Feltham and Heston

Seema Malhotra: [\[72281\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has provided additional (a) financial and (b) other support to help tackle (i) patient backlogs and (ii) increased workloads in GP surgeries in Feltham and Heston constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

The 'Delivery plan for tackling the COVID-19 backlog of elective care', published in February 2022, stated the ambition to reduce patient backlogs for planned National Health Service treatments and the Government plans to spend more than £8 billion from 2022/23 to 2024/25. We made £520 million available to expand general practice capacity during the pandemic. This was in addition to at least £1.5 billion announced in 2020 by 2024 which includes supporting increased workloads in general practitioner (GP) surgeries, including in Feltham and Heston. In September 2022, 'Our plan for patients' announced measures to support GP practices increase access and manage workloads, such as the provision of 31,000 phone lines and funding to expand the staff roles working in general practice, including in Feltham and Heston.

■ General Practitioners: Luton South

Rachel Hopkins: [\[71339\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many and what proportion of GP surgeries were rated as good by the Care Quality Commission in Luton South constituency as of 20 October 2022.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 28 October 2022]: There are currently 12 or 70.6% of general practitioner practices in Luton South Parliamentary constituency rated as 'good' by the Care Quality Commission.

Rachel Hopkins:[\[72500\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate his Department has made of the number of GP practices that were open in Luton South constituency on (a) 26 October 2022 and (b) in 2013.

Neil O'Brien:

In September 2013, there were 21 practices registered in Luton South, with 18 practices registered in October 2022.

Practices close for a variety of reasons, including practice mergers or retirement. A reduction in practice numbers does not indicate a reduction in the quality of care. When a practice closes, patients are informed and advised to register at another local practice of their choice. Practices and commissioners must put in place appropriate measures to ensure that affected patients have access to general practitioner services.

Rachel Hopkins:[\[72501\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate his Department has made of the number of FTE fully-qualified GPs, excluding GPs in a training grade, who were practicing in Luton South constituency (a) on 26 October 2022 and (b) in 2013.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 31 October 2022]: This information is not collected in the format requested.

Rachel Hopkins:[\[72502\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate his Department has made of the number of GP appointments there were in Luton South constituency in (a) the last 12 months and (b) in 2013.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 31 October 2022]: This information is not held in the format requested.

■ General Practitioners: Nottingham South**Lilian Greenwood:**[\[74632\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate his Department has made of the number of GP appointments in Nottingham South in the last 12 months; and what that number was in 2013.

Neil O'Brien:

NHS England currently commissions many primary care services, including dentistry. Since 1 July 2022, nine integrated care board (ICBs) have delegated responsibility for

the commissioning of one or more pharmaceutical services, general ophthalmic services and dental services. NHS England plans to delegate commissioning responsibility to the remaining ICBs for all dental services from 1 April 2023. The Department encourages integrated care systems to commission services to meet the dental care needs of the local population, which could include Centres for Dental Development where appropriate.

Lilian Greenwood: [\[74633\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate his Department has made of the proportion of GP appointments in Nottingham South constituency that were conducted face to face in (a) the past 12 months and (b) 2013.

Neil O'Brien:

This information is not collected in the format requested.

■ **General Practitioners: Pharmacy**

Caroline Nokes: [\[68527\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if she will relax the restrictions on dispensing pharmaceuticals in GP surgeries to enable more patients to obtain their medication from the surgery.

Neil O'Brien:

There are no plans to do so. These measures are in place to protect the viability of community pharmacies and the provision of services.

■ **General Practitioners: Recruitment**

Feryal Clark: [\[61394\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate her Department has made of the potential cost of employing 1,000 additional GP assistants as outlined in the Government's Plan for Patients.

Neil O'Brien:

General practice assistants (GPAs) were included in the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS) in October 2022. Through the Scheme, Primary Care Networks (PCNs) claim reimbursement for the salaries and some on-costs of defined roles in the Network Contract Directed Enhanced Service.

Each PCN is entitled to a share of the total national budget, based on the size and needs of the local population and selects the roles to recruit within these budgets. The introduction of new roles such as the GPA provides PCNs and commissioners with more choice, flexibility and opportunity to utilise ARRS funding entitlements, increasing the number of patient-facing staff in local general practice teams.

The national budget for ARRS is currently approximately £1 billion and is expected to rise to over £1.4 billion next year. Information on planned PCN recruitment and expenditure of allocations indicates there is sufficient funding to meet expected demand for GPAs.

Sir George Howarth: [\[61767\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether she plans to take steps to help ensure that GP surgeries employ more (a) GP Assistants and (b) Advanced Practitioners.

Neil O'Brien:

In September, we announced in 'Our plan for patients' how we will improve access to general practitioner (GP) services. As part of the plan, from October GP assistants can be recruited through the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme and the number of advanced practitioners which Primary Care Networks can recruit through the Scheme was increased.

■ **General Practitioners: Slough**

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[74855\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate his Department has made of the number of GP practices open in Slough; and what that number was in 2013.

Neil O'Brien:

There were 17 practices registered in Slough in September 2013 and in October 2022.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[74856\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate his Department has made of the number of FTE Fully qualified GPs, excluding GPs in Training Grade, practicing in Slough; and what that number was in 2013.

Neil O'Brien:

This information is not collected in the format requested.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[74857\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate his Department has made of the number of GP appointments in Slough in the last 12 months; and what that number was in 2013.

Neil O'Brien:

This information is not held in the format requested.

■ **General Practitioners: Standards**

Mark Jenkinson: [\[74918\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress the Government has made on meeting the target to deliver 50 million extra general practice appointments a year; and what steps he is taking to increase access to a GP in Workington.

Neil O'Brien:

In the 12 months to September 2022, there were an estimated 325.2 million appointments in general practice in England, excluding COVID-19 vaccinations. This is an increase of 7.3% compared to the 12 months to September 2021. On 22 September 2022, we announced 'Our plan for patients', which sets out how we will deliver an additional one million appointments this winter and the expectation that patients who need an appointment within two weeks will receive one, with urgent cases being seen on the same day, including in Workington.

We have committed to publishing practice-level appointment data to assist patients to make an informed choice on the appropriate practice for their needs. We have also set out measures to help patients book appointments more easily and benefit from more options for care, such as community pharmacy. NHS England has offered a short-term telephony solution to all general practitioner (GP) practices, to increase capacity for incoming calls. From December, NHS England will accelerate the delivery of a framework to support all practices to secure cloud-based telephony systems. We will also assist general practices to recruit a range of health professionals to increase appointment capacity, such as GP assistants and advanced practitioners.

■ General Practitioners: Sunderland Central**Julie Elliott:**[\[72991\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to help support the (a) recruitment and (b) retention of GPs in Sunderland Central constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

We are working with NHS England, Health Education England and the profession to increase the general practice workforce in England, including in Sunderland Central. This includes measures to improve recruitment, address the reasons why doctors leave the profession and encourage them to return to practice.

The updated GP Contract Framework announced a number of new schemes, alongside continued support for existing recruitment and retention schemes for the general practice workforce. This includes the GP Retention Scheme, the GP Retention Fund, the National GP Induction and Refresher, the Locum Support Scheme, the New to Partnership Payment and the Supporting Mentors Scheme.

■ General Practitioners: Worsley and Eccles South**Barbara Keeley:**[\[69566\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate her Department has made of the number of GP practices that were open in Worsley and Eccles South constituency (a) on 13 October 2022 and (b) in 2013.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 27 October 2022]: In September 2013, there were 19 practices registered in Worsley and Eccles South and 17 practices registered in October 2022.

Practices close for a variety of reasons, including practice mergers or retirement. A reduction in practice numbers does not indicate a reduction in the quality of care. When a practice closes, patients are informed and advised to register at another local practice of their choice. Practices and commissioners must put in place appropriate measures to ensure that affected patients have access to general practitioner services.

Genito-urinary Medicine**Janet Daby:**[\[60065\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps she is taking to ensure sexual health clinics can continue to deliver a full range of services alongside delivering the monkeypox vaccination programme.

Neil O'Brien:

We are working with the UK Health Security Agency, local authorities, NHS England and other stakeholders to identify how local health and care systems can manage pressures on sexual health services and maintain access in addition to delivering the monkeypox vaccination programme. Local authorities will receive more than £3.4 billion in 2022/23 for public health responsibilities, including sexual health services.

Genito-urinary Medicine: Surveys**Feryal Clark:**[\[60151\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department has taken to begin the inaugural reproductive health experiences survey.

Neil O'Brien:

The Department is commissioning an external organisation to deliver the inaugural women's reproductive health experiences survey in 2023.

Health Professions**Jeff Smith:**[\[62873\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the forthcoming NHS workforce strategy will include specific projections of workforce needs with respect to (a) consultant hepatologists, (b) liver nurse specialists and (c) alcohol care teams.

Will Quince:

The Department has commissioned NHS England to develop a long-term workforce plan. The plan will consider the number of staff and the roles required and will set out the actions and reforms needed to improve workforce supply and retention. The plan will review all National Health Service professions, including medicine, nursing and multi-disciplinary teams. The conclusions of the plan will be available in due course.

■ Health Services and Social Services: Regulation

Wes Streeting: [\[61997\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if she will make an assessment of the potential impact of regulatory changes at the Care Quality Commission on (a) users of health and social care services and (b) its staff.

Maria Caulfield:

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and adult social care in England. The CQC launched its new strategy in May 2021 to ensure that its regulation is relevant to the way care is now delivered and more flexible and effective at managing risk and uncertainty. The CQC has introduced a new single assessment framework, where people's views and experiences are a source of evidence in its assessments of all care services and those who organise care locally.

The CQC is also creating a new operations group and regulatory leadership team and has been engaging with joint trades union colleagues and its staff. The CQC will support staff in the transition to new ways of working and any changes will not be implemented until it is safe to do so.

■ Health Services: Females

Feryal Clark: [\[67251\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to ensure the views of relevant stakeholders are taken into account in the development of the Sexual and Reproductive Health Action Plan.

Neil O'Brien:

We are engaging with stakeholders to inform our understanding of the specific challenges faced by sexual and reproductive health commissioners and providers face. Further information on plans for sexual and reproductive health will be available in due course.

Feryal Clark: [\[67253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Women's Health Strategy published on 20 July 2022, and the specific commitment to commission a reproductive health experiences survey every two years, (a) what progress has been made in commissioning this survey, (b) what plans her department has to develop the survey through consultation with stakeholders and (c) how will her department ensure that the experiences of disadvantaged groups are captured in the survey.

Neil O'Brien:

The Department is currently commissioning an external organisation to deliver the inaugural women's reproductive health experiences survey in 2023. We intend to ensure that the survey is developed through consultation with stakeholders and that the experiences of disadvantaged groups are recorded.

■ Health Services: Immunosuppression

Andrew Gwynne: [\[72219\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will meet with (a) clinically vulnerable, (b) clinically extremely vulnerable and (c) immunosuppressed patient support groups to discuss the Government's strategy to protect these groups over winter 2022-23.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 31 October 2022]: Following the end of the shielding programme in September 2021, the term 'clinically extremely vulnerable' (CEV) is no longer in use. The majority of people previously identified as CEV are well protected through the vaccination programme. However, there is a smaller patient cohort whose immune systems mean that they continue to be at higher risk of infection.

Ministers and officials regularly engage with charities and organisations representing and supporting those who are immunocompromised and immunosuppressed. The Enhanced Protection Programme stakeholder forum was held on 23 September 2022. The meeting was chaired by Professor Dame Jenny Harries, the Chief Executive of the UK Health Security Agency and attended by charities and groups representing immunosuppressed patients. In addition, officials meet with individual charities representing these patients.

■ Health Visitors and Nurses

Sarah Olney: [\[69751\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many (a) FTE nurses and (b) health visitors there were in the NHS workforce, by region, in each of the last five years.

Will Quince:

[Holding answer 27 October 2022]: The following table shows the number of full-time equivalent nurses employed in National Health Service trusts in each English NHS region in June of each year since 2018.

	JUNE 2018	JUNE 2019	JUNE 2020	JUNE 2021	JUNE 2022
All regions	275,418	281,619	294,980	303,884	313,553
East of England	25,228	26,327	27,968	28,954	29,498
London	50,593	51,898	54,346	55,555	56,972
Midlands	51,067	51,913	54,095	56,013	57,423
North East and Yorkshire	46,565	46,856	48,050	49,273	50,575
North West	42,574	43,470	45,235	46,717	48,736

	JUNE 2018	JUNE 2019	JUNE 2020	JUNE 2021	JUNE 2022
South East	35,109	36,051	38,319	39,972	42,015
South West	24,281	25,104	26,967	27,400	28,333

Source: NHS Digital Workforce Statistics June 2022

The following table shows the number of full-time equivalent health visitors employed in NHS trusts in each English NHS region in June of each year since 2018.

	JUNE 2018	JUNE 2019	JUNE 2020	JUNE 2021	JUNE 2022
All regions	7,910	7,026	6,632	6,367	5,929
East of England	614	546	527	514	472
London	1,276	1,177	1,052	963	858
Midlands	1,640	1,552	1,491	1,445	1,360
North East and Yorkshire	1,293	1,205	1,159	1,093	1,011
North West	1,509	1,253	1,177	1,165	1,096
South East	1,114	1,042	992	952	911
South West	464	252	233	236	220

Source: NHS Digital Workforce Statistics June 2022

■ Health: Bradford South

Judith Cummins:

[\[63234\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps her Department has taken to help tackle health inequality in Bradford South constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

'Our plan for patients', published on 22 September, sets out the immediate priorities to support individuals to live healthier lives, including improving access to health and care services in all areas and preventing ill-health. Further information on measures to address health disparities will be available in due course.

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities works with local system partners in York, Easington, Bradford, Washington and Sunderland to support programmes to reduce health inequalities, including providing evidence and intelligence.

■ Health: City of Durham**Mary Kelly Foy:**[\[68597\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps her Department has taken to help tackle health inequality in City of Durham constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 28 October 2022]: 'Our plan for patients', published on 22 September, sets out the immediate priorities to support individuals to live healthier lives, including improving access to health and care services in all areas and preventing ill-health. Further information on measures to address health disparities will be available in due course.

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities works with local system partners in City of Durham to support programmes to reduce health inequalities, including providing evidence and intelligence.

■ Health: Disadvantaged**Andrew Gwynne:**[\[72221\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department plans to publish a health disparities white paper.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 31 October 2022]: The Department is reviewing how health disparities can be addressed and further information will be available in due course.

■ Health: Easington**Grahame Morris:**[\[63170\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps her Department has taken to help tackle health inequality in the Easington constituency.

Rachael Maskell:[\[63275\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps her Department has taken to help tackle health inequality in (a) York and (b) York Central constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 19 October 2022]: 'Our plan for patients', published on 22 September, sets out the immediate priorities to support individuals to live healthier lives, including improving access to health and care services in all areas and preventing ill-health. Further information on measures to address health disparities will be available in due course.

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities works with local system partners in York, Easington, Bradford, Washington and Sunderland to support programmes to reduce health inequalities, including providing evidence and intelligence.

■ Health: Garston and Halewood**Maria Eagle:** [\[69528\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps her Department has taken to help tackle health inequality in Garston and Halewood constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 28 October 2022]: 'Our plan for patients', published on 22 September, sets out the immediate priorities to support individuals to live healthier lives, including improving access to health and care services in all areas and preventing ill-health. Further information on measures to address health disparities will be available in due course.

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities works with local system partners in Garston and Halewood to support programmes to reduce health inequalities, including providing evidence and intelligence.

■ Health: Gender Recognition**Lloyd Russell-Moyle:** [\[73113\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how the specific healthcare needs of (a) trans and (b) non-binary people are included in the Women's Health Strategy for England 2022.

Maria Caulfield:

The Women's Health Strategy's aim is to improve the health of all women and girls. We recognise that some transgender and non-binary people may also experience some of the same issues covered, for example cervical screening or menopause care.

We also recognise that people who are transgender or non-binary have specific health needs, and work is ongoing across government to address these.

■ Health: Nottingham South**Lilian Greenwood:** [\[69588\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps her Department has taken to help tackle health inequality in Nottingham South constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 27 October 2022]: 'Our plan for patients', published on 22 September, sets out the immediate priorities to support individuals to live healthier lives, including improving access to health and care services in all areas and preventing ill-health. Further information on measures to address health disparities will be available in due course.

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities works with local system partners in Nottingham South to support programmes to reduce health inequalities, including providing evidence and intelligence.

■ Health: Screening

Alberto Costa:

[\[72307\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential benefits of community pharmacies carrying out (a) blood pressure monitoring and (b) other NHS-funded health checks.

Neil O'Brien:

The Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework (CPCF) 2019-24 five-year deal set the Government's intention to nationally commission a range of evidence based clinical services in community pharmacy. Since 2019, several clinical services have been introduced including minor illness referrals from GPs and NHS111 and blood pressure checks. The Blood Pressure Checks Service was launched in October 2021 and enables community pharmacies to identify patients at risk of hypertension and measure their blood pressure. By June 2022 over 8,000 pharmacies had signed up to deliver the service and over 400,000 blood pressure checks were delivered between October 2021 and August 2022.

In September, the Government announced the agreement with the sector for the remainder of the five-year deal backed by a one-off investment of £100 million. Under the agreement we will further expand the range of clinical services offered in community pharmacy. Community pharmacists will be able to manage and initiate contraception and provide extra support to patients newly prescribed antidepressants. In addition, urgent emergency care settings will be able to refer patients to a community pharmacist for a minor illness consultation or an urgent medicine supply.

In addition to services commissioned nationally, Integrated Care Boards or NHS England regional teams can commission pharmaceutical services locally, and Local Authorities can commission community pharmacies to provide public health services to meet the needs of their populations, including the NHS Health Check.

■ Health: Slough

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[\[72424\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps her Department has taken to help tackle health inequality in Slough constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 31 October 2022]: 'Our plan for patients', published on 22 September, sets out the immediate priorities to support individuals to live healthier lives, including improving access to health and care services in all areas and preventing ill-health. Further information on measures to address health disparities will be available in due course.

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities works with local system partners in Slough to support programmes to reduce health inequalities, including providing evidence and intelligence.

■ **Health: Walsall South**

Valerie Vaz: [\[69611\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps her Department has taken to help tackle health inequality in Walsall South constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 27 October 2022]: 'Our plan for patients', published on 22 September, sets out the immediate priorities to support individuals to live healthier lives, including improving access to health and care services in all areas and preventing ill-health. Further information on measures to address health disparities will be available in due course.

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities works with local system partners in Walsall South to support programmes to reduce health inequalities, including providing evidence and intelligence.

■ **Health: Washington and Sunderland West**

Mrs Sharon Hodgson: [\[63140\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps her Department has taken to help tackle health inequality in Washington and Sunderland West constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

'Our plan for patients', published on 22 September, sets out the immediate priorities to support individuals to live healthier lives, including improving access to health and care services in all areas and preventing ill-health. Further information on measures to address health disparities will be available in due course.

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities works with local system partners in York, Easington, Bradford, Washington and Sunderland to support programmes to reduce health inequalities, including providing evidence and intelligence.

■ **Health: Weaver Vale**

Mike Amesbury: [\[62064\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps her Department has taken to help tackle health inequality in Weaver Vale constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

'Our plan for patients', published on 22 September, sets out the immediate priorities to support individuals to live healthier lives, including improving access to health and care services in all areas and preventing ill-health. Further information on measures to address health disparities will be available in due course.

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities works with local system partners in Weaver Vale to support programmes to reduce health inequalities, including providing evidence and intelligence.

■ **Health: Worsley and Eccles South**

Barbara Keeley:

[\[68516\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps her Department has taken to help tackle health inequality in Worsley and Eccles South constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 26 October 2022]: 'Our plan for patients', published on 22 September, sets out the immediate priorities to support individuals to live healthier lives, including improving access to health and care services in all areas and preventing ill-health. Further information on measures to address health disparities will be available in due course.

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities works with local system partners in Worsley and Eccles South to support programmes to reduce health inequalities, including providing evidence and intelligence.

■ **Healthy Start Scheme**

Kate Green:

[\[66993\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 1 August 2022 to Question HL2011, what progress her Department has made on (a) collecting and (b) publishing data on take-up of the Healthy Start scheme.

Neil O'Brien:

The Department of Health and Social Care continues to work with the NHS Business Services Authority and the Department for Work and Pensions to obtain the relevant data by the end of 2022.

Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:

[\[68541\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many beneficiaries of Healthy Start paper vouchers have not yet re-enrolled via the new online registration system.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 26 October 2022]: The NHS Business Services Authority estimate that as of 18 October 2022, there were 2,954 households previously were in receipt of paper vouchers which have not successfully applied to the NHS Healthy Start prepaid card scheme.

Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:

[\[68544\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if she will increase the value of Healthy Start payments to keep in line with food price inflation.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 26 October 2022]: While there are no current plans to increase the value of Healthy Start, this is kept under continuous review. In April 2021 the value of the Healthy Start increased from £3.10 to £4.25, providing additional support to pregnant women and families on lower incomes to make healthy food choices. Due to the increase, eligible families with children aged under one year old receive £8.50 compared to £6.20 previously.

■ Healthy Start Scheme: Newcastle Upon Tyne**Chi Onwurah:**[\[62832\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many Healthy Start Vouchers have been (a) used and (b) claimed in Newcastle in each month of 2022 to date.

Neil O'Brien:

This information is not collected in the format requested.

■ Heart Diseases: Medical Treatments**Mr Virendra Sharma:**[\[67883\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, on what date the NICE's Interventional Procedures Advisory Committee is expected to meet to develop guidance on mitral valve replacement.

Will Quince:

[Holding answer 25 October 2022]: The National Institute for Health Care and Excellence (NICE) is developing interventional procedure guidance (IPG) on the insertion of neo-chordae into the beating heart for mitral regurgitation for valve repair, rather than replacement. The provisional schedule is as follows:

- First Committee meeting: 9 February 2023
- Interventional procedure consultation: 17 March 2023 to 18 April 2023
- Second Committee meeting: 8 June 2023
- Expected publication: 23 August 2023

NICE is monitoring transcatheter trans-septal mitral valve in-ring implantation and is awaiting publication of further literature or evidence.

■ HIV Infection: Chesterfield**Mr Toby Perkins:**[\[64020\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people were diagnosed with HIV in Chesterfield constituency in each of the last 5 five years.

Neil O'Brien:

This information is not held in the format requested.

■ HIV Infection: Easington**Grahame Morris:** [\[74623\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people were diagnosed with HIV in Easington constituency in each of the last five years.

Neil O'Brien:

The information is not collected in the format requested.

■ HIV Infection: Exeter**Mr Ben Bradshaw:** [\[65554\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people were diagnosed with HIV in Exeter constituency in each of the last 5 five years.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 24 October 2022]: The information is not collected in the format requested.

■ HIV Infection: Slough**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[72422\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people were diagnosed with HIV in Slough constituency in each of the last five years.

Rachel Hopkins: [\[72495\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people were diagnosed with HIV in Luton South constituency in each of the last five years.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 31 October 2022]: The information is not collected in the format requested.

■ HIV Infection: Streatham**Bell Ribeiro-Addy:** [\[66025\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people were diagnosed with HIV in Streatham constituency in each of the last five years.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 21 October 2022]: The information is not collected in the format requested.

■ HIV Infection: Warrington North**Charlotte Nichols:** [\[64354\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people were diagnosed with HIV in Warrington North constituency in each of the last five years.

Neil O'Brien:

This information is not collected in the format requested.

■ **HIV Infection: Washington and Sunderland West**

Mrs Sharon Hodgson:

[\[62734\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people were diagnosed with HIV in Washington and Sunderland West constituency in each of the last 5 five years.

Neil O'Brien:

This information is not collected in the format requested.

■ **Home Care Services: Ophthalmic Services**

Marsha De Cordova:

[\[72453\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether she has made an assessment of the potential impacts of the requirement for domiciliary eye-care providers to submit a pre-visit notification to NHS England on (a) those providers' levels of administrative work and (b) patient wait times.

Neil O'Brien:

The current regulatory framework for domiciliary eye care services requires contractors to provide at least 48 hours' notice to NHS England of the intention to provide National Health Service sight testing services to two patients at the same address and at least three weeks' notice where contractors intend to provide services to three or more patients. The current framework also allows for contractors to see up to three additional urgent cases without notice on the day of a planned visit.

The Department and NHS England are in discussions with the eye care profession on whether there is a need to amend the legal framework for domiciliary services, including the potential review of pre-visit notifications.

■ **Hormone Replacement Therapy**

Caroline Nokes:

[\[68526\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate she has made of the timeframe for the provision of technology to allow for annual prescriptions for HRT.

Maria Caulfield:

The technology already exists to allow prescribers to issue annual prescriptions for hormone replacement therapy (HRT). The estimated timeframe for the introduction of the HRT prescription prepayment certificate is 1st April 2023.

■ **Hospital Wards: Closures**

Sir Greg Knight:

[\[72209\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many wards are closed or not being used as a ward; and which hospitals those wards are in.

Will Quince:

[Holding answer 31 October 2022]: The information requested is not collected centrally.

■ Hospitals: Consultants**Preet Kaur Gill:**[\[72411\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of whether there will be sufficient full-time equivalent consultants to meet patient demand in the next (a) 5, (b) 10 and (c) 20 years; and if he will make a statement.

Will Quince:

The Government has 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. The first graduates from this expansion entered foundation training in August this year.

There has been an increase of 1,310 (2.5%) FTE consultants in the past year. This is an increase of 4,945 (10.3%) since 2019, and an increase of 14,914 (39.0%) in the last 10 years.

In January 2022, the Department commissioned NHS England to develop a long-term workforce plan. The long-term workforce plan will build on the foundations of the NHS People Plan. The plan is currently being developed by NHS England and they are due to complete this work by the end of 2022. The key conclusions will be shared in due course.

The work of the long-term workforce plan will be used to inform future government work on how to best meet the needs of patients and the NHS workforce. Funding plans beyond the current Spending Review period will be subject to the outcome of future Spending Reviews.

■ Independent Investigation into East Kent Maternity Services**Robert Courts:**[\[67158\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if she will make an assessment of the implications for her policies of the report of the Independent Investigation into East Kent Maternity Services, published on 19 October 2022; and if she will make a statement.

Maria Caulfield:

[Holding answer 24 October 2022]: A written statement to the House of Commons and the House of Lords was made on 19 October 2022 regarding the publication of the report of the independent investigation into maternity and neonatal services in East Kent Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Dr Caroline Johnson MP, also made an oral statement to the House on 20 October 2022.

The Department has established an independent working group, chaired by the Royal College of Midwifery and the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, which will help guide the maternity transformation programme to take forward the next steps from the reports into maternity services at East Kent and Shrewsbury and Telford.

Together with the NHS, the Department will consider actions from both reports to form a coherent national delivery plan for maternity services.

■ Learning Disability: Children

Sarah Olney: [\[62918\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if she will make an estimate of the number of children that have been registered as having a learning disability in each of the last five years.

Maria Caulfield:

[Holding answer 18 October 2022]: The information requested is not held centrally. NHS Digital collects information on the number of children on learning disability registers for some general practitioner (GP) practices. However, this is not representative of the total number of children with a learning disability in England, as the coverage of the associated dataset is restricted to approximately 56% of GP practices. This data is available at the following link:

<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/health-and-care-of-people-with-learning-disabilities>

■ Life Expectancy: Edmonton

Kate Osamor: [\[72373\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of trends in the level of healthy life expectancy in Edmonton constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

No specific assessment has been made.

■ Life Expectancy: Newcastle upon Tyne

Chi Onwurah: [\[72256\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the implications for her policies of trends in the level of healthy life expectancy in Newcastle.

Neil O'Brien:

No specific assessment has been made.

■ Life Expectancy: Slough**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[74854\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of trends in the level of healthy life expectancy in Slough.

Neil O'Brien:

No specific assessment has been made.

■ Making Smoking Obsolete Independent Review**Peter Dowd:** [\[74728\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to publish the Government's response to Javed Khan's Making Smoking Obsolete review.

Neil O'Brien:

We are currently considering the recommendations made in 'The Khan review: making smoking obsolete' and further information will be available in due course.

■ Malnutrition: Easington**Grahame Morris:** [\[74625\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment her Department has made of trends in the level of malnutrition in Easington constituency.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[74853\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment his Department has made of trends in the level of malnutrition in Slough.

Neil O'Brien:

No specific assessment has been made.

■ Malnutrition: Edmonton**Kate Osamor:** [\[72372\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment her Department has made of trends in the level of malnutrition in Edmonton constituency.

Rachel Hopkins: [\[72498\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment her Department has made of trends in the level of malnutrition in Luton South.

Neil O'Brien:

No specific assessment has been made.

■ Malnutrition: Exeter**Mr Ben Bradshaw:**[\[65557\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment her Department has made of trends in the level of malnutrition in Exeter constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 24 October 2022]: No specific assessment has been made.

■ Malnutrition: Garston and Halewood**Maria Eagle:**[\[69529\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment her Department has made of trends in the level of malnutrition in Garston and Halewood constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 28 October 2022]: No specific assessment has been made.

■ Malnutrition: Health Services**Rachael Maskell:**[\[73052\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to (a) monitor and (b) tackle malnutrition.

Rachael Maskell:[\[73053\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps she is taking to tackle malnutrition caused by food poverty.

Neil O'Brien:

NHS Digital collects data on finished admission episodes by year and month of admission to hospital, where a primary and secondary diagnosis of malnutrition was recorded. Local health and care providers are responsible for services to address malnutrition based on the needs of the local population. Integrated care boards coordinate and commission health and care services to improve population health and reduce inequalities. There are tools and guidance in place to assist health and social care professionals identify and treat malnutrition and to access appropriate training. In addition, Healthy Start, the Nursery Milk Scheme and the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme provide nutritional support to more than three million children.

■ Malnutrition: Lancaster and Fleetwood**Cat Smith:**[\[71115\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to Answer of 25 October 2022 to Question 64166 on Malnutrition: Lancaster and Fleetwood, for what reason no specific assessment has been made of trends in the level of malnutrition in Lancaster and Fleetwood constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 28 October 2022]: Local health and care providers are responsible for malnutrition services based on the needs of the population. Integrated care boards coordinate and commission health and care services to improve population health and reduce inequalities. Tools and guidance are available through a range of organisations for health and social care professionals to identify and treat malnutrition and access appropriate training.

Malnutrition: Plymouth Sutton and Devonport**Luke Pollard:**[\[62969\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment her Department has made of trends in the level of malnutrition in Plymouth Sutton and Devonport constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

No specific assessment has been made.

Malnutrition: Stockport**Navendu Mishra:**[\[67248\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment her Department has made of trends in the level of malnutrition in Stockport constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

No specific assessment has been made.

Malnutrition: Wirral West**Margaret Greenwood:**[\[68553\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment her Department has made of trends in the level of malnutrition in Wirral West constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 27 October 2022]: No specific assessment has been made.

Maternity Services**Lisa Nandy:**[\[66977\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the report by the Baby Loss and Maternity All Party Parliamentary Groups entitled *Safe Staffing: The impact of staffing shortages in maternity and neonatal care*, published on 13 October 2022, what assessment she has made of the implications of that report's findings for her Department's policies; and if she will take steps to support (a) a reduction in the rates of baby loss, (b) increased provision of specialist bereavement care following pregnancy loss and the death of a baby and (c) sufficient and safe staffing levels for maternity services.

Maria Caulfield:

[Holding answer 24 October 2022]: No assessment has been made of the implications of the Baby Loss and Maternity All Party Parliamentary Group report on Safe Staffing on the Department of Health and Social Care's policies.

Since 2010, the rate of stillbirths has reduced by 19.3%, the rate of neonatal mortality for babies born over 24 weeks gestational age of viability has reduced by 36% and maternal mortality has reduced by 17%. The progress towards reducing brain injuries in babies has been slower. The overall rate of brain injuries occurring during or soon after birth has fallen to 4.2 per 1,000 births in 2019, 2% lower than the 2010 baseline. DHSC has provided funding to the Avoiding Brain Injuries in Childbirth collaboration to accelerate progress.

In 2022, NHS England have provided £2.26m of national funding to support trusts expand the number of staff being trained in bereavement care and directly support trusts to increase the number of days families can access specialist bereavement provision.

The Government are taking action to increase the support available in the perinatal period, including expanding perinatal mental health services around England to include new mental health "hubs" for new, expectant or bereaved mothers. This expansion includes 33 new Maternal Mental Health Services, which bring together psychological therapy, maternity services and reproductive health for women who have mental health needs following trauma or loss related to their maternity experience. These will be available across the whole of England by March 2024.

■ Maternity Services: Staff**Beth Winter:**[\[69821\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of establishing nationally agreed minimum staffing levels for maternity and neonatal staff.

Maria Caulfield:

The Department of Health and Social Care have provided almost £450,000 to the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) to develop a new workforce planning tool to improve how maternity units calculate their medical staffing requirements, to better support families and babies.

The tool will be freely available to NHS trusts across the country in the next year and will provide maternity staff with a new methodology that calculates the numbers, skill sets, and grades of medical staff required within individual maternity units based on local needs. It will help identify ways of working to better utilise the current workforce and help gain a better understanding of the factors which promote safety and positive culture within maternity teams and how these can be rolled out nationally.

The NICE endorsed Birth Rate Plus tool similarly allows midwifery units to calculate their staffing with the acuity app assesses real time staffing needs based on clinical needs of women and babies.

We have also commissioned the Long Term Workforce plan which looks at short, medium and long term demand, including projections, and will set out actions to reduce supply gaps, improve retention and boost productivity.

Dr Rupa Huq:

[\[74808\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of (a) producing a workforce plan for maternity services and (b) long-term funding for (i) safe and (ii) sustainable staffing across all of NHS England's maternity services.

Will Quince:

In 2022, a further £127 million has been invested in the National Health Service maternity workforce and improving neonatal care. This is in addition to the £95 million invested in 2021 to fund a further 1,200 midwives and 100 consultant obstetricians. We have also provided almost £450,000 to the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists to develop a new workforce planning tool to improve how maternity units calculate medical staffing requirements.

The Department has commissioned NHS England to develop a long-term workforce plan. The plan will consider the number of staff and the roles required and will set out the actions and reforms needed to improve workforce supply and retention. There are no current plans to produce a specific workforce plan for maternity services.

■ Maternity Services: Training

Beth Winter:

[\[69820\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of ringfencing of a proportion of her Department's funding settlement for the training and development of maternity and neonatal staff.

Maria Caulfield:

No formal assessment has been made. However, NHS England has also invested £127 million in National Health Service maternity workforce and improving neonatal care. This includes approximately £50 million to increase staff in maternity and neonatal services, £34 million for culture and leadership development programmes and supporting staff retention and £45 million to increase the number of neonatal cots in England.

This is in addition to the £95 million investment made in 2021 to fund the establishment of a further 1,200 midwifery and 100 consultant obstetrician posts, with £26.5 million for training multidisciplinary teams. We have allocated £2.8 million to the Perinatal Culture and Leadership Development Programme to support multi-professional teams in maternity and neonatal services. In addition, £500,000 was provided training for NHS maternity and neonatal leaders to address poor workplace culture and facilitate collaborative working between nurses, doctors, midwives and obstetricians.

■ Medicine: Higher Education**Stephen Morgan:**[\[68592\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential impact of increasing the number of places at medical schools on the Government's priorities on (a) ambulances, (b) backlogs, (c) care, (d) doctors and (e) dentists.

Will Quince:

No specific assessment has been made. The Government has funded an additional 1,500 undergraduate medical school places each year for domestic students in England, with the first graduates entering foundation training in August 2022. In addition, the Government temporarily lifted the cap on medical school places for students who completed A-Levels in 2020 and in 2021 and had an offer from a university in England to study medicine, subject to their grades.

We will continue to monitor these arrangements to ensure that the number of medical school places align with England's workforce requirements.

Preet Kaur Gill:[\[72408\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the potential impact of the current number of places to study medicine in universities on the ability of the NHS to keep pace with patient demand in the next 10 years.

Will Quince:

The Government has funded an additional 1,500 undergraduate medical school places each year for domestic students in England and delivered five new medical schools. In 2020/21 and 2021/22, the Government temporarily lifted this cap for students who completed A-levels in 2020 and 2021 and who had an offer from a university in England to study medicine subject to their grades.

In January 2022 the Department commissioned NHS England to develop a long-term workforce plan, following the NHS People Plan. The plan is due for completion by the end of 2022 and its key conclusions will be available in due course. It will inform how we meet the future needs of patients and the National Health Service workforce.

Funding plans beyond the current Spending Review period will be subject to the outcome of future Spending Reviews.

■ Mental Health Services: Bermondsey and Old Southwark**Neil Coyle:**[\[67050\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to help support the (a) recruitment and (b) retention of mental health specialists in Bermondsey and Old Southwark constituency.

Maria Caulfield:

The NHS Long Term Plan stated the aim of increasing the mental health workforce in England by an additional 27,000 professionals by 2023/24. NHS England and Health

Education England are working with local integrated care systems, including in South East London, to confirm plans for service models, supply, retention and recruitment until 2024.

NHS England continues to support local systems, including in South East London, to develop tailored health and wellbeing offers to meet the needs of the local mental health workforce. This includes mental health hubs in each integrated care system and occupational health services which are being supported through the Growing Occupational Health and Wellbeing national programme.

■ **Mental Health Services: Feltham and Heston**

Seema Malhotra:

[\[72280\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to help improve access to mental health services in Feltham and Heston constituency.

Maria Caulfield:

In September we announced 'Our plan for patients', which outlines how we will increase access to National Health Service mental health and eating disorder services, including in Feltham and Heston. Ensuring easier access to general practice will expand this route to access mental health services.

Through the NHS Long Term Plan, we are investing an additional £2.3 billion a year by 2023/24 to expand NHS mental health and eating disorder services for adults, children and young people in England, including in Feltham and Heston. We will invest approximately £1 billion in community mental health care for adults with severe mental illness, including eating disorders, by 2023/24 and an additional £53 million per year in children and young people's community eating disorder services to increase capacity in the 70 community eating disorder teams.

■ **Mental Health Services: Finance**

Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:

[\[72395\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department are taking steps to provide additional mental health support, in the context of the rising cost of living.

Maria Caulfield:

On 9 October we launched our Every Mind Matters campaign, which urges people to be kind to their mind. The campaign empowers people to look after their mental health by directing them to free, practical tips and advice, through the Every Mind Matters website, which can be found at the following link:

<https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/>

Every Mind Matters includes practical advice on coping with money worries and job uncertainty, and it provides link to a range of voluntary organisations that provide mental health support, such as CALM and Hub of Hope and to organisations such as

Mental Health and Money Advice, a UK-wide service that combines support for both mental health and financial problems.

We continue to drive progress on delivering the aims of the NHS Long Term Plan to enhance the availability of mental health support and transformation of mental health services. Through the Long Term Plan, an additional two million people will be able to access NHS-funded mental health support by 2023/24.

■ **Mental Health Services: Pupils**

Helen Hayes:

[\[59091\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment has he made of schools' current ability to make referrals to CAMHS services.

Maria Caulfield:

The Department has made no such assessment. However, the Department for Education undertakes and publishes pupil, parent, and teacher omnibus surveys which include a range of questions on their perception of mental health and wellbeing support and promotion in school. This supports our understanding of, amongst other areas, education staff's perceived confidence in identifying and responding to mental health issues, including knowing when and how to make referrals to external, specialist support services.

We are committed to equipping more education staff with the knowledge and skills to effectively identify and respond to mental health issues, and feel confident when doing so, and that is why we are taking immediate action to build schools' capability and capacity in this area. Over a third of state schools and colleges have so far claimed a senior mental health lead training grant, backed by £9.5 million in year 2021/22, and a further £10 million this financial year. This is sufficient to enable up to two thirds of state schools and colleges to access training by April 2023. The training will help leads to make or support effective referrals to NHS children and young people's mental health services, or other services as appropriate.

In addition to providing advice to school and college staff, established mental health support teams connect with local children and young people's mental health services and liaise with external specialist services. This includes an integrated referral system with community and specialist services to facilitate access to appropriate support.

■ **Mental Health Services: Sunderland Central**

Julie Elliott:

[\[72992\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to help support the (a) recruitment and (b) retention of mental health specialists in Sunderland Central constituency.

Maria Caulfield:

The NHS Long Term Plan stated the aim of increasing the mental health workforce in England by an additional 27,000 professionals by 2023/24. NHS England and Health Education England are working with local integrated care systems, including in the

North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System, to confirm plans for service models, supply, retention and recruitment until 2024.

NHS England continues to support local systems, including in the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System, to develop tailored health and wellbeing offers to meet the needs of the local mental health workforce. This includes mental health hubs in each integrated care system and occupational health services which are being supported through the Growing Occupational Health and Wellbeing national programme.

■ Mental Health Services: Veterans

Rachel Hopkins:

[68040]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many veterans have requested mental health support in each month since January 2019.

Maria Caulfield:

[Holding answer 26 October 2022]: This information is not collected in the format requested. However, the following table shows the number of referrals made to each service provided by Op COURAGE: the Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service (TILS); the Complex Treatment Services (CTS); and since its commencement in 2020, the High Intensity Service (HIS), in each month since January 2019. These services provide a mental health care pathway for veterans, with individuals benefitting from personalised care plans and access to support and treatment in and out of hours.

MONTH	NUMBER OF REFERRALS TO TILS	NUMBER OF REFERRALS TO CTS	NUMBER OF REFERRALS TO HIS
January 2019	337	81	N/A
February 2019	297	46	N/A
March 2019	384	44	N/A
April 2019	342	54	N/A
May 2019	337	51	N/A
June 2019	356	75	N/A
July 2019	372	56	N/A
August 2019	323	56	N/A
September 2019	340	62	
October 2019	448	69	

MONTH	NUMBER OF REFERRALS TO TILS	NUMBER OF REFERRALS TO CTS	NUMBER OF REFERRALS TO HIS
November 2019	371	45	
December 2019	291	33	
January 2020	438	56	
February 2020	543	64	
March 2020	435	72	
April 2020	236	91	
May 2020	266	56	
June 2020	336	54	
July 2020	403	46	
August 2020	299	49	
September 2020	437	57	2
October 2020	386	59	31
November 2020	367	53	52
December 2020	273	53	47
January 2021	307	41	44
February 2021	303	40	48
March 2021	457	35	79
April 2021	326	41	50
May 2021	380	42	54
June 2021	436	40	52
July 2021	365	54	62
August 2021	373	38	71
September 2021	450	53	76
October 2021	387	35	68

November 2021	436	61	63
December 2021	340	39	56
January 2022	395	39	56
February 2022	410	30	66
March 2022	397	45	87
April 2022	340	39	63
May 2022	431	49	119
June 2022	366	43	88
July 2022	413	37	78
August 2022	404	38	87

John Healey:[\[68484\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if she will record (a) how many veterans are seen by NHS commissioned services for mental health support, (b) the time to enter treatment and (c) the length of treatment offered on delivery.

Maria Caulfield:

This information is not held in the format requested. However, as of 31 August 2022, over 24,000 referrals have been made to Op COURAGE since April 2019, the bespoke mental health service commissioned by NHS England for veterans. The following table shows the number of referrals to Op COURAGE in each year since 2019.

YEAR	NUMBER OF REFERRALS
2019	4,870
2020	5,261
2021	5,802
2022 to 31 August	4,120

Individuals can have multiple referrals, calls or appointments. In addition, some veterans may also seek support through National Health Service mental health services. The following table shows the average waiting time for treatment to the services provided by Op COURAGE in 2021/2022.

SERVICE	AVERAGE WAITING TIME IN CALENDAR DAYS
Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service	23 days
Complex Treatment Service	16 days
High Intensity Service	4 days

The length of treatment is dependent on the clinical needs and circumstances of the veteran concerned. While NHS England collect data on the length of treatment offered to individuals within Op COURAGE, there is no standard treatment period as individual treatment times will vary.

Rachel Hopkins:

[\[69882\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many veterans requested mental health support in each month of (a) 2019, (b) 2020, (c) 2021, and (d) 2022.

Maria Caulfield:

[Holding answer 27 October 2022]: This information is not collected in the format requested. However, the following table shows the number of referrals made to each service provided by Op COURAGE: the Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service (TILS); the Complex Treatment Services (CTS); and since its commencement in 2020, the High Intensity Service (HIS), in each month since January 2019. These services provide a mental health care pathway for veterans, with individuals benefitting from personalised care plans and access to support and treatment in and out of hours.

MONTH	NUMBER OF REFERRALS		
	TO TILS	TO CTS	TO HIS
January 2019	337	81	N/A
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July 2019	372	56	N/A
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June 2020	336	54	
July 2020	403	46	
August 2020	299	49	
September 2020	437	57	2
October 2020	386	59	31
November 2020	367	53	52
December 2020	273	53	47
January 2021	307	41	44
February 2021	303	40	48
March 2021	457	35	79
April 2021	326	41	50
May 2021	380	42	54
June 2021	436	40	52
July 2021	365	54	62
August 2021	373	38	71
September 2021	450	53	76
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August 2022	404	38	87

■ Mental Health Services: Walsall South

Valerie Vaz:

[\[66973\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to help support the (a) recruitment and (b) retention of mental health specialists in Walsall South constituency.

Maria Caulfield:

[Holding answer 24 October 2022]: The NHS Long Term Plan stated the aim of increasing the mental health workforce in England by an additional 27,000 professionals by 2023/24. NHS England and Health Education England are working with local integrated care systems, including in the Black Country, to confirm plans for service models, supply, retention and recruitment until 2024.

NHS England continues to support local systems, including in the Black Country, to develop tailored health and wellbeing offers to meet the needs of the local mental health workforce. This includes mental health hubs in each integrated care system and occupational health services which are being supported through the Growing Occupational Health and Wellbeing national programme.

■ Mental Health Services: Wirral West

Margaret Greenwood:

[\[67068\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to help support the (a) recruitment and (b) retention of mental health specialists in Wirral West constituency.

Maria Caulfield:

[Holding answer 25 October 2022]: The NHS Long Term Plan stated the aim of increasing the mental health workforce in England by an additional 27,000 professionals by 2023/24. NHS England and Health Education England are working with local integrated care systems, including in Cheshire and Merseyside, to confirm plans for service models, supply, retention and recruitment until 2024.

NHS England continues to support local systems, including in Cheshire and Merseyside, to develop tailored health and wellbeing offers to meet the needs of the local mental health workforce. This includes mental health hubs in each integrated care system and occupational health services which are being supported through the Growing Occupational Health and Wellbeing national programme.

■ Mental Health Services: Worsley and Eccles South**Barbara Keeley:**[\[66929\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to help support the (a) recruitment and (b) retention of mental health specialists in Worsley and Eccles South constituency.

Maria Caulfield:

[Holding answer 24 October 2022]: The NHS Long Term Plan stated the aim of increasing the mental health workforce in England by an additional 27,000 professionals by 2023/24. NHS England and Health Education England are working with local integrated care systems, including in Greater Manchester, to confirm plans for service models, supply, retention and recruitment until 2024.

NHS England continues to support local systems, including in Greater Manchester, to develop tailored health and wellbeing offers to meet the needs of the local mental health workforce. This includes mental health hubs in each integrated care system and occupational health services which are being supported through the Growing Occupational Health and Wellbeing national programme.

■ Midwives**Sarah Olney:**[\[65957\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate she has made of the number of (a) private and (b) NHS midwives working in each clinical commissioning group area in each of the last 5 years.

Will Quince:

[Holding answer 21 October 2022]: This information is not held in the format requested.

■ Midwives: Easington**Grahame Morris:**[\[74622\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to help support the (a) recruitment and (b) retention of midwives in Easington constituency.

Will Quince:

NHS England retains oversight of local workforce plans and is updated on vacancy rates. However, recruitment and retention is undertaken at trust level.

In 2022, an additional £127 million has been invested in the National Health Service maternity workforce and improving neonatal care, including in Easington. This is in addition to the £95 million invested in 2021 to fund a further 1,200 midwives and 100 consultant obstetricians. The NHS People Plan focuses on improving the retention of NHS staff by prioritising staff health and wellbeing. In 2022/23, £45 million has been allocated to support the continuation of 40 mental health hubs, the Professional Nurse Advocates programme and expanding the NHS Practitioner Health service.

■ Midwives: Luton South**Rachel Hopkins:**[\[72493\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to help support the (a) recruitment and (b) retention of midwives in Luton South constituency.

Will Quince:

[Holding answer 31 October 2022]: NHS England retains oversight of local workforce plans and is updated on vacancy rates. However, recruitment and retention is undertaken at trust level.

In 2022, an additional £127 million has been invested in the National Health Service maternity workforce and improving neonatal care, including in Luton South. This is in addition to the £95 million invested in 2021 to fund a further 1,200 midwives and 100 consultant obstetricians. The NHS People Plan focuses on improving the retention of NHS staff by prioritising staff health and wellbeing. In 2022/23, £45 million has been allocated to support the continuation of 40 mental health hubs, the Professional Nurse Advocates programme and expanding the NHS Practitioner Health service.

■ Midwives: Nottingham South**Lilian Greenwood:**[\[66954\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to help support the (a) recruitment and (b) retention of midwives in Nottingham South constituency.

Will Quince:

[Holding answer 24 October 2022]: NHS England retains oversight of local workforce plans and is updated on vacancy rates. However, recruitment and retention is undertaken at trust level.

In 2022, an additional £127 million has been invested in the National Health Service maternity workforce and improving neonatal care, including in Nottingham South. This is in addition to the £95 million invested in 2021 to fund a further 1,200 midwives and 100 consultant obstetricians. The NHS People Plan focuses on improving the retention of NHS staff by prioritising staff health and wellbeing. In 2022/23, £45 million has been allocated to support the continuation of 40 mental health hubs, the Professional Nurse Advocates programme and expanding the NHS Practitioner Health service.

■ Midwives: Sunderland Central**Julie Elliott:**[\[72993\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to help support the (a) recruitment and (b) retention of midwives in Sunderland Central constituency.

Will Quince:

NHS England retains oversight of local workforce plans and is updated on vacancy rates. However, recruitment and retention is undertaken at trust level.

In 2022, an additional £127 million has been invested in the National Health Service maternity workforce and improving neonatal care, including in Sunderland Central. This is in addition to the £95 million invested in 2021 to fund a further 1,200 midwives and 100 consultant obstetricians. The NHS People Plan focuses on improving the retention of NHS staff by prioritising staff health and wellbeing. In 2022/23, £45 million has been allocated to support the continuation of 40 mental health hubs, the Professional Nurse Advocates programme and expanding the NHS Practitioner Health service.

■ Midwives: Vacancies**Stephanie Peacock:**[\[62931\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to tackle shortages of midwives.

Will Quince:

We have committed to expanding midwifery training places by 3,650 against the 2018/19 baseline between 2019/20 and 2022/23, with an increase of 650 in 2019/20 and 1,000 per year in subsequent years. NHS England is also supporting trusts to establish and expand midwifery international recruitment.

In 2022, an additional £127 million has been invested in the National Health Service maternity workforce and improving neonatal care. This is in addition to the £95 million invested in 2021 to fund a further 1,200 midwives and 100 consultant obstetricians.

■ Midwives: Warrington North**Charlotte Nichols:**[\[63084\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to help support the (a) recruitment and (b) retention of midwives in Warrington North constituency.

Will Quince:

NHS England retains oversight of local workforce plans and is updated on vacancy rates. However, recruitment and retention is undertaken at trust level.

In 2022, an additional £127 million has been invested in the National Health Service maternity workforce and improving neonatal care, including in Warrington North. This is in addition to the £95 million invested in 2021 to fund a further 1,200 midwives and 100 consultant obstetricians. The NHS People Plan focuses on improving the retention of NHS staff by prioritising staff health and wellbeing. In 2022/23, £45 million has been allocated to support the continuation of 40 mental health hubs, the Professional Nurse Advocates programme and expanding the NHS Practitioner Health service.

■ Midwives: Washington and Sunderland West**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:**[\[61805\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to help support the (a) recruitment and (b) retention of midwives in Washington and Sunderland West constituency.

Will Quince:

NHS England retains oversight of local workforce plans and is updated on vacancy rates. However, recruitment and retention is undertaken at trust level.

In 2022, an additional £127 million has been invested in the National Health Service maternity workforce and improving neonatal care, including in Washington and Sunderland West. This is in addition to the £95 million invested in 2021 to fund a further 1,200 midwives and 100 consultant obstetricians. The NHS People Plan focuses on improving the retention of NHS staff by prioritising staff health and wellbeing. In 2022/23, £45 million has been allocated to support the continuation of 40 mental health hubs, the Professional Nurse Advocates programme and expanding the NHS Practitioner Health service.

■ Monkeypox: Publicity and Vaccination**Dr Rupa Huq:**[\[58896\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to provide (a) vaccines against monkeypox and (b) accurate public information on monkeypox.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 24 October 2022]: The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) has procured over 150,000 doses of the vaccines used for monkeypox. To maximise the number of people that can be vaccinated, more clinics are now offering the vaccine using safe and clinically approved intradermal administration.

The UKHSA has delivered targeted, online communications to raise awareness of the symptoms, transmission routes and actions people with suspected monkeypox should take. Supported by NHS England, the UKHSA convenes a weekly monkeypox communications external partners forum. The forum has a membership of over 30 national, regional and local lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender and sexual health organisations.

Monkeypox: Vaccination**Janet Daby:**[\[72456\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 26 October 2022 to Question 59084 on Monkeypox: Vaccination, what his timescale is for the completion of the monkeypox vaccination programme to the eligible cohort.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 31 October 2022]: The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) is unable to confirm a current deadline for completion of the vaccination programme. The UKHSA has procured over 154,000 doses of the vaccine used for monkeypox and vaccination continues to be delivered by sexual health services as eligible individuals come forward.

Mortality Rates**Andrew Gwynne:**[\[59520\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to reduce the level of avoidable mortality.

Neil O'Brien:

'Our plan for patients', published on 22 September, sets out how we will support individuals to live healthier lives, including improving access to health and care services. The Department is currently reviewing measures to address health disparities and further information will be available in due course.

Motor Neurone Disease: Medical Treatments and Research**David Warburton:**[\[72393\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to increase funding for motor neurone disease research and treatment.

Will Quince:

The Government is strongly committed to supporting research into dementia and neurodegeneration, including motor neurone disease (MND).

In November 2021, the government committed to invest at least £50 million in MND research over the next five years and this commitment was reaffirmed in September of this year.

As part of this investment, the government has collaborated with charity funders to deliver a new £4.25 million partnership, bringing together the MND research community to boost research and speed up the delivery of new treatments. The Department of Health and Social Care funded National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) welcomes research applications from MND researchers and has recently signalled that MND research is a priority area by launching a Highlight Notice on MND, which invites ambitious MND research proposals.

■ Neurology

Rachael Maskell: [\[73868\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much his Department has spent on neurological sciences in each of the last five years.

Will Quince:

The Department funds research into neurological sciences through the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR). The following table shows expenditure by the NIHR on research into neurological sciences in each year since 2017/18.

2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
£56 million	£56.1 million	£54 million	£40 million	£56.6 million

The NIHR's usual practice is not to ring-fence funds for expenditure on particular topics. Research proposals in all areas compete for the funding available and the NIHR welcomes funding applications for research into any aspect of human health, including neurological sciences. 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.

■ Neurology: Health Professions

Rachael Maskell: [\[73867\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an estimate of the number of NHS (a) medics, (b) specialist nursing staff, (c) physios, (d) speech and language therapists, (e) occupational therapists and (f) psychological staff who specialise in neurology as of 28 October 2022.

Will Quince:

As of July 2022, the most recent data available shows there were 1,617 full-time equivalent doctors in the speciality of neurology within the National Health Service in England, of which 887 or 54.9% are consultants. Information on other staff groups by speciality is not held in the format requested.

■ Neurology: Health Services

Rachael Maskell: [\[73866\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to develop a clinical network for neurological conditions.

Will Quince:

The Department funded National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) invests in research, clinical expertise, specialist facilities, workforce and support services across a range of clinical areas, including neurological conditions. The NIHR brings together its research centres through clinical networks. The NIHR Dementia Translational Research Collaboration is a network of leading universities, NHS trusts and research centres in the UK who carry out early translational research for dementia. The NIHR Clinical Research Network supports participation in research to advance knowledge and improve care. It has speciality areas for neurological disorders such as epilepsy and multiple sclerosis, dementia and neurodegeneration including Motor Neurone Disease and stroke. These speciality areas provide clinical leadership and expertise to effectively deliver studies.

■ NHS England: Vaccination

Daisy Cooper: [\[58990\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions she has had with NHS England on the timescale for publication of its vaccination and immunisation strategy.

Neil O'Brien:

NHS England and the Department are developing an integrated future vaccination strategy, which will incorporate learning from the COVID-19, flu and routine immunisation programmes. NHS England is currently undertaking stakeholder engagement on the strategy and there will hold further discussions with the Department in due course.

■ NHS: Drugs

Robert Halfon: [\[62789\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many medicine by presentations included within the Voluntary Patient Access Scheme have had NHS List Price increase approved by their Department since 1 January 2020; and what was the average percentage increase for any such increases.

Will Quince:

Between 1 January 2020 and 14 October 2022, members of the Voluntary Scheme for Branded Medicines Pricing and Access have received approval for an increase to the National Health Service list price for 35 medicines, for 120 presentations. The majority of price increases have been concentrated in specific market segments particularly impacted by global cost increases in the active pharmaceutical ingredient.

Price increase requests are assessed in line with Scheme's rules, which ensure companies cannot make excess profits by setting a return on sales target of 6% for standard price increase requests.

■ NHS: Ealing North

James Murray: [\[67232\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what (a) financial and (b) other steps her Department is taking to help tackle NHS workforce shortages in Ealing North constituency.

Will Quince:

[Holding answer 24 October 2022]: The Department has commissioned NHS England to develop a long-term workforce plan. The plan will consider the number of staff and the roles required and will set out the actions and reforms needed to improve workforce supply and retention, including in Ealing North.

■ NHS: Energy

Wes Streeting: [\[72341\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the impact that repeated disruption of energy supplies and national power outages would have on the NHS; and what steps he is taking to mitigate that impact'

Neil O'Brien:

While we do not expect any disruption, the Department is working with the health and social care sector to understand the impact of any possible disruption to energy on services. In addition, we are working with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to understand the likely impact of any power outages. All National Health Service organisations are required to have business continuity plans in place to support the continued safe provision of services to patients for a number of different scenarios, including loss of power. These plans seek to minimise the impact of power outages as much as possible so that they can continue to deliver critical services to patients. The Department and the NHS continue to explore further means of reducing such impacts.

■ NHS: Industrial Disputes

Wes Streeting: [\[73877\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department has taken to prepare for potential industrial action by NHS staff in winter 2022-23.

Will Quince:

Officials from the Department, NHS England and NHS Employers are working to ensure system preparedness ahead of any possible industrial action. The Department is responsible for the policy on national pay and terms and conditions of service and is working with NHS England which is accountable for operational

planning and assurance. Additionally, the Department is working with NHS Employers which leads national discussions with trade unions, including on derogations at national level and supporting employers locally.

■ NHS: Luton South

Rachel Hopkins:

[\[71338\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what (a) financial and (b) other steps her Department is taking to help tackle NHS workforce shortages in Luton South constituency.

Will Quince:

[Holding answer 28 October 2022]: The Department has commissioned NHS England to develop a long-term workforce plan. The plan will consider the number of staff and the roles required and will set out the actions and reforms needed to improve workforce supply and retention, including in Luton South.

■ NHS: Overtime

Wes Streeting:

[\[73875\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many hours of unpaid overtime have NHS (a) nurses, (b) doctors, (c) midwives, (d) paramedics and (e) staff overall, worked in each of the last three years.

Will Quince:

The information requested is not collected centrally. However, the NHS Staff Survey asks respondents whether they routinely complete unpaid work and the average number of hours completed. The following table shows the proportion of staff who reported doing unpaid work in the 2021 NHS staff survey by occupation group and the average amount of unpaid work per week.

OCCUPATION GROUP	NO UNPAID WORK	UP TO FIVE HOURS	SIX TO 10 HOURS	OVER 11 HOURS
All respondents	43%	43%	10%	4%
Nurses and midwives	33%	50%	12%	5%
Medical and dental	22%	52%	19%	7%
Paramedics	56%	35%	6%	3%

Source: 2021 NHS Staff Survey

■ NHS: Software**Wes Streeting:** [\[59327\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Statement of 5 September 2022 on DHSC Update, HCWS291, what information she plans to make available to patients through the NHS App to support their choice of provider at the point of GP referral; and what types of provider she plans to include.

Wes Streeting: [\[59924\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Statement of 5 September 2022 on DHSC Update, HCWS291, how she plans to measure progress towards the commitment to offer all patients a choice of provider at the point of GP referral by April 2023; what plans she has to publicise the offer to all patients from April 2023; and whether the adequacy of the level of choice being offered to patients will be monitored.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 17 October 2022]: Patients in England have a legal right to choose the provider for their first outpatient appointment following a general practitioner referral for many healthcare services. Patients may choose between National Health Service or independent providers. The My Planned Care platform was launched by the NHS in February 2022, which provides access to information on local average waiting times at a speciality level, excluding cancer, for all hospital trusts in England. NHS England intends to develop My Planned Care to provide a hub for patients for the entire treatment pathway and develop further integration with the NHS App.

■ NHS: Staff**Emma Hardy:** [\[67996\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether it is her policy to publish the NHS workforce strategy by the end of 2022.

Will Quince:

In January 2022, the Department commissioned NHS England to develop a long-term workforce plan to follow the NHS People Plan. It is expected this will be completed by the end of 2022 and its conclusions will be available in due course.

Stephen Morgan: [\[68593\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what her planned timetable is for the publication of the long-term NHS workforce plan; and whether that plan will be underpinned by multi-year funding.

Will Quince:

The Department has commissioned NHS England to develop a long-term workforce plan. The plan will consider the number of staff and the roles required and will set out the actions and reforms needed to improve workforce supply and retention, following the NHS People Plan. The plan is due for completion by the end of 2022 and its conclusions will be available in due course.

It will be used to inform how to meet the future needs of patients and the National Health Service workforce. Funding plans beyond the current Spending Review period will be subject to the outcome of future Spending Reviews.

Stephen Morgan: [\[68594\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to help ensure that the health and care workforce is able to meet growing patient demand.

Will Quince:

The Department has commissioned NHS England to develop a long-term workforce plan. The plan will consider the number of staff and the roles required and will set out the actions and reforms needed to improve workforce supply and retention. The Department is committed to deliver an additional 50,000 nurses by the end of this Parliament to ensure a sustainable long-term supply in future.

Since September 2020, all eligible nursing, midwifery and allied health profession students have received a non-repayable training grant of a minimum of £5,000 per academic year. We have also funded an additional 1,500 undergraduate medical school places each year for domestic students in England.

Local authorities are responsible for ensuring there is sufficient workforce capacity to meet local care needs. To support local authorities and providers, we are launching a £15 million international recruitment fund and a new domestic national recruitment campaign in November. In addition, we have made care workers eligible for the Health and Care Visa and added these workers to the Shortage Occupation list.

Rachael Maskell: [\[72317\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to publish a workforce plan for the NHS.

Will Quince:

[Holding answer 31 October 2022]: In January 2022, the Department commissioned NHS England to develop a long-term workforce plan to follow the NHS People Plan. The plan is due to be completed by the end of 2022 and its conclusions will be available in due course. It will inform how we can meet the needs of patients and the National Health Service workforce. Funding plans beyond the current Spending Review period will be subject to the outcome of future Spending Reviews.

Preet Kaur Gill: [\[72409\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he will maintain the commitment to publish the NHS workforce strategy by the end of 2022.

Will Quince:

In January 2022 the Department of Health and Social Care commissioned NHS England to develop a long-term workforce plan. The long-term workforce plan will build on the foundations of the NHS People Plan. The plan is still being created by

NHS England and they are due to complete this work by the end of 2022. The key conclusions will be shared in due course.

■ NHS: Supply Chains

Wes Streeting:

[\[72342\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the impact that failures in the continuity of the supply of medical products would have on the NHS; what (a) drugs or (b) equipment his Department considers to be at particular risk of supply chain uncertainty; and what steps he is taking to mitigate that impact.

Will Quince:

No formal assessment has been made. However, the Department engages regularly with the supply chain, including with trade associations, suppliers and manufacturers of medicines and medical products, and logistics providers. The Department has well-established processes to prevent, manage and mitigate shortages of medicines and medical products. This includes the National Supply Disruption Response (NSDR), designed to mitigate disruption to the supply of medicines and medical products. The NSDR was established in March 2020, supporting providers and suppliers with supply disruptions 24 hours a day, seven days a week and offering express freight support.

■ NHS: Workplace Pensions

Ruth Cadbury:

[\[64120\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment has she made of the potential impact of the Government's policy on NHS pension taxation on workforce numbers in NHS England.

Will Quince:

Tax policy is a matter for the Chancellor, and the annual and lifetime allowances apply to all industries and occupational pension schemes.

The vast majority of NHS staff are able to build pensions tax-free. However, the generosity of the scheme and well-remunerated careers means that some senior clinicians exceed their allowances for tax-free saving.

The Government has previously delivered a manifesto commitment to solve the taper issue in doctors' pensions, by increasing the tapered annual allowance thresholds by £90,000 to exclude 98% of GPs and 96% of consultants from the scope of the taper based on NHS earnings. Pension tax should not impact on take home pay and the Scheme Pays facility allows members to meet a tax charge from the value of their pension pot.

We are working with NHS England to ensure that NHS employers are able to offer local solutions to address pension tax issues for their clinicians, including the option of employer pension contribution recycling.

■ NHS: York**Rachael Maskell:** [\[65865\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what (a) financial and (b) other steps her Department is taking to help tackle NHS workforce shortages in (a) York and (b) York Central constituency.

Will Quince:

[Holding answer 21 October 2022]: The Department has commissioned NHS England to develop a long-term workforce plan. The plan will consider the number of staff and the roles required and will set out the actions and reforms needed to improve workforce supply and retention, including in York.

■ Nurses: Recruitment**Sarah Olney:** [\[74831\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many additional nurses have been delivered in the 2019 Parliament to date.

Will Quince:

As of August 2022, there were 330,357 full time equivalent nurses in hospital and community health service and general practice settings in England. This is an increase of 29,453 than the September 2019 baseline for the target of achieving 50,000 additional nurses and an increase of 24,579 since December 2019.

We published a delivery update on the 50,000 nurses target on 7 March 2022, providing details on progress and the definition, scope and timing of the target, which is available at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/50000-nurses-programme-delivery-update/50000-nurses-programme-delivery-update>

■ Nurses: Sunderland Central**Julie Elliott:** [\[67901\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her department is taking to promote the (a) recruitment and (b) retention of school nurses in Sunderland Central constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 27 October 2022]: The recruitment and retention of school nurses is the responsibility of the local authority commissioner and the service provider. The requirements of the service should be determined by a local workforce plan and population health needs.

■ Ophthalmic Services: Special Educational Needs**Elliot Colburn:** [\[72464\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if his Department will publish further information on its future plans for the NHS Special Schools Eye Care Service; how

many special schools were in receipt of the NHS Special Schools Eye Care Service as of 26 October 2022; and how many children attend those schools.

Neil O'Brien:

There are 83 special schools with approximately 9324 children who have participated in the NHS England's Special Schools Eye Care Service proof of concept programme.

NHS England are currently evaluating the programme to inform the future of any special schools' sight testing service model and will set out the next steps in due course.

■ **Parkinson's Disease: Health Services**

Mary Glendon:

[\[71065\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps she is taking to implement an NHS workforce plan to support Parkinson's care.

Will Quince:

[Holding answer 28 October 2022]: Local health systems are responsible for planning local staffing levels in line with service priorities, including providing care to people living with Parkinson's disease.

Dr Liam Fox:

[\[72191\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential impact of regional differences in access to multidisciplinary support on Parkinson's care.

Helen Whately:

No assessment has been made.

■ **Paxlovid**

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[72218\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many of the 2.75 million courses of Paxlovid procured by the Government have reached their expiry date as of 26 October 2022.

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[72220\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many doses of Paxlovid are due to expire within the next 6 months.

Will Quince:

[Holding answer 31 October 2022]: Of the nirmatrelvir+ritonavir (Paxlovid) received, none has expired. Currently 1,095,954 courses held in central warehouses will expire within the next six months. The latest shelf-life approved by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) on 26 October 2022 is 24 months from initial manufacture. The Department is working with Pfizer to extend the use-by period of the unused stock received through batch-specific variation applications.

This will align existing stock with the MHRA's latest approved shelf-life, therefore it is anticipated none of the nirmatrelvir+ritonavir held will expire in the next six months. Any shelf-life extension is subject to the MHRA's review and approval of the product's continued safety and effectiveness.

■ Pharmacy: Reform

Elliot Colburn: [\[72462\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when the Department will publish its plans to reform pharmacy as part of the primary care reform plan.

Elliot Colburn: [\[72463\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to expand the number of clinical services that pharmacies can provide.

Neil O'Brien:

The Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework 2019-2024 sets out how community pharmacy will be integrated into the National Health Service, deliver more clinical services and provide treatment and advice for minor illnesses. Since 2019, minor illness referrals from NHS 111 and general practitioners and blood pressure checks have been introduced.

In September, the Government announced the agreement with the sector for the remainder of the Framework, supported by a one-off investment of £100 million. Under the agreement, community pharmacists will manage and initiate contraception and provide additional support to patients newly prescribed antidepressants. In addition, urgent emergency care settings will refer patients to a community pharmacist for a minor illness consultation or an urgent medicine supply.

■ Prescriptions: Barking and Dagenham

Dame Margaret Hodge: [\[61693\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate her Department has made on the number of people in my constituency of Barking and Dagenham who are unable to afford prescription costs.

Will Quince:

No specific estimate has been made. However, arrangements are in place to help with the affordability of National Health Service prescriptions, including exemptions relating to age, income or qualifying medical conditions. Approximately 89% of NHS prescription items are dispensed in the community free of charge.

To support those who do not qualify for an exemption from prescription charges, the cost of prescriptions can be capped by purchasing a prescription pre-payment certificate, which can be paid for in instalments. A holder of a 12-month certificate can get all the prescriptions they need for just over £2 per week. Additionally, people on a low income who do not qualify for an exemption from prescription charges can also

seek help under the NHS Low Income Service, which provides help with health costs on an income-related basis.

■ Private Patients

Chi Onwurah: [\[61904\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if her Department will make an assessment on the potential impact on patient health and wellbeing of people who have had to use private healthcare due to (a) waiting times for NHS treatment and (b) the treatment needed being unavailable on the NHS.

Will Quince:

We have no plans to make a specific assessment.

NHS England and integrated care boards are responsible for commissioning healthcare services to meet the needs of the population, taking account of healthcare priorities and available evidence, informed by guidance from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence.

■ Psilocybin

Owen Thompson: [\[65880\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if she will discuss the potential approval of psilocybin as a medicine with the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency.

Will Quince:

[Holding answer 21 October 2022]: There are no plans to do so. For an authorisation to be granted for a medicine, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency must receive a full marketing application from the applicant.

■ Radiology: North East

Alex Cunningham: [\[74664\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the impact on patients of the 37 per cent shortfall of clinical radiology consultants in the Northeast of England, as identified in the Royal College of Radiologists' 2021 Workforce Census.

Alex Cunningham: [\[74665\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to tackle the impact the 37 per cent shortfall of clinical radiology consultants in the Northeast of England is having on (a) diagnostic waiting times, (b) patient outcomes and (c) staff wellbeing in the region.

Alex Cunningham: [\[74666\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the impact on patients of the Northeast of England having the slowest average annual clinical radiology workforce growth rate in the last five years of 1 per cent.

Alex Cunningham: [\[74667\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to address regional clinical radiology workforce shortfalls in the Northeast of England.

Alex Cunningham: [\[74668\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of (a) the 17 per cent clinical radiology vacancy rate in the Northeast of England and b) that 90 per cent of those vacancies have been unfilled for a year or more.

Will Quince:

As of July 2022, there are 696 full time equivalent doctors working in the clinical radiology specialism in the North East and Yorkshire region. This is an increase of 2.7% compared to July 2021. From 2016 to 2021, there has been an increase of 63% in entries in clinical radiology specialty training places in England, with all places taken in 2021. The Government has funded an additional 1,500 undergraduate medical school places each year for domestic students in England, with the first graduates entering foundation training in August 2022. We have delivered five new medical schools in England, including at the University of Sunderland.

The Department has commissioned NHS England to develop a long-term workforce plan. The plan will consider the number of staff and the roles required and will set out the actions and reforms needed to improve workforce supply and retention, including in clinical radiology. In 2022/23 Health Education England is investing an additional £50 million to expand the cancer and diagnostics workforce, including expanding the postgraduate medical training of cancer-related medical professions, such as clinical radiologists. In the North East and Yorkshire region in August 2022, over 37,000 people received care following an urgent general practitioner referral for suspected cancer and over 73% had cancer diagnosed or ruled out within 28 days.

The NHS People Plan aims to improve the retention of all National Health Service staff by prioritising health and wellbeing. In 2022/23, more than £45 million has been invested to support the 40 mental health hubs in England, the Professional Nurse Advocates programme and expanding the NHS Practitioner Health service.

■ Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors

Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:

[\[68568\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether her Department has taken recent steps to help increase the availability of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors.

Will Quince:

We continue to work with the suppliers of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), including citalopram and fluoxetine, to ensure continuity of supply. With the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, we are supporting suppliers to bring stock to the United Kingdom market and engaged with industry to ensure stock remains available to meet demand.

While we are aware of supply issues with some SSRIs, including fluoxetine 10 milligram tablets, fluoxetine 10 milligram capsules remain available. A Serious Shortage Protocol has been issued to allow community pharmacists to supply capsules where tablets have been prescribed. The majority of SSRIs remain available for pharmacies to purchase via the usual wholesaler routes.

■ Skin Diseases: Mental Health Services

Sir Edward Leigh:

[\[72199\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Westminster Hall debate on Skin Conditions and Mental Health on 25 January 2022, Official Report, cols 322-338 WH, what steps his Department is taking to improve access to mental health services for people with skin conditions.

Maria Caulfield:

We are investing at least £2.3 billion of additional funding a year by 2023-24 to expand and transform mental health services in England so that two million more people, including those with skin conditions, will be able to access the mental health support they need.

In addition, we provided an additional £500 million for 2021/22, to accelerate our NHS mental health expansion plans, including NHS talking therapies through the improving access to psychological therapies services (IAPT). All integrated care systems are expected to commission IAPT services, integrated into physical care pathways, as part of their IAPT expansion plans locally.

To support healthcare professionals in the implementation of clear care pathways, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has published guidance on the diagnosis and treatment on a range of common skin conditions including eczema, acne, and psoriasis. The guidance emphasises the need for health care professionals to consider a patient's psychosocial wellbeing and refer onto specialist care where appropriate.

■ Sleep

Julie Elliott: [\[72263\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans she has to increase funding for research into (a) sighted non 24 sleep wake disorder and (b) other similar sleep disorders; and what steps she is taking to help meet the additional needs of people living with sighted non 24 disorder.

Julie Elliott: [\[72264\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps she is taking to support patients of sighted non 24 through the NHS in England; and what assessment she has made of the potential merits of increasing funding into research on that condition.

Will Quince:

[Holding answer 31 October 2022]: The Department funds research on health and social care through the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR). The NIHR welcomes funding applications for research into any aspect of human health, including sighted and non-sighted non-24-hour sleep wake disorder. However, it is not usual practice to ring-fence funds for particular topics or conditions. 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.

Between 2017/18 and 2021/22, the NIHR directly funded seven studies researching sleep disorders with a total award of £8,564,996. Additionally, the NIHR has supported the delivery of 23 studies relating to sleep disorders via the Clinical Research Network infrastructure, including one study on sighted non-24 disorder.

Integrated care boards work with local commissioners and providers to understand the needs of the local population and commission services that meet those needs, including the treatment of sighted non-24-hour sleep wake disorder.

■ Smoking

Peter Dowd: [\[74727\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the progress in meeting the Government's smokefree targets; and whether he plans to retain those targets.

Neil O'Brien:

We are on schedule to achieve or exceed our targets on youth and adult smoking, including reducing the number of 15 year olds who regularly smoke from 8% to 3% or less. The most recent data available shows that smoking rates in the population are currently 13.5%. No decisions on the retention of these targets have been made.

■ Smoking: Health Services**Andrew Gwynne:** [\[72222\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will commit to publishing a smoking action plan.

Neil O'Brien:

We are currently considering the wide range of recommendations set out in the independent Khan Review, published in June. No decisions have been taken on the publication of a new Tobacco Control Plan.

■ Social Services: Finance**Paula Barker:** [\[71299\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when her Department last discussed the local government finance settlement in respect to adult social care service provision demands across local council areas with the Secretary of State for Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 1 November 2022]: We have regular discussions with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on adult social care service delivery and budgets.

The Local Government Finance Settlement for 2022/23 made an additional £3.7 billion available to councils compared to 2021/22. Through the settlement, local authorities have access to an additional £1 billion for social care in 2022/23.

■ Social Services: Vetting**Holly Lynch:** [\[69706\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate she has made of the backlog of DBS check applications for people seeking to work in social care; and what assessment she has made of the effect of those backlogs on the level of the social care workforce.

Helen Whately:

No specific assessment has been made. The Disclosure and Barring Service is meeting the service standard of completing 80% of enhanced check applications within 14 days.

■ Surgery: Barking and Dagenham**Dame Margaret Hodge:** [\[61684\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to help reduce waiting times for elective surgeries in Barking and Dagenham.

Will Quince:

The 'Delivery plan for tackling the COVID-19 backlog of elective care' sets out how the National Health Service will recover and expand elective services over the next three years, including in Barking and Dagenham. We have allocated more than £8 billion from 2022/23 to 2024/25, in addition to the £2 billion Elective Recovery Fund and £700 million Targeted Investment Fund already made available in 2021/2022 to increase elective activity. This funding aims to deliver the equivalent of approximately nine million additional checks and procedures and 30% further elective activity by 2024/25 than pre-pandemic levels. A proportion of this funding will be invested in workforce capacity and training and we have committed to invest £5.9 billion for new beds, equipment and technology.

The target to eliminate waiting times of two years or more for elective procedures was met in July 2022 and we aim to eliminate waiting time of eighteen months or more by April 2023. This will be achieved through increasing capacity, seeking alternate capacity in other trusts or the independent sector and engaging with patients to understand choices made regarding their care.

■ Surgery: Bermondsey and Old Southwark**Neil Coyle:**[\[61939\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to help reduce waiting times for elective surgeries in Bermondsey and Old Southwark constituency.

Will Quince:

The 'Delivery plan for tackling the COVID-19 backlog of elective care' sets out how the National Health Service will recover and expand elective services over the next three years, including in Bermondsey and Old Southwark. We have allocated more than £8 billion from 2022/23 to 2024/25, in addition to the £2 billion Elective Recovery Fund and £700 million Targeted Investment Fund already made available in 2021/2022 to increase elective activity. This funding aims to deliver the equivalent of approximately nine million additional checks and procedures and 30% further elective activity by 2024/25 than pre-pandemic levels. A proportion of this funding will be invested in workforce capacity and training and we have committed to invest £5.9 billion for new beds, equipment and technology.

The target to eliminate waiting times of two years or more for elective procedures was met in July 2022 and we aim to eliminate waiting time of eighteen months or more by April 2023. This will be achieved through increasing capacity, seeking alternate capacity in other trusts or the independent sector and engaging with patients to understand choices made regarding their care.

■ Surgery: Bolton South East**Yasmin Qureshi:**[\[62765\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to help reduce waiting times for elective surgeries in Bolton South East constituency.

Will Quince:

The 'Delivery plan for tackling the COVID-19 backlog of elective care' sets out how the National Health Service will recover and expand elective services over the next three years, including in Bolton South East. We have allocated more than £8 billion from 2022/23 to 2024/25, in addition to the £2 billion Elective Recovery Fund and £700 million Targeted Investment Fund already made available in 2021/2022 to increase elective activity. This funding aims to deliver the equivalent of approximately nine million additional checks and procedures and 30% further elective activity by 2024/25 than pre-pandemic levels. A proportion of this funding will be invested in workforce capacity and training and we have committed to invest £5.9 billion for new beds, equipment and technology.

The target to eliminate waiting times of two years or more for elective procedures was met in July 2022 and we aim to eliminate waiting time of eighteen months or more by April 2023. This will be achieved through increasing capacity, seeking alternate capacity in other trusts or the independent sector and engaging with patients to understand choices made regarding their care.

■ Surgery: Bradford East**Imran Hussain:**[\[62858\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to help reduce waiting times for elective surgeries in Bradford East constituency.

Will Quince:

The 'Delivery plan for tackling the COVID-19 backlog of elective care' how the National Health Service will recover and expand elective services over the next three years, including in Bradford East. We have allocated more than £8 billion from 2022/23 to 2024/25, in addition to the £2 billion Elective Recovery Fund and £700 million Targeted Investment Fund already made available in 2021/2022 to increase elective activity. This funding aims to deliver the equivalent of approximately nine million additional checks and procedures and 30% further elective activity by 2024/25 than pre-pandemic levels. A proportion of this funding will be invested in workforce capacity and training and we have committed to invest £5.9 billion for new beds, equipment and technology.

The target to eliminate waiting times of two years or more for elective procedures was met in July 2022 and we aim to eliminate waiting time of eighteen months or more by April 2023. This will be achieved through increasing capacity, seeking alternate capacity in other trusts or the independent sector and engaging with patients to understand choices made regarding their care.

■ Surgery: Bradford South**Judith Cummins:**[\[63226\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to help reduce waiting times for elective surgeries in Bradford South constituency.

Will Quince:

The 'Delivery plan for tackling the COVID-19 backlog of elective care' sets out how the National Health Service will recover and expand elective services over the next three years, including in Bradford South. We have allocated more than £8 billion from 2022/23 to 2024/25, in addition to the £2 billion Elective Recovery Fund and £700 million Targeted Investment Fund already made available in 2021/2022 to increase elective activity. This funding aims to deliver the equivalent of approximately nine million additional checks and procedures and 30% further elective activity by 2024/25 than pre-pandemic levels. A proportion of this funding will be invested in workforce capacity and training and we have committed to invest £5.9 billion for new beds, equipment and technology.

The target to eliminate waiting times of two years or more for elective procedures was met in July 2022 and we aim to eliminate waiting time of eighteen months or more by April 2023. This will be achieved through increasing capacity, seeking alternate capacity in other trusts or the independent sector and engaging with patients to understand choices made regarding their care.

■ Surgery: Dulwich and West Norwood**Helen Hayes:**[\[62011\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to help reduce waiting times for elective surgeries in Dulwich and West Norwood constituency.

Will Quince:

The 'Delivery plan for tackling the COVID-19 backlog of elective care' how the National Health Service will recover and expand elective services over the next three years, including in Dulwich and West Norwood. We have allocated more than £8 billion from 2022/23 to 2024/25, in addition to the £2 billion Elective Recovery Fund and £700 million Targeted Investment Fund already made available in 2021/2022 to increase elective activity. This funding aims to deliver the equivalent of approximately nine million additional checks and procedures and 30% further elective activity by 2024/25 than pre-pandemic levels. A proportion of this funding will be invested in workforce capacity and training and we have committed to invest £5.9 billion for new beds, equipment and technology.

The target to eliminate waiting times of two years or more for elective procedures was met in July 2022 and we aim to eliminate waiting time of eighteen months or more by April 2023. This will be achieved through increasing capacity, seeking alternate capacity in other trusts or the independent sector and engaging with patients to understand choices made regarding their care.

■ Surgery: Ellesmere Port and Neston**Justin Madders:**[\[64153\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to help reduce waiting times for elective surgeries in Ellesmere Port and Neston constituency.

Will Quince:

The 'Delivery plan for tackling the COVID-19 backlog of elective care' sets out how the National Health Service will recover and expand elective services over the next three years, including in Ellesmere Port and Neston. We have allocated more than £8 billion from 2022/23 to 2024/25, in addition to the £2 billion Elective Recovery Fund and £700 million Targeted Investment Fund already made available in 2021/2022 to increase elective activity. This funding aims to deliver the equivalent of approximately nine million additional checks and procedures and 30% further elective activity by 2024/25 than pre-pandemic levels. A proportion of this funding will be invested in workforce capacity and training and we have committed to invest £5.9 billion for new beds, equipment and technology.

The target to eliminate waiting times of two years or more for elective procedures was met in July 2022 and we aim to eliminate waiting time of eighteen months or more by April 2023. This will be achieved through increasing capacity, seeking alternate capacity in other trusts or the independent sector and engaging with patients to understand choices made regarding their care.

■ Surgery: Leeds North West**Alex Sobel:**[\[65999\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate her Department has made of the number of cancelled operations in Leeds North West constituency in the last 12 months.

Will Quince:

This information is not collected in the format requested.

■ Surgery: Luton South**Rachel Hopkins:**[\[69888\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps her Department has taken to help reduce waiting times for elective surgeries in Luton South constituency.

Will Quince:

[Holding answer 27 October 2022]: The 'Delivery plan for tackling the COVID-19 backlog of elective care' sets out how the National Health Service will recover and expand elective services over the next three years, including in Luton South. We have allocated more than £8 billion from 2022/23 to 2024/25, in addition to the £2 billion Elective Recovery Fund and £700 million Targeted Investment Fund already

made available in 2021/2022 to increase elective activity. This funding aims to deliver the equivalent of approximately nine million additional checks and procedures and 30% further elective activity by 2024/25 than pre-pandemic levels. A proportion of this funding will be invested in workforce capacity and training and we have committed to invest £5.9 billion for new beds, equipment and technology.

The target to eliminate waiting times of two years or more for elective procedures was met in July 2022 and we aim to eliminate waiting time of eighteen months or more by April 2023. This will be achieved through increasing capacity, seeking alternate capacity in other trusts or the independent sector and engaging with patients to understand choices made regarding their care.

■ **Surgery: Nottingham South**

Lilian Greenwood:

[\[74634\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate his Department has made of the number of cancelled operations in Nottingham South constituency in the last 12 months.

Will Quince:

This information is not collected in the format requested.

■ **Surgery: Warrington North**

Charlotte Nichols:

[\[63071\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to help reduce waiting times for elective surgeries in Warrington North constituency.

Will Quince:

The 'Delivery plan for tackling the COVID-19 backlog of elective care' sets out how the National Health Service will recover and expand elective services over the next three years, including in Warrington North. We have allocated more than £8 billion from 2022/23 to 2024/25, in addition to the £2 billion Elective Recovery Fund and £700 million Targeted Investment Fund already made available in 2021/2022 to increase elective activity. This funding aims to deliver the equivalent of approximately nine million additional checks and procedures and 30% further elective activity by 2024/25 than pre-pandemic levels. A proportion of this funding will be invested in workforce capacity and training and we have committed to invest £5.9 billion for new beds, equipment and technology.

The target to eliminate waiting times of two years or more for elective procedures was met in July 2022 and we aim to eliminate waiting time of eighteen months or more by April 2023. This will be achieved through increasing capacity, seeking alternate capacity in other trusts or the independent sector and engaging with patients to understand choices made regarding their care.

■ Surgery: Washington and Sunderland West**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:**[\[61792\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to help reduce waiting times for elective surgeries in Washington and Sunderland West constituency.

Will Quince:

The 'Delivery plan for tackling the COVID-19 backlog of elective care' how the National Health Service will recover and expand elective services over the next three years, including in Washington and Sunderland West. We have allocated more than £8 billion from 2022/23 to 2024/25, in addition to the £2 billion Elective Recovery Fund and £700 million Targeted Investment Fund already made available in 2021/2022 to increase elective activity. This funding aims to deliver the equivalent of approximately nine million additional checks and procedures and 30% further elective activity by 2024/25 than pre-pandemic levels. A proportion of this funding will be invested in workforce capacity and training and we have committed to invest £5.9 billion for new beds, equipment and technology.

The target to eliminate waiting times of two years or more for elective procedures was met in July 2022 and we aim to eliminate waiting time of eighteen months or more by April 2023. This will be achieved through increasing capacity, seeking alternate capacity in other trusts or the independent sector and engaging with patients to understand choices made regarding their care.

■ Surgery: West Ham**Ms Lyn Brown:**[\[68510\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate her Department has made of the number of cancelled NHS operations in the West Ham constituency in the past 12 months, by (a) borough, (b) ethnicity, (c) age and (d) socio-economic group of the patient.

Will Quince:

[Holding answer 27 October 2022]: This information is not collected in the format requested.

■ Surgery: Wirral West**Margaret Greenwood:**[\[65835\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to help reduce waiting times for elective surgeries in Wirral West constituency.

Will Quince:

[Holding answer 24 October 2022]: The 'Delivery plan for tackling the COVID-19 backlog of elective care' how the National Health Service will recover and expand elective services over the next three years, including in Wirral West. We have allocated more than £8 billion from 2022/23 to 2024/25, in addition to the £2 billion

Elective Recovery Fund and £700 million Targeted Investment Fund already made available in 2021/2022 to increase elective activity. This funding aims to deliver the equivalent of approximately nine million additional checks and procedures and 30% further elective activity by 2024/25 than pre-pandemic levels. A proportion of this funding will be invested in workforce capacity and training and we have committed to invest £5.9 billion for new beds, equipment and technology.

The target to eliminate waiting times of two years or more for elective procedures was met in July 2022 and we aim to eliminate waiting time of eighteen months or more by April 2023. This will be achieved through increasing capacity, seeking alternate capacity in other trusts or the independent sector and engaging with patients to understand choices made regarding their care.

■ Tobacco

Dan Carden:

[\[64287\]](#)

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

Neil O'Brien:

We are currently considering the recommendations made in 'The Khan review: making smoking obsolete', published in June. Further information will be available in due course.

■ Vaccination

John Howell:

[\[64013\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the debate entitled Preventing vaccine discrimination, which took place at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on 14 October 2022.

Neil O'Brien:

The vaccination programme has been designed to be fair to individuals and communities by removing barriers to access, while respecting and not discriminating against those who choose not to be vaccinated.

Due to the vaccination programme and 'COVID-19 Response: Living with COVID-19', the Government has removed domestic restrictions, while encouraging safer behaviours through public health advice, in common with longstanding ways of managing most other respiratory illnesses. COVID-19 status certification, including the NHS COVID travel pass, remains an important tool to allow individuals to demonstrate their COVID-19 vaccination status when travelling outside the United Kingdom.

■ Vaccination: Ethnic Groups

Janet Daby:

[\[71269\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans she has to improve the uptake of vaccinations in (a) Black African and (b) Black Caribbean adults.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 28 October 2022]: We continue to work with the National Health Service to provide information on the benefits of COVID-19 and flu vaccination, targeted for specific communities where vaccination uptake is lower or has been falling. This includes information and advice via television, radio and social media and translated into 13 languages. We have also launched a nationwide communications campaign to encourage eligible members of the public to receive a COVID-19 booster and flu vaccination this autumn.

On 24 June 2021, NHS England published the COVID-19 vaccination toolkit to provide evidence-based guidance for increasing vaccination confidence and uptake within black African and black Caribbean communities. We continue to work with community and faith ambassadors and organisations to build trust within local communities.

■ Vaccine Taskforce

Jonathan Reynolds:

[\[66991\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the expected annual (a) current and (b) capital expenditure on the Vaccines Taskforce will be in each financial year of that project; and if he will place that information in the House of Commons Library.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 24 October 2022]: On 1 October 2022, the core functions of the Vaccine Taskforce (VTF) merged with the UK Health Security Agency and the Office for Life Sciences.

In February 2022, the National Audit Office confirmed that the VTF's expenditure on vaccine development and procurement was £3.3 billion to the end of October 2021. In 2022/23, the Department has allocated £2 billion to procure and deploy COVID-19 vaccines

■ Veterans Mobility Fund

Mark Pritchard:

[\[72227\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make it his policy to ensure the future of the Veterans Mobility Fund.

Will Quince:

The Government does not intend to reinstate the Veterans' Mobility Fund

The Veterans' Mobility Fund was a time-limited fund set up in 2015 to provide support for veterans with serious physical injury resulting from their time in service. Although

this fund is now closed, the NHS has a range of specialist equipment that can be procured through the NHS following an assessment of clinical need.

We are working with NHS England to ensure that there is no gap in provision for those who previously relied on the Veterans' Mobility Fund. All equipment provided through the NHS must meet the clinical needs of the person who needs it whilst at the same time being available to all who need it. Enhanced support is available through the Personal Health Budget for Wheelchairs for those who required enhanced equipment.

HOME OFFICE

■ Action Fraud

Damian Green: [\[70923\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of cases referred to Action Fraud in 2021 resulted in a police investigation

Damian Green: [\[70924\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether fraud will be included in the crime statistics for the UK; and if he will make a statement.

Damian Green: [\[70925\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many incidents of fraud were referred to Action Fraud in each year since 2016 inclusive.

Tom Tugendhat:

[Holding answer 2 November 2022]: The Home Office collects information on the number of fraud offences that the National Fraud Investigation Bureau (NFIB) refer to police forces for investigation and on the number of fraud outcomes recorded by the police. This data is published annually as part of the Home Office's 'Crime Outcomes in England and Wales' publication. The latest available data for the year ending March 2022 can be found here: Crime outcomes in England and Wales 2021 to 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

Current official statistics for England and Wales by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) do include fraud but to allow analysis of long-term trends, a headline measure excluding fraud is also captured. Policing, including crime statistics, is devolved in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The table below shows the number of fraud reports directly reported into Action Fraud since 2016:

2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
247,864	270,520	301,123	330,340	363,489	413,789

This does not include UK Finance and Cifas data, only crimes that were directly reported into Action Fraud.

■ Animal Experiments: Primates

Alex Sobel: **[73888]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential implications for her policies of the incident described in the Animals in Science Regulation Unit's annual reports for 2019-2021 in which a non-human primate died after becoming trapped behind a restraint device; and what steps her Department is taking to prevent such incidents recurring.

Chris Philp:

[Holding answer 2 November 2022]: Each establishment licence holder has the responsibility at all times for the welfare of the animals within their establishment.

The Home Office take any allegations regarding non-compliance with the law, the Code of Practice or individual licence conditions very seriously. The Compliance Policy, found here: (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/animal-testing-and-research-compliance-with-aspa>) explains how the Regulator identifies and investigates potential incidents of non-compliance and decides on appropriate and proportionate measures and remedies aimed to minimise the risk of recurrence. The Regulator focusses on delivering the right sanctions to achieve better compliance outcomes.

In July 2021 the Regulator initiated a new operating model that delivers a more structured and integrated framework aligned with leading regulatory practice. The assessment of compliance in this new model is achieved through a variety of methods including full system, facilities and partial audits, review of reports, investigation and management of cases of potential non-compliance.

■ Animal Experiments: Rodents

Alex Sobel: **[73889]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the incident described in the Animals in Science Regulation Unit's annual reports for 2019-2021 in which boxes containing 112 live rats were transferred to a compactor in error and the animals were crushed; and what steps she will take to prevent such incidents from occurring in future.

Chris Philp:

[Holding answer 2 November 2022]: The Home Office take any allegations regarding non-compliance with the law, the Code of Practice or individual licence conditions very seriously.

The Compliance Policy, found here: (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/animal-testing-and-research-compliance-with-aspa>) explains how the Regulator identifies and investigates potential incidents of non-compliance and decides on appropriate and proportionate measures and remedies aimed to minimise the risk of recurrence.

The Regulator focusses on delivering the right sanctions to achieve better compliance outcomes.

■ Asylum

Stephen Kinnock:

[74712]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether a person who has arrived in the UK with the intention of seeking asylum is classified in government records as an asylum seeker in the event that the person has been deemed inadmissible under the Nationality and Borders Act 2022.

Robert Jenrick:

The Home Office publishes data on asylum in the '[Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release](#)'.

Data on asylum applications are published in table Asy_D01 of the '[asylum and resettlement detailed datasets](#)'. Data on cases considered under inadmissibility rules are published in table Asy_09a of the '[asylum and resettlement summary tables](#)'.

When an individual submits an asylum application, they are counted in Asy_D01. If they are later deemed as inadmissible, this will be recorded in table Asy_09, but they will not be removed from table Asy_D01. A person is not considered on inadmissibility grounds if they have not submitted an asylum claim.

■ Asylum and Visas: Applications

Claire Hanna:

[72476]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what progress her Department has made on improvements in service standards to visa and asylum applications; and whether it is on target to meet its goal to return to a 20 day service standard by March 2023.

Claire Hanna:

[72478]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many additional staff her Department has hired to work on asylum and visa applications.

Robert Jenrick:

The latest decision waiting times for visa applications made inside the UK are published on Gov.uk.

- [Visa decision waiting times: applications outside the UK](#)
- [Visa decision waiting times: applications inside the UK](#)

Individuals may wait longer for a decision if their application is not straightforward, and more information is required. Where priority and super-priority visas have been applied for, these will remain at the head of the decision-making queue. The Home Office are working hard to ensure that service standards are met across all visa application routes.

The Home Office does not currently have a service standard to decide initial asylum claims. A new accelerated service standard is being developed and we are testing the impact of several coordinated initiatives, including enhanced screening, case triage, centralised workflow and streamlined decision templates.

We have already made progress in prioritising older claims, high harm cases, those cases with extreme vulnerability, children and new flow cases following the introduction of the Nationality & Borders Act, whilst those in receipt of support are a priority for caseworkers considering legacy cases.

Whilst we are unable to offer specific timescales to individuals at this time, we are working hard to reintroduce service standards in line with the Nationality and Borders Act to improve the level of service we provide to those who claim asylum.

The number of asylum decision makers in the Home Office has increased from 614 in 2021/22 to 1,073, an increase of 75% with ongoing recruitment strategies in place to retain and increase the number of asylum decision makers.

■ Asylum: Correspondence

Stephen Kinnock:

[\[74714\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her Department's policy is on the criteria and process for when (a) a letter is sent to an asylum seeker informing that person that they are inadmissible for asylum under the Nationality and Broder Act 2022 and (b) a letter is sent to an asylum seeker informing them that the Government intends to transport that person to Rwanda; whether those letters are sent at the same time or separately; and if she will make a statement.

Robert Jenrick:

Inadmissibility guidance is published online and can be found at [Inadmissibility: safe third country cases \(accessible\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Individuals are first served with a Notice of Intent which sets out that we may ask Rwanda to admit them, under the terms of the Migrations and Economic Development Partnership. Individuals have either 7 or 14 calendar days (depending on their circumstances) to respond with reasons why their claims should not be treated as inadmissible.

Following that time period, decisions on inadmissibility and removal can be made. The general approach as set out in the "Removal Agreements and Timescales" section of the guidance is that inadmissibility decisions are served with removal decisions, however that is not a requirement.

■ Asylum: Housing

Stephen Kinnock:

[\[74713\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish data on the average length of time that an asylum seeker who has been deemed inadmissible under the Nationality and Borders Act typically spends in asylum accommodation before the

Government (a) is able to return that individual to their country of origin or the previous safe country that they had resided in and (b) recognises that there is no prospect of returning that person to their country of origin or the previous safe country that they had resided in and therefore permits that person to apply for asylum in the UK.

Robert Jenrick:

This information is not held in a reportable format currently and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Richard Thomson:

[\[74944\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many places in accommodation alternative to Manston did she approve from (a) 6 to 11, (b) 12 to 18, (d) 19 to 25 and (e) 26 to 30 September 2022; when the first of those places was approved; and when the first place accommodated someone.

Robert Jenrick:

The significant increase in dangerous journeys across the Channel is placing unprecedented strain on our asylum system.

We are committed to working closely with communities and stakeholders to ensure destitute asylum seekers are housed in safe, secure and suitable accommodation, and that they are treated with dignity, care and compassion while their asylum claim is considered. All appropriate options are being explored to ensure that suitable accommodation is secured as quickly as is necessary and hotels are one element.

In the month of September 19 new hotel sites were brought into use providing additional bedspaces for over 2700 people

A breakdown of individual hotels, approvals, online and occupancy could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

■ **Asylum: Northern Ireland**

Claire Hanna:

[\[73156\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum seekers in Northern Ireland are without an initial decision as of 26 October 2022.

Robert Jenrick:

The information is not held in the requested format.

Claire Hanna:

[\[73157\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum seekers in Northern Ireland are under investigation for third party interest.

Robert Jenrick:

The Home Office does not publish this data and such information although recorded across various systems on individual cases, it is not held in a readily available, extractable format.

Claire Hanna:

[73158]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum seekers in Northern Ireland have been assessed as a potential victim of human trafficking.

Robert Jenrick:

The Home Office publishes statistics regarding asylum, which can be found here

[Asylum and resettlement datasets - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/asylum-and-resettlement-datasets)

The Home Office publishes quarterly and annual statistics regarding the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), which can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-referral-mechanism-statistics>

Data on the number of asylum seekers who have been referred into the National Referral Mechanism are not published.

■ Asylum: Rwanda

Stephen Kinnock:

[74711]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 25 October 2022 to Question 67920 on Asylum: Rwanda, what assessment of set up costs was made to support the determination of an upfront payment of £20 million; what value for money assessment was carried out on that £20 million payment; whether there will be a further assessment of how that payment is spent by the Government of Rwanda before agreeing further payments; and what the original £120 million payment covered given the requirement for an additional £20 million to cover set up costs.

Robert Jenrick:

Under our Migration and Economic Development Partnership (MEDP) with Rwanda, the UK has provided Rwanda with an initial investment of £120m as part of a new Economic Transformation and Integration Fund. This will go towards Rwanda's development creating professional and personal development opportunities for migrants and Rwandans alike.

We have also undertaken to provide funding to Rwanda for each individual relocated. This funding will cover asylum processing (case workers, translators etc), accommodation, healthcare, and for those granted protection, a comprehensive integration package. As part of this, the UK made a £20m upfront payment to the Government of Rwanda to support initial set up costs.

The Government of Rwanda is responsible for the allocation of the funding they receive. However, the Joint Committee will monitor the overall implementation and operation of all aspects of the Partnership.

A full value for money assessment was undertaken as part of the Accounting Officer advice provided to Ministers on the MEDP.

■ Community Policing

Steve McCabe: [\[72924\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she will take to increase community policing to help tackle levels of crime.

Chris Philp:

Decisions about frontline policing, and how resources are best deployed, are for Chief Constables and democratically accountable Police & Crime Commissioners. They are best placed to make decisions based on their local knowledge, enabling them to adapt and respond to the changing crime mix and priorities of their communities.

We are continuing work to increase the number of police officers in England and Wales. As at 30 September 2022, 15,343 additional officers have been recruited in England and Wales as part of the Police Uplift Programme. This amounts for 77% of the target of 20,000 additional officers by March 2023.

■ Crime: Cost of Living

Steve McCabe: [\[72923\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of trends in the level of crime during the cost of living crisis; and what steps she will take to tackle that crime.

Chris Philp:

We monitor crime levels on a regular basis, both at a national level and police force area level and this monitoring feeds into our crime reduction efforts.

The Government is committed to reducing crime and is funding a range of evidence-led interventions to prevent crime happening in the first place.

For example, the Safer Streets Fund provides investment into innovative as well as traditional interventions to improve the safety of public places, Violence Reduction Units bring together local partners to tackle the drivers of violence in their area, and 'Grip' funding allows the police to carry out targeted and visible patrols in areas where there is greatest risk of serious violence.

■ Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre: Contracts

Sir Alan Campbell: [\[72935\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking on the future management of Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre ahead of the contract for that centre, currently with Mitie, ending in June 2023; and if she will make statement.

Robert Jenrick:

The current contract for the provisions of operational, management and maintenance services at Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre is being managed to ensure the commercial partner's compliance and adherence to their contractual obligations.

On 21st July 2021 the Home Office launched a public-sector procurement for the ongoing provision of these services beyond the expiry of the existing contract. The new contract is due to be awarded in Spring 2023.

Sir Alan Campbell:[\[72936\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has taken recent steps to issue new tenders for the management of Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre.

Robert Jenrick:

The Home Office is currently undertaking a public-sector procurement for the award of a contract for the ongoing provision of operational, management and maintenance services at Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre. This procurement was launched on 21st July 2021. The new contract is due to be awarded in Spring 2023.

■ Detention Centres: Manston**Beth Winter:**[\[73147\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many full-time medical personnel are employed at Manston short-term holding facility; and in what roles are those personnel employed.

Beth Winter:[\[73152\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, With reference to the response of 27 October 2022 by the Minister for Immigration to the Urgent Question on Cross-Channel Migrants: Manston Facility, how many of those employed at Manston Facility are (a) Home Office staff, (b) contractors, (c) military personnel and (d) security staff.

Robert Jenrick:

The Home Office does not routinely publish information relating to the number of staff working in specific locations as this would publicise operational practises which, in the wrong hands, could be used to attempt to evade controls at the border and compromise border security.

Medical services are delivered through two separate but complementary contracts with external suppliers. In total, there are 8 paramedical/medical trained staff on site by day, in a fully equipped medical centre. In addition, there are 3 Emergency Department Consultant doctors providing clinical cover at the site; a Consultant is on site during the day between 0800-2000hrs, with on-call cover provided overnight.

We currently have up to 900 staff involved in the landside small boat response which includes HO staff, Contractors (fulfilling security, detention custody, catering, medical, transport and facilities management tasks) and Military support.

The resource and staffing requirements are continually reviewed by the Home Office, working closely with contractors and stakeholders to deploy resources flexibly as and when they are required.

Beth Winter: [\[73148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many (a) toilets, (b) showers and baths and (c) washing machines and other laundry facilities were available for use by detainees at Manston Short-term Holding Facility as of 27 October 2022.

Beth Winter: [\[73149\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department is taking steps to replace tent and marquee accommodation with hardened accommodation at Manston Short-term Holding Facility in winter 2022.

Beth Winter: [\[73150\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Short-term Holding Facility Rules 2018, what recent certification has been issued by the Secretary of State to certify that sleeping accommodation at Manston Short-term Holding Facility contains is adequately (a) sized, (b) lit, (c) heated, (d) ventilated and fitted for health.

Beth Winter: [\[73151\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Short-term Holding Facility Rules 2018, what arrangements are in place to ensure food provided at Manston Short-term Holding Facility is varied, nutritionally balanced and must where practicable meet all religious, dietary, cultural and medical needs.

Robert Jenrick:

The Manston Initial Triage and Processing Centre has been stood up as a critical infrastructure to enable criminal, identity and immigration background checks on migrants illegally crossing the Channel and collate their initial asylum claims away from the Port of Dover.

Accommodation on site is provided by a mix of existing barrack blocks converted for this purpose and marquees erected as emergency accommodation once the number of migrants crossing demanded the rapid expansion of capacity. Seven of these marquees are certified as holding rooms under the Short-Term Holding Facility rules.

There are no extant plans with the Local Authorities for the installation or building of any permanent structures on site. However, it is our aim to continuously improve the quality of accommodation to provide adequate response to the needs of those crossing the channel.

A laundry service is provided by the contractors on site. Washing machines are available on site for use by families.

Food is provided for everyone being held at Manston. As the number of crossings has increased, resulting in longer stays whilst onward accommodation is sourced, the Home Office has continued to engage with contractors to ensure the food provision

meets this changing need – including increasing the variety of food available and ensuring that it meets each individual's needs.

Alison Thewliss: [\[74737\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many confirmed diphtheria cases have been detected at the Manston Asylum Processing Centre; and how many of these have been reported to the UK Health Security Agency.

Alison Thewliss: [\[74739\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many health professionals are allocated to the Manston Asylum Processing Facility.

Robert Jenrick:

Medical services are delivered at Manston and Western Jetfoil through two separate but complementary contracts with external suppliers. Currently, in total, there are eight paramedical/medical trained staff on site by day, in a fully equipped medical centre. In addition, there are three Emergency Department Consultant doctors providing clinical cover at the site; and a Consultant is on site during the day between 0800-2000hrs, with on-call cover provided overnight.

To date there have been 6 confirmed cases of Diphtheria at Manston. All suspected cases are isolated in line with public health guidance. Every confirmed case is referred to the UK Health Security Agency by the laboratory.

Alison Thewliss: [\[74738\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether Manston Asylum Processing Centre is designated as a non-residential short term holding facility under the Short-term Holding Facility Rules 2018.

Alison Thewliss: [\[74741\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether people detained at Manston Asylum Processing Centre have access to (a) their own mobile phone and (b) a public phone.

Robert Jenrick:

Manston operates as a non-residential short-term holding facility. In order to operate as a short-term holding facility (STHF), a site does not need to be designated as one. The Immigration (Places of Detention) Direction 2021 sets out the places in which people can lawfully be detained, and included within that are STHFs (both non-residential and residential STHFs) as set out in paragraph 3(1)(c) of the Direction. Only immigration removal centres are designated individually by name.

[Immigration \(Places of Detention\) Direction 2021 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/102442/immigration_places_of_detention_direction_2021.pdf)

The STHF Rules 2018 apply by default to Manston, minus the specific dis-applications/modifications for holding rooms set out in Rule 6 of the STHF Rules 2018 [STHF-rules-operational-guidance-v1.0-EXT.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/102442/sthf_rules_operational_guidance_v1.0-ext.pdf).

Rule 28 provides that individuals in STHFs must have access to a telephone to make calls, and the means to receive incoming telephone calls, which they must be notified

of promptly. While their own mobile phones are securely stored with their property, the Home Office is ensuring that people held at Manston have access to mobile phones held by the contractors operating the facility.

Alison Thewliss:

[\[74740\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many children have been detained at the Manston Asylum Processing facility in each day since that facility opened; and what is the (a) mean, (b) median and (c) longest time a child has been detained at that facility.

Robert Jenrick:

The data is not held in the format requested.

■ Home Office: Email

Mr Alistair Carmichael:

[\[73796\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many staff employed by her Department were dismissed for misuse of the email system in each of the last five years.

Tom Tugendhat:

The Home Office disciplinary database has several broad categories to group cases for identification and management information purposes.

However, the categories are not sufficiently detailed to identify particular elements of a case.

Therefore, this information can only be supplied by disproportionate effort.

Mr Alistair Carmichael:

[\[73797\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many staff employed by her Department have been reinstated following dismissal for misuse of the email system in each of the last five years.

Tom Tugendhat:

The Home Office disciplinary database has several broad categories to group cases for identification and management information purposes.

However, the categories are not sufficiently detailed to identify particular elements of a case. Therefore, this information can only be supplied by disproportionate effort.

■ Home Office: ICT

Claire Hanna:

[\[72477\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she is taking steps to update her Department's internal IT systems to improve efficiencies and help ensure effective processing of visa applications.

Tom Tugendhat:

The current processing of overseas visa applications is mainly carried out on the Proviso caseworking IT system. The Department continues to review the

effectiveness of this system to ensure it provides a robust platform from which applications can be concluded within UKVI's existing customer service standards.

The Department has already begun to transition overseas visa applications from Proviso to ATLAS for example on the Hong Kong British National (Overseas) (BNO) and Ukrainian Scheme routes. ATLAS is replacing the in-country IT system 'CID', and has provided efficiencies in processing applications from the Access UK online application service, enabling automated and integrated security checks, increased caseworking flexibility and the creation of a fully Digital Immigration Status for individuals.

The full movement of all overseas cases on-to ATLAS is scheduled over the course of the next three years".

■ Home Office: Ministerial Changes

Anne McLaughlin:

[\[67937\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the cost to his Department was of the additional administration necessitated by the change of the Home Secretary on 19 October 2022.

Robert Jenrick:

[Holding answer 25 October 2022]: There are associated IT costs, but as devices are returned to the department upon exit, cost is mitigated. The Home Office does not hold records of other administrative costs.

■ Home Office: Recruitment

Florence Eshalomi:

[\[75001\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much her Department spent on external recruitment consultants in 2021.

Chris Philp:

The Home Office does not report the information sought to the level of granularity required.

To identify spending on external recruitment consultants specifically from our management systems would require a manual review of all consultancy related transactions. This can only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

■ Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration

Beth Winter:

[\[73143\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the oral evidence given by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration at the Home Affairs Select Committee hearing of 26 October, when she will meet with the Chief Inspector.

Beth Winter:

[\[73144\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the oral evidence given by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration at the Home Affairs Select Committee hearing of 26 October, what steps she is taking to speed up publication of Inspectorate reports.

Robert Jenrick:

The Home Secretary will meet the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration as soon as reasonably possible. The Minister for Immigration will meet the ICIBI on 3 November, while bilateral meetings with senior officials continue regularly.

The department has a ministerial commitment to lay ICIBI inspection reports before Parliament within eight weeks of receipt where possible. This excludes periods of parliamentary recess as both Houses must be sitting for ICIBI reports to be laid. The department takes every inspection report seriously and considers the findings and recommendations carefully. This can sometimes mean the publication process extends beyond eight weeks.

■ **Intelligence Services: China**

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[\[73794\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has received any evidence of the Chinese government operating unofficial police stations in the UK.

Tom Tugendhat:

[Holding answer 2 November 2022]: We continually assess potential threats in the UK, and take protection of individuals' rights, freedoms, and safety in the UK very seriously. Reports of undeclared 'police stations' in the UK are of course very concerning and are taken extremely seriously.

As a matter of longstanding policy we don't comment on security or operational matters.

■ **Members: Correspondence**

Ruth Cadbury:

[\[73017\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the correspondence from the hon. Member for Brentford and Isleworth of 15 August 2022 and 12 September 2022 on a naturalisation request.

Ruth Cadbury:

[\[73018\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she will respond to correspondence of (a) 21 July, (b) 15 August, (c) 13 September and (d) 12 October 2022 from the hon. Member for Brentford and Isleworth on an asylum application

Robert Jenrick:

PQ 73017 – MPAM reference – MPAM/0413355/22 – The Home Office responded to the correspondence on 28 October 2022

PQ 73018 – MPAM reference – MPAM/0399356/22 – The Home Office responded to the correspondence on 28 October 2022

Sir Stephen Timms: [\[74488\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department plans to reply to the correspondence of 12 September 2022 from the Hon. Member for East Ham, case reference ST100174.

Sir Stephen Timms: [\[74489\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department plans to reply to the correspondence of 12 August 2022 from the Hon. Member for East Ham, case reference ST99670.

Robert Jenrick:

PQ 74488 – MPAM reference – MPAM/0463991/22 – The Home Office responded to the correspondence on 1 November 2022

PQ 74489 – MPAM reference – MPAM/0413047/22 – The Home Office responded to the correspondence on 1 November 2022

■ Migrants: Albania

Mr David Davis: [\[74511\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent discussions her Department has had with police forces on the potential impact of Albanian migrants on crime rates in the UK.

Tom Tugendhat:

My Rt Hon Friend, the Home Secretary, has regular discussions with senior leaders in the police covering the whole range of issues to do with crime.

The police are operationally independent, and we would expect them to investigate all allegations of crime thoroughly and proportionately.

How police forces spend resources is an operational matter for individual Chief Officers who will decide how to deploy available resources, taking into account any specific local problems and demands.

Mr David Davis: [\[74512\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the National Crime Agency has had recent discussions with law enforcement agencies in Europe on the potential impact that Albanian migrants have had on levels of organised crime in Europe.

Tom Tugendhat:

HMG's approach to Western Balkans Serious and Organised Crime aims to limit the impact of high harm Western Balkan (including Albanian) crime groups on the UK and the region itself.

As part of this approach, we work bilaterally and with international partners to disrupt Western Balkans OCGs which operate across the region and transnationally.

The NCA has well established relationships with law enforcement partners across Europe, as well as with Europol and Interpol, which include regular exchanges on Albanian organised crime. The Agency's International Liaison Officers help reduce the organised crime threat to the UK by working closely with host nation law enforcement and intelligence organisations.

Mr David Davis:[\[74513\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an estimate with Cabinet colleagues of the total cost of providing housing for Albanian migrants in each of the last five years.

Robert Jenrick:

The information held is not in the correct format.

Official Secrets**Mark Pritchard:**[\[72968\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to bring forward legislative proposals to (a) update or (b) replace the Official Secrets Act.

Tom Tugendhat:

The National Security Bill, currently before Parliament, will update the Official Secrets Acts (OSAs) 1911, 1920 and 1939 which relate primarily to espionage.

The Government is considering the case for the potential future legislative reform of OSA 1989, which relates to unlawful disclosures of Government information. It is important that this work runs in lockstep with other crucial work the Government is doing to strengthen whistle-blowing practices and transparency.

Refugees: Afghanistan**Fleur Anderson:**[\[74942\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking with local authorities to move refugees from Afghanistan who have been in hotels for longer than year into alternative accommodation.

Robert Jenrick:

There is a significant effort underway to support the families into permanent homes as soon as we can so they can settle and rebuild their lives. We remain committed to matching evacuees to suitable settled accommodation and continue to work

collaboratively alongside around 350 local authorities, government departments and other partners to meet the demand for housing.

In addition, many families have, in recent months, taken steps to secure their own accommodation through the Find Your Own Accommodation scheme which opened on 29 June and empowers Afghan families to source their own accommodation. We are also looking at ways to make more suitable homes available in the private rented sector, and exploring alternatives to hotels for families who may have to remain in bridging accommodation for long periods.

The length of time that a family will remain in bridging hotels is dependent on the availability of appropriate housing. The demographic complexity of the Afghan cohort, coupled with a shortage in supply of appropriate housing and reliance on local authorities to bring forth property pledges means that this remains challenging. We encourage families to accept appropriate properties as quickly as possible and urge local authorities to continue to do all they can to help house people.

■ **Visas: Overseas Students**

Matt Western:

[\[73114\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 25 October 2022 to Question 64270 on Visas: Overseas Students, whether her Department holds data on the number of recipients of international student visas that are accompanied by (a) five and (b) six dependents; what steps her Department is taking to monitor this information; and what recent assessment she has made of the adequacy of her Department's monitoring processes of this information.

Robert Jenrick:

The Home Office regularly reviews available data to inform operational processes and policies.

Information on our immigration routes, including overall volumes of dependants for each route is available as part of our transparency data and can be found at: [Visas and Citizenship data: Q2 2022](#).

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ **Department for International Trade: Location**

Florence Eshalomi:

[\[69874\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if they will publish the payments made to officials in their Department for relocation to government offices outside London in 2021.

Nigel Huddleston:

In 2021, the Department for International Trade (DIT) paid a total of £14,000 to officials who relocated to DIT offices outside of London through the cross-Government Places for Growth programme (PfG).

JUSTICE

■ Law Commission

Sir Peter Bottomley:

[\[72907\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, in what years the requirement to report on implementation and non-implementation of Law Commission proposals has not been met since 2010; and when he expects to publish this year's report.

Mike Freer:

The Government's report on the implementation of Law Commission proposals was published in line with requirements between 2010 and the publication of the last report in 2018. A draft of the next report, including updates on all relevant proposals since then, is currently being prepared and is expected to be laid before Parliament as soon as practicable.

■ National Offender Management Service

Theresa Villiers:

[\[74579\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what discussions he has had with the leadership of the National Offender Management Service on recruitment and retention of staff.

Damian Hinds:

Having experienced staff in our prisons is vital to ensuring prisons remain safe, secure and decent. Ministers receive regular briefings from Prison Service leadership on prison resourcing and proactive measures are being taken to improve recruitment and retention.

There are recruitment campaigns open for all prisons with vacancies and a tailored approach to recruitment advertising is being taken at sites where it is harder to recruit.

We made a significant investment in pay for prison staff through the 2022/23 pay award. This delivered an increase in base pay of at least 4% for all staff between bands 2 to 11, alongside further targeted pay rises for our lowest paid staff of up to £3,000.

Since April 2022, we have also invested in several new initiatives to improve the experience of our new joiners and increase retention. These include a new peer-to-peer learning scheme, the introduction of mentors for new prison officers, piloting additional staff support and supervision in two prisons, and new leadership training in prisons facing retention challenges.

■ Prisoners: Per Capita Costs

Steve Reed:

[\[72997\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average cost was of each prison place created under the Prison Estate Transformation Programme.

Damian Hinds:

The Prison Estate Transformation Programme delivered 206 prison places via a new houseblock at HMP Stocken in June 2019. These were delivered at an average capital cost of £173k per prison place. The Prison Estate Transformation Programme was closed in 2019.

■ **Probate****Tony Lloyd:**[\[72207\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make an estimate of the number and proportion of applications for grant of probate that were resolved within the eight week target in the latest period for which data is available; and how many and what proportion of these applications took more than nine months to resolve.

Mike Freer:

The attached table shows the number and proportion of Grants of Probate applications resolved in 8 weeks and those that took more than 9 months.

Cases can take longer than 8 weeks for a number of reasons including HMCTS stopping a case to request further information which the user has not supplied, time taken for users to reply, cases can also be stopped due to application being made by another interested party or because the application becomes contested.

Attachments:

1. 72207_table [\[2022-11-03 72207.xlsx\]](#)

■ **Probation****Theresa Villiers:**[\[74578\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what discussions he has had with the leadership of the Probation Service on recruitment and retention of staff.

Theresa Villiers:[\[74581\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on ensuring that probation services are adequately resourced.

Damian Hinds:

The Probation Service plays a critical role in protecting the public and reducing reoffending. The 2021 Spending Review provided an additional £155m per year to support probation reform. Future decisions on funding will be taken in the course of normal government business, at fiscal events.

The recruitment and retention of staff are key priorities for the Probation Service leadership team and me, and these are subjects of frequent discussion, covering career marketing and attraction, remuneration and benefits, career development paths, and other factors. The recently agreed three-year pay deal is important to our offer.

The Probation Service recruited over 1,000 trainees in 2020/21 financial year and 1,518 trainees in 2021/22.

■ **Probation: Standards**

Theresa Villiers: [\[74580\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to ensure that probation services are adequately resourced.

Theresa Villiers: [\[74582\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to encourage people to enter careers in the probation services.

Theresa Villiers: [\[74583\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to encourage the creation of apprenticeships in probation services.

Damian Hinds:

The Probation Service has accelerated the recruitment of trainee Probation Officers over the last two years, recruiting 1007 trainees in 2020/21 and 1518 trainees in 2021/22. We have committed to recruiting a further 1500 trainee probation officers in the 2022/23 financial year.

To increase engagement, and reduce attrition, we are launching an engagement tool to target candidates at key stages of the Professional Qualification in Probation (PQiP) recruitment process.

We have increased local outreach to improve awareness of Probation and the roles available, as well as refreshing our marketing and website to ensure we are attracting sufficient applications. We are committed to widening our routes to achieve probation qualifications by developing pathways for existing staff, as well as creating routes for those without a graduate degree.

We have centralised recruitment in six priority regions to streamline and improve the process and speed up the time it takes to hire new staff.

We anticipate the recently agreed three-year pay deal for the Probation Service will improve retention prospects of experienced staff, and provide – particularly those at the top of their pay bands and therefore less likely to have seen increases to pay over the past years – a guaranteed increase to their salaries each year of the pay deal.

We also anticipate that increases to the starting salary for all roles will have a positive impact on the attractiveness of the service to potential and new staff.

The Ministry of Justice is committed to offering apprenticeship programmes to new and existing staff at all grades. The apprenticeships are currently offered in a broad range of areas including Operational Delivery and Business Administration. The apprenticeships are also available to probation staff.

■ Secure Accommodation: Children and Young People

Steve Reed:

[\[74697\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the official statistics entitled Safety in the Children and Young People Secure Estate: Update to June 2022, published on 27 October 2022, for what reasons the annualised rate of self-harm incidents per 100 children and young people per year increased compared to the same period in the previous year.

Steve Reed:

[\[74699\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Annual self-harm incidents 1,2,3,4 by method, England and Wales, 2004-2021, how many self-harm incidents by (a) cutting and scratching, (b) hanging, (c) overdose, self-poisoning or swallowing, (d) Self-strangulation and (e) burning occurred in youth estates in (a) 2022 and (b) since 2010.

Damian Hinds:

The Government is committed to doing everything possible to ensure the safety of children and young people in custody.

Between the quarters ending June 2021 and June 2022, the number of self-harm incidents across the whole of the Children and Young People Secure Estate decreased from 473 to 455, and the number of children and young people self-harming also decreased, from 104 to 79. As the average population during this time fell by 11 per cent – from 550 children and young people to 492 – the annualised rate of self-harm incidents per 100 children and young people per year rose by 8 per cent. As the figures have only recently been compiled and published, it has not yet been possible to make an assessment of the reasons for the increase.

The requested statistics can be found in the table below:

METHOD(1)	JANUARY 2010 TO MARCH 2019(2)(A)	APRIL 2019 TO DECEMBER 2021(3)(B)	J ANUARY 2022 TO JUNE 2022(B)
Cutting and scratching	6,655	1,347	180
Hanging(4)	-	74	5
Overdose, self-poisoning or swallowing	465	260	69
Self-strangulation(5)	-	1,267	282
Burning(6)	-	42	5
Asphyxiation(7)	2,547	-	-

(1)A Self-Harm incident may have included more than one method, so the overall number of incidents will be less than the sum of the methods used.

(2) Reporting of Self-Harm incidents changed in April 2019 from the Behaviour Management Toolkit bespoke return from establishments, to the Assaults and Self-Harm bespoke return for Secure Children's Homes and Secure Training Centres, and NOMIS data capture for Youth Offender Institutes.

(3) Reporting of Self-Harm incidents changed in April 2019 from the Behaviour Management Toolkit bespoke return from establishments, to the Assaults and Self-Harm bespoke return for Secure Children's Homes and Secure Training Centres, and NOMIS data capture for Youth Offender Institutes.

(4) Until March 2019, Hanging and Self-Strangulation were grouped together as Asphyxiation.

(5) Until March 2019, Hanging and Self-Strangulation were grouped together as Asphyxiation.

(6) Until March 2019, Burning was not reported separately.

(7) From April 2019, Hanging and Self-Strangulation were reported separately.

We are rolling out psychological interventions for every child that needs it with counselling psychologists, forensic psychologist and family therapists.

We are also working with the NHS to deliver a framework which will ensure every child gets a full needs assessment and support plan encompassing education, health and behavioural problems. Both of these measures will help protect young people and reduce violence.

■ **Suicide: Veterans**

Mark Pritchard:

[\[72228\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make it his policy to require coroners to keep records of whether the deceased is a military veteran when recording a verdict of suicide.

Mike Freer:

The Government takes the welfare of Armed Forces veterans very seriously and we are committed to improving our understanding of the risk of suicide and its prevalence among veterans.

The Office of Veteran Affairs has been working with the Ministry of Defence and the Office for National Statistics to link and exploit administrative data held by the various organisations that will enable the tracking of veteran suicides without creating additional duties for coroners. This approach will ensure that the most complete picture of veteran suicides is available to coroners and the public. It is expected that the first annual statistics will be published in 2024.

There are currently no plans to require coroners to keep records of whether the deceased is an Armed Forces veteran when recording a conclusion of suicide. Where a coroner has been informed that the deceased person was a veteran and considers that information about veteran status is relevant to a suicide which is being

investigated, they can seek information from the Defence Inquests Unit in the Ministry of Defence. How a coroner uses any information received is for them to determine.

■ Video Recordings: Evidence

Ellie Reeves: [\[74849\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the take up of use of section 28 video evidence in rape trials in England and Wales.

Edward Argar:

The latest Criminal Justice System Delivery Data Dashboard, which the Government publishes quarterly, shows that 57 witnesses gave evidence via s.28 in a case with at least one adult rape offence between January and March 2022.

We are working with partners to ensure the rollout of Section 28 is a success and will continue to monitor the rollout of Section 28.

LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

■ Affordable Housing

Mr Toby Perkins: [\[72235\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will make a comparative assessment of what constitutes an affordable house in the regions of the UK.

Mr Toby Perkins: [\[72237\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what estimate he has made of the average price of an affordable home in England in each year since 2009.

Lucy Frazer:

The Regulator for Social Housing publishes relevant data on affordable housing held by Registered Providers and local authorities across England. This is available [here](#).

The department does not hold centrally the information requested on the average price of affordable homes.

■ Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks: Capital Investment

Tim Farron: [\[72973\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether his Department received expressions of interest for investment zones within the boundaries or setting of (a) national parks and (b) areas of outstanding natural beauty.

Lee Rowley:

We are assessing the proposals received through the recent Expression Of Interest process and policy will be announced in the usual way.

■ Capital Investment

Dan Jarvis:

[\[74687\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what the Government's plans are for Investment Zones; and if he will make a statement.

Luke Pollard:

[\[74902\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what the process is for assessing the potential merits of Investment Zones in South West of England.

Lee Rowley:

Policy announcements will be made in the usual way.

■ Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities: Email

Lisa Nandy:

[\[74656\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether (a) he, (b) his predecessor and (c) other Ministers in his Department have used personal email addresses to conduct Government business during the 2022-23 parliamentary Session.

Lee Rowley:

There is a place for the use of a variety of digital channels in fast moving modern environments. Ministers will have informal conversations from time to time, in person or remotely, and relevant content from such discussions is passed back to officials. They will also use a variety of digital communications channels for personal, political and Parliamentary matters.

■ Domestic Visits: Batley and Spen

Kim Leadbeater:

[\[72503\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to his contribution to HC Deb 2 February 2022, col 330, on Levelling Up, what progress his Department has made on setting up a visit for him to Batley and Spen constituency.

Dehenna Davison:

Ministers look forward to visiting the constituency of Batley and Spen when diary scheduling allows.

■ Homes for Ukraine Scheme: Wirral West

Margaret Greenwood:

[\[73029\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what estimate he has made of the number of Ukrainian refugees who have been granted a visa to live with a host in Wirral West constituency under (a) the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme, and (b) the Ukraine Family Scheme.

Margaret Greenwood: [\[73030\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps he is taking to help sponsors under the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme with the rising cost of living.

Margaret Greenwood: [\[73031\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what estimate he has made of the proportion of Ukrainian refugees who were granted a visa to live with a host in Wirral West constituency under (a) the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme and (b) the Ukraine Family Scheme who are homeless: and what steps his Department is taking to ensure that refugees do not face homelessness in the future.

Felicity Buchan:

Up to date data on arrivals through the Homes for Ukraine Scheme can be accessed [here](#).

Details on funding for the scheme are available [here](#) . We are continuing to work with local authorities and sponsors to support them with their hosting arrangements.

■ **Housing: Older People**

Bob Blackman: [\[72976\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities, what steps his Department is taking with the Secretary of State for Health and Social care to increase the supply of (a) older people's housing and (b) housing with care.

Lucy Frazer:

Ensuring older people have access to the right homes that suit their needs can help them to live independently for longer and feel more connected to their communities. The Government is committed to improving the diversity of housing options available to older people and boosting the supply of specialist elderly accommodation, including housing with care.

My department works closely with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC).

DHSC's Adult Social Care Reform White Paper reiterated the Government's commitment to the important role of supported housing. In February 2022, the Levelling Up White Paper announced a taskforce on older people's housing to explore how we can improve the choice of and access to housing options for older people.

■ **Housing: Standards**

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[72428\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what progress the Government has made on its commitment to review the Decent Homes Standard.

Felicity Buchan:

The government recently consulted on the introduction and enforcement of the Decent Homes Standard in the private rented sector. The consultation closed on October 14th and decisions will be announced in the usual way.

Housing: Workington**Mark Jenkinson:**[\[74920\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps he will take to ensure that new GP and school places are delivered ahead of people moving into new housing developments in Workington.

Lucy Frazer:

The provision of the right infrastructure at the right time is very important to new and existing communities.

To this end, the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill provides powers to introduce an Infrastructure Levy largely to replace the complex and discretionary Section 106 regime and the Community Infrastructure Levy. The new Levy will be a mandatory, non-negotiable charge, set and collected locally. It will give a greater say to local councils on what their infrastructure priorities are and give greater transparency to local people about how funds will be spent.

Local authorities will be able to borrow against their infrastructure levy receipts to ensure that infrastructure is provided when it is needed.

To strengthen infrastructure delivery further, the Bill introduces a requirement for local authorities to prepare infrastructure delivery strategies. These will set out a strategy for delivering local infrastructure, including education and GP surgeries, and spending infrastructure levy proceeds.

Local Government Finance**Sarah Owen:**[\[73901\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the financial stability of local authorities in (a) England and (b) Wales.

Sarah Owen:[\[73902\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether his Department plans to provide additional support to local authorities to help cover the increase in inflation and rising energy costs.

Sarah Owen:[\[73903\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what information his Department holds on the number of warm banks and warm spaces opened by local authorities for use during winter 2022-23; and if he will make an estimate of the average cost of running those spaces by local authority.

Lee Rowley:

The Local Government Finance Settlement makes available substantial funding in 2022/23 for local government in England. In addition, the Energy Bill Relief Scheme is providing a discount on energy prices this winter for local authorities whose bills have been significantly inflated by the global energy crisis.

We know that inflation forecasts are higher than they were at the Spending Review. We are working closely with councils and their representatives, as we always do, to monitor the impact on service delivery and budgets.

Local authorities in Wales are in the first instance a matter for the Welsh Government.

The department does not hold the information requested on warm banks and warm spaces.

Rachael Maskell: [\[74758\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of local authority budgets for helping to tackle poverty in their communities during winter 2022.

Rachael Maskell: [\[74759\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what fiscal steps he will take to ensure that local authorities can meet their (a) food, (b) heating and (c) housing needs in winter 2022-23.

Lee Rowley:

The Local Government Finance Settlement makes available substantial taxpayer subsidy in 2022/23 for local government in England. The funding we have made available is the largest cash-terms increase in grant funding provided through the settlement in the past 10 years.

The Energy Bill Relief Scheme is providing a discount on energy prices this winter for local authorities whose bills have been significantly inflated by the global energy crisis.

■ Park Homes: Fees and Charges**Sir Peter Bottomley:** [\[72908\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what estimate he has made of the annual costs to park home residents of pitch fees since 2010; what estimate he has made of the those levels if increases were linked to CPI instead of RPI; and if he will make a statement.

Felicity Buchan:

The data requested is not held centrally.

■ Private Rented Housing

Caroline Lucas: [\[72234\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, pursuant to the Answer of 24 October to Question 65688 on Private Rented Housing, what his indicative timescales are for the introduction of the proposed renters reform legislation.

Felicity Buchan:

Legislation will be announced in the usual way.

■ Private Rented Housing: Evictions

Rachael Maskell: [\[71138\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, when he plans to introduce measures to prevent landlords evicting their tenants for no fault under Section 21 of the Housing Act 1998.

Felicity Buchan:

Announcements will be made in the usual way.

Mike Amesbury: [\[73127\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential implications for his policies of the level of use of Section 21 notices by landlords and letting agents as part of routine letting contract renewals.

Felicity Buchan:

The department routinely considers the implications of its policies as they are developed. Legislation will be announced in the usual way.

■ Rented Housing

Rachael Maskell: [\[71139\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will take steps to address the fall of availability in rental properties in areas of England.

Felicity Buchan:

We are delivering more affordable homes through our 2021-26 Affordable Homes Programme. Future policy announcements will be made in the usual way.

■ Rents

Mr Ben Bradshaw: [\[72192\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, when the Government will announce the outcome of its consultation on capping rent rises.

Felicity Buchan:

The consultation on social housing rents closed on 12 October 2022. We will respond in due course, including with any policy announcements.

■ Social Rented Housing

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[72420\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps his Department is taking to ensure a greater proportion of social and affordable housing is built.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[72425\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what recent steps his Department has taken to work with local authorities on reducing waiting lists for social housing.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[72426\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what recent assessment he has made of the availability of social housing to meet current social housing requirements in (a) Slough and (b) the UK.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[72427\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps he is taking to help support (a) councils and (b) housing associations to meet social housing requirements.

Lucy Frazer:

Since 2010, more than 598,900 affordable homes have been delivered, including 157,200 for social rent. In 2020-21, 38 new Affordable Homes were provided in Slough, all of which were Affordable Rent. The Department only holds relevant data for England.

In 2012 we abolished open waiting lists and gave local authorities the power to manage their own waiting lists. This is because local authorities are best placed to develop solutions which make best use of local social homes.

■ Temporary Accommodation: Children

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[72429\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the data on the average time households with children spend in temporary accommodation in the official statistical release entitled Statutory Homelessness Annual Report 2021-22, England, published on 22 September 2022.

Felicity Buchan:

This Government is committed to reducing the need for temporary accommodation. Local authorities have received £316 million through the Homelessness Prevention Grant in 2022-23, part of the significant funding we are investing to tackle Homelessness and Rough Sleeping.

PRIME MINISTER**■ Independent Adviser on Ministers' Interests: Public Appointments****Angela Rayner:**[\[74702\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, whether he plans to advertise a vacancy for the role of independent adviser on Ministers' interests.

Rishi Sunak:

I have committed to appointing an Independent Adviser. Further details will be announced in due course.

SPEAKER'S COMMITTEE FOR THE INDEPENDENT PARLIAMENTARY STANDARDS AUTHORITY**■ Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority****John Spellar:**[\[72197\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for Broxbourne, representing the Speaker's Committee for the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, pursuant to his answer of 24 October to Question 6697 on Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, what the average daily attendance of staff at IPSA London Office was in each of the last 12 months.

Sir Charles Walker:

Average attendance at the London office has been monitored carefully by IPSA and is calculated by working days in the calendar month (and is only based on current office-based staffing numbers (66)). This does not, however, include a number of IPSA people based on home-base contracts who make regular journeys into the office, particularly when based a short distance from the London region. It should be noted at the outset too that the discovery and surge of the Omicron variant, which necessitated public health advice to work from home, will have had an impact on the data from at least last Autumn 2021 to Spring 2022. For nearly the entire time period requested in the question, a significant number of desks were unavailable for use in the IPSA office to maintain appropriate social distancing in the context of IPSA's office layout. As only 32 of the possible 81 desks were available for use from 201 to the end of September 2022, this further materially reduced capacity within and attendance at the office. Noting the desks available and the number of staff available on office-based contracts, the general figures are below:

- October 2021: 9% (This should be read as the average office-based contract employee spending 9% of their working month in the office in October 2021 and so on for the following months). This constituted 18% of available desks.
- November 2021: 9%. This constituted 20% of available desks.
- December 2021: 7%. This constituted 15% of available desks.
- January 2022: 5%. This constituted 9% of available desks.

- February 2022: 8%. This constituted 17% of available desks.
- March 2022: 7%. This constituted 14% of available desks.
- April 2022: 8%. This constituted 16% of available desks.
- May 2022: 8%. This constituted 16% of available desks.
- June 2022: 6%. This constituted 13% of available desks.
- July 2022: 7%. This constituted 14% of available desks.
- August 2022: 6%. This constituted 13% of available desks.
- September 2022: 7%. This constituted 14% of available desks.
- October 2022: now that all the desks are available for use, the desk booking system upon which the data above is based is no longer operative, so this figure cannot be produced.

Like many organisations in the public sector, IPSA recognised many benefits for its people and performance in continuing with a hybrid approach to work despite a lifting of formal coronavirus restrictions and other government public health advice. IPSA functions, such as payroll accuracy and the speed of reimbursement, have not been adversely impacted by such a model, and IPSA has instead been able to build a more inclusive and diverse workforce based across the U.K. by bringing forward plans to create a more representative, hybrid, and flexible organisation to reflect the nations, regions and constituencies MPs serve. The geographical spread of IPSA staff, new hybrid approach to working, and importance of value for money for the public purse will be central considerations for IPSA when it explores the locations and size of any office premises (in London or elsewhere) which it may require in future to continue to discharge its statutory duties efficiently, cost-effectively, and transparently.

TRANSPORT

■ A483

Helen Morgan:

[\[69900\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans are in place to reduce traffic and improve safety on the A483 road on the Wales-Shropshire border.

Mr Richard Holden:

In developing its interim Route Strategies that will help shape the third Road Investment Strategy, National Highways has worked closely with interested parties to gather information on the current performance of the A483. This work will assist in the identification of areas for further investigation. Safety is one of the top priorities for the Department and National Highways when producing these strategies.

The Wales – Shropshire border section of the A483 will be considered principally within the Midlands and Gloucestershire to Wales strategy, which is due to be published later this year

■ **Avanti West Coast: Cleaning Services**

Navendu Mishra:

[\[74958\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of the impact of inflation on cleaners employed by Atalian Servest on Avanti West Coast services.

Huw Merriman:

Given neither the Department nor Avanti West Coast has a direct contractual relationship with Atalian Servest for cleaning services, no assessment has been made on the impact of inflation on cleaners employed by Atalian Servest.

■ **Avanti West Coast: Stockport**

Navendu Mishra:

[\[74957\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the effect of reductions in Avanti West Coast services on the economy of Stockport.

Huw Merriman:

The Department recognises the importance of a high performing railway in contributing to growth and local economies. Avanti West Coast (AWC) temporarily reduced its overall timetable to ensure a more stable and reliable service for passengers. AWC plans to reinstate its full timetable between London and Manchester in December. Crucially, this uplift in services is not dependent on driver rest day working.

■ **Department for Transport: Email**

Louise Haigh:

[\[74781\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether Ministers in his Department have forwarded emails from their Departmental account to a private email account in the last five years.

Mr Richard Holden:

There is a place for the use of a variety of digital channels in fast moving modern environments. Ministers will have informal conversations from time to time, in person or remotely, and relevant content from such discussions is passed back to officials. They will also use a variety of digital communications channels for personal, political and Parliamentary matters.

■ Doncaster Sheffield Airport**Dan Jarvis:** [\[74688\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many Ministerial meetings have taken place with Peel Group and/or their representatives regarding Doncaster Sheffield Airport since January 2022.

Jesse Norman:

The Government is incredibly disappointed that Peel Group has announced the closure of Doncaster Sheffield Airport.

The Government has engaged with local stakeholders throughout the period of the review and since Peel Group announced its decision to close the airport. This has included several ministerial meetings since the end of July, including four meetings with Peel Group, as well as some with the Mayor of South Yorkshire and Mayor of Doncaster City Council, and with Members from both the House of Commons and House of Lords.

Officials from the Department for Transport have also been in regular contact with all interested parties, including weekly discussions with representatives from Peel Group, the South Yorkshire Combined Authority and Doncaster City Council.

The Government remains engaged with all parties we will continue to encourage local leaders and Peel Group to work together and find a solution for the site which will benefit local people and the region's economy.

■ First TransPennine Express: Crew**Louise Haigh:** [\[74779\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the rail contract between the Secretary of State and First Trans Pennine Express Limited and predecessor contracts, how many drivers have (a) been recruited by and (b) left the employment of that company in each year from 2015 to date.

Huw Merriman:

The Department does not hold this information; it is an operational matter for TransPennine Express.

Louise Haigh: [\[74780\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the rail contract between the Secretary of State and First Trans Pennine Express Limited and predecessor contracts, how many FTE drivers needed to work rest days in order to fulfil the service level requirements within the prevailing timetable in each year from 2015 to date.

Huw Merriman:

The number of rest days worked is determined by the circumstances prevailing at any particular time and the number of drivers who make themselves available, with operators including a mix of cover for services, if required, and training provision.

■ Great British Railways

Louise Haigh:

[\[74778\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much his Department has spent on recruitment, employment and all other costs associated with the establishment of Great British Railways to date.

Huw Merriman:

The Rail Transformation Programme has been established to address the challenges set out in the Plan for Rail White Paper, including the establishment of a guiding mind to tackle the fragmentation and unclear accountabilities across the rail sector. The programme does not monitor on an aggregated basis time spent on each individual work stream.

■ Large Goods Vehicles

Jeff Smith:

[\[72313\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the answer of 25 October 2022 to Question 67938 on Large Goods Vehicles, how many operators have registered since the legislation underpinning the dual registration measure came into force.

Mr Richard Holden:

As previously set out in response to Question 67938, dual registration allows eligible operators to transfer their vehicles between their two operator licences without needing to change vehicles mid-tour.

I can confirm that six operators have registered to use dual registration since it came into force in July 2022.

■ Narborough Railway Station: Tickets

Alberto Costa:

[\[73854\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of installing a self-service ticket machine at Narborough Railway Station.

Huw Merriman:

Decisions on installation of self-service ticket machines at stations are for the relevant train operating company to make. East Midlands Railways is the train operating company responsible for Narborough Railway Station. The department has therefore not made an assessment of installing self-service ticket machines at Narborough Station.

■ Railway Stations: Tickets

Alberto Costa:

[\[73853\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to ensure ticket offices are available at rural railway stations.

Huw Merriman:

We want to move staff out from behind the ticket office window to more visible roles across stations to provide more face-to-face help and assistance to passengers. This would create an opportunity to position staff to provide support where passengers need them the most, on the gateline or platform, whilst still allowing them to help passengers with purchasing tickets when needed. Any potential changes to the opening hours of ticket offices would be led by the train operating company and would need to follow the process set out in the Ticketing and Settlement Agreement.

■ Railways: Timetables**Louise Haigh:**[\[74777\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many changes to the rail timetable are planned in December 2022.

Huw Merriman:

Train operating companies will use the December 2022 to make some significant changes to the national timetable to improve the service passengers receive. For example, Avanti West Coast is planning to restore more services, South Eastern is changing its timetable to improve efficiency and make it more adaptable to changes in demand, and timetables across Manchester and Birmingham are changing to improve performance.

These changes are intended to improve performance for passengers and provide services that respond to current passenger demand, and suit the needs of local communities.

■ Road Traffic: Noise**Luke Pollard:**[\[74903\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, in which constituencies the successful applicants to his Department's pilot for noise cameras are located.

Luke Pollard:[\[74904\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many areas submitted a letter of interest for participation in his Department's trials of noise cameras.

Mr Richard Holden:

73 letters of interest were received for participation in the Department's roadside trials of noise camera technology. From these applications, four sites in Keighley, Kingswood, Great Yarmouth and Bromsgrove were selected to host the trials.

Successful applicants were chosen based on a sufficiently wide range of road types to test the noise camera technology.

■ Roads: Safety

Janet Daby:

[\[73893\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he plans to publish guidance for local authorities relating to School Streets.

Jesse Norman:

The Department is working with stakeholders to develop guidance to support local authorities that wish to introduce School Streets schemes. We aim to publish the guidance early next year.

TREASURY

■ Central Bank Digital Currencies

Emily Thornberry:

[\[74595\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much money from the public purse his Department has spent on (a) staff activity, (b) IT costs, (c) external consultants and (d) stakeholder engagement, related to the proposed creation of a Central Bank Digital Currency, from the start of financial year 2021-22 up to the end of October 2022.

Andrew Griffith:

The UK, like many other countries globally, is actively exploring the potential role of CBDCs. HM Treasury is exploring a CBDC as part of its wider ongoing work on FinTech and the future of payments.

The government and the Bank of England have not yet made a decision on whether to introduce a CBDC in the UK.

On 9 November 2021, the government published a written statement setting out its future timelines for this work, including an upcoming joint consultation from HM Treasury and the Bank of England setting out their assessment of the case for a UK CBDC.

■ Disability: Children

Wendy Chamberlain:

[\[74927\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department made of the impact of the measures in the fiscal announcement made on (a) 23 September; and (b) 17 October on families with disabled children.

Wendy Chamberlain:

[\[74928\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what impact the fiscal announcements made on (a) 23 September and (b) 17 October 2022 will have on families on benefits with disabled children.

John Glen:

The Treasury carefully considers the equality impacts of the individual measures announced at fiscal events on those with protected characteristics, including gender,

race and disability – in line with both its legal obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and with its strong commitment to equality issues. As part of these legal obligations, the Treasury considers equalities impacts and has due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination under the Act, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups.

The Government understands that families across the UK, especially those with children who are suffering from long-term health conditions and disabilities, are worried about the rising cost of living. That is why the Government is taking decisive action to help families get through this winter, while ensuring we act in a fiscally responsible way.

Recipients of extra-costs disability benefits, including children in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) received a one-off Disability Cost of Living Payment of £150 from 20th September, to help with the rising cost of living. The DWP (Department for Work & Pensions) has already processed around 6 million such payments. A one-off £650 Cost of Living Payment is also being delivered to households in receipt of means-tested benefits.

We are continuing to keep the situation under review and are focusing support on the most vulnerable whilst ensuring we act in a fiscally responsible way.

■ Energy: Prices

Beth Winter:

[\[73912\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the impact of (a) share buybacks and (b) dividend payments in each of the (i) extraction, (ii) generation, (iii) transmission and (iv) supply stages of the energy sector on the household cost of energy.

Andrew Griffith:

Dividends and buybacks are commercial decisions for companies and the government has not made these specific assessments. However, the government understands that many households are facing higher energy costs due to multiple factors, not least Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine. The government is taking a range of actions to support households.

The Energy Price Guarantee (EPG) caps the unit price households pay for electricity and gas, meaning that the typical household will pay bills equivalent to no more than £2500 a year this winter. This is in addition to the Energy Bills Support Scheme (EBSS) which provides all households with £400 over this winter. In addition, further support announced earlier this year includes providing £1200 of support to low-income households through the £400 Energy Bills Support Scheme, a Council Tax rebate of £150, and a one-off payment of £650 to those in receipt of means tested benefits. Those on non-means tested disability benefits received a one-off Disability Cost of Living Payment of £150 from September 2022, and over 8 million pensioner households will receive a one-off Pensioner Cost of Living Payment of £300 this year. For households that are not eligible for one-off Cost of Living Payments or for families

that need additional support, the government has provided £1.5bn total funding for the Household Support Fund and extended the fund's end date from October 2022 to March 2023.

The government also introduced the Energy Profits Levy from 26 May in response to sharp increases in oil and gas prices over the past year and to help fund cost of living support for UK households. The levy is an additional 25% surcharge on UK oil and gas profits, taking the combined headline tax rate for oil and gas companies operating in the UK and on the UK Continental Shelf to 65%, more than triple the rate paid by other businesses. The Government has calculated that it expects the levy to raise over £7 billion in 2022/23 based on forecast oil and gas prices.

■ Energy: Taxation

Beth Winter:

[\[73910\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the impact on tax revenues to the Exchequer of the Relief for investment expenditure measures in the Energy (Oil and Gas) Profits Levy Act 2022 since it came into force.

Beth Winter:

[\[73911\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential impact on tax revenues to the Exchequer in future North Sea profits reporting periods, until 31 December 2025, of the Relief for investment expenditure measures in the Energy (Oil and Gas) Profits Levy Act.

Victoria Atkins:

The Energy Profits Levy (EPL) was introduced from 26 May, in response to sharp increases in oil and gas prices and to help fund cost of living support for UK households. It is an additional 25 per cent surcharge on UK oil and gas profits on top of the existing 40 per cent headline rate of tax, taking the combined rate of tax on profits to 65 per cent, more than triple the rate paid by other businesses.

The Government has been clear that it wants to see the oil and gas sector reinvest their profits in North Sea oil and gas to support the economy, jobs, and the UK's energy security. That is why, within the EPL, a new 'super-deduction' style relief has been introduced to encourage firms to invest in oil and gas extraction in the UK. The new 80 per cent investment allowance means businesses get an overall 91p tax saving for every £1 they invest.

The Government has calculated that it expects the EPL to raise over £7 billion in 2022-23, and around £28 billion over the period to 2025-26. This is based on forecast oil and gas prices and is inclusive of the impact of investment expenditure relief.

■ Food Banks

Steve McCabe:

[\[74506\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department will take to support food banks in the event that donations decrease as a result of increases to the cost of living.

John Glen:

Foodbanks are independent, charitable organisations and HM Government does not have any role in their operation.

However, the Government understands that people across the UK are worried about the cost of living, including the rising cost of food. That is why the Government has provided £1.5 billion since October 2021 to enable the creation and extension of the Household Support Fund in England, which will be in place until the end of March 2023. The Fund continues to support vulnerable households with the cost of food, energy and other essentials, and some Local Authorities have used their allocations to support food banks.

The Household Support Fund is only one part of the Government's £37 billion package of support for the cost of living this financial year.

This is in addition to over £200 million per year invested by the Government in the Holiday Activities and Food programme, which provides healthy food and enriching activities for children from low-income families in England during the school holidays. Over £1 billion is also spent annually on delivering free meals to pupils in schools.

■ Multiple Sclerosis: Carers

Dr Rupa Huq:

[\[73880\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of providing a targeted financial support package for (a) people living with multiple sclerosis and (b) their carers.

John Glen:

The Government understands that people across the UK and especially the most vulnerable members of society, such as those suffering from long-term health conditions and their carers, are worried about the rising cost of living. That is why the Government is taking decisive action to get households through this winter, while ensuring we act in a fiscally responsible way.

If individuals have extra-costs arising from multiple sclerosis, then they may qualify for disability benefits such as Personal Independence Payments (PIP). People in receipt of extra-costs disability benefits such as PIP, Attendance Allowance or Disability Living Allowance (DLA) will receive a one-off Disability Cost of Living Payment of £150 from 20th September, to help disabled people with the rising cost of living. The DWP has already processed around 6 million such payments. Carers will also benefit from this payment if they live in the same household as the person for whom they care.

A one-off £650 Cost of Living Payment is also being delivered to those on means-tested benefits. Individuals who have limited ability to work because of their health condition, and are in receipt of means-tested benefits such as income-related Employment and Support Allowance or the Universal Credit Health top up, are eligible for this support. Carers with low incomes and in receipt of qualifying benefits such as Universal Credit will also benefit from this Cost of Living Payment.

Those living with a long-term health condition such as multiple sclerosis, and their carers, can also benefit from other forms of non-means-tested support which the Government is providing to assist with household energy bills. We have taken decisive action to support millions of households with rising energy costs this winter through the Energy Price Guarantee. In addition to the Energy Price Guarantee, millions of the most vulnerable households will receive further support this year through the £400 Energy Bills Support Scheme. The £150 Council Tax rebate will also mean that all households in Council Tax bands A-D will receive a rebate, and 99% of eligible households have already received this. Lastly, to support households who need further help or who are not eligible for elements of the wider package of support, the Government is also providing an extra £500 million of local support to help with the cost of essentials until the end of March 2023, via the Household Support Fund.

We are continuing to keep the situation under review and are focusing support on the most vulnerable whilst ensuring we act in a fiscally responsible way.

■ Public Sector Debt

Stephen Farry:

[\[72487\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment he has made of the impact of rising (a) inflation and (b) refinancing costs on the cost of servicing Government debt.

John Glen:

Inflation has a range of impacts on the public finances and previous OBR forecasts have shown how inflation can increase spending on welfare and debt interest, as well as tax revenues. With respect to debt interest, the most recent OBR forecast in March projected that government spending on debt interest would reach £83.0 billion in 2022-23. The OBR also publish a 'ready reckoner' to estimate the effect of changes in economic determinants, such as inflation and gilt rates. This shows the estimated change in debt interest costs from a 1 percentage point increase in inflation and gilt rates throughout the forecast.

■ Research and Development Expenditure Credit

Chi Onwurah:

[\[74671\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if his Department will conduct a review of the (a) eligibility criteria and (b) claims process for R&D tax relief, in response to ONS evidence, published 29 September, showing a high incidence of fraud and error.

Victoria Atkins:

The recent ONS Business Expenditure on Research and Development (BERD) publication did not provide new evidence on R&D tax relief error and fraud, but it did show that ONS estimates of UK R&D and, the amounts of expenditure for which R&D tax credits are claimed, are closer than previous estimates thought. The current estimate of error and fraud in the SME R&D scheme is higher than the 2020-21 estimate, reflecting improvements in HMRC's risk identification process. As part of an ongoing series of reforms to tackle abuse and better target the relief, in November 2021 HMRC announced a series of new compliance measures that will be implemented from April 2023. These include improvements to the claims process, which will require additional information from claimants, and the establishment of an anti-abuse unit.

■ Research and Development Tax Credit**Chi Onwurah:**[\[74669\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to ONS R&D Tax Credit Data, published on 29 September 2022, for what reason there has been a £469 million R&D tax credit error and fraud in the financial year 2021-22; and what steps he is taking to prevent fraudulent claims of R&D tax credits.

Victoria Atkins:

The current HMRC estimate of error & fraud (E&F) in Research and Development (R&D) tax reliefs is £469 million. This is 4.9 per cent of the £9.5 billion R&D expenditure in the 2021-22 Resource Accounts. The level of E&F for the Small and Medium Enterprises scheme was 7.3 per cent and the level for the R&D expenditure credit scheme was 1.1 per cent. The rate is higher than the 2020-21 estimate (3.6 per cent) and reflects improvements in HMRC's risk identification process.

In response to the R&D review announced at Spring Budget 2021, Government announced a package of measures at Autumn Budget and Tax Administration & Maintenance Day 2021 to target abuse and improve compliance. These include improvements to the claims process, which will require additional information from claimants. Operationally, HMRC also deployed more resource to undertake compliance checks and improved data-led risking processes.

By acting quickly to pause payments and implement additional checks on claims, HMRC have protected £46 million of public money. HMRC have also arrested 8 people suspected of conspiring to submit over 100 fraudulent R&D relief claims.

The formation of an Anti-Abuse unit has been accelerated in advance of an April 2023 commitment to further strengthen our tackling of R&D fraud.

Chi Onwurah:[\[74672\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many claims for R&D Tax Credits were investigated for suspected fraud or error in each of the last five financial years; and what proportion of those claims were found to be fraudulent.

Victoria Atkins:

HMRC does not disclose the information requested. This information may influence or assist those considering, or intent on, not paying the right amount of tax at the right time and that is not in the public interest.

Research and Development Tax Credit: Hospitality Industry

Chi Onwurah: [\[74674\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the ONS R&D Tax Credit Data, published 29 September 2022, what proportion of R&D tax credit claims were made up by (a) pubs and (b) restaurants; and what the total amount lost to error and fraud in pub and restaurant claims was.

Victoria Atkins:

Information relating specifically to Research and Development (R&D) tax credit claims for pubs and restaurants is not available, the closest available data is within the R&D Tax Credit statistics which are published online. Pubs and restaurants fall within the broad industry sector 'Accommodation and Food Services Activities'. In 2020-21, the provisional published uplifted estimate for the number of Accommodation and Food Services tax credit claims was 810. Information on the total cost of error and fraud in claims made by pubs and restaurants is not available.

Royal Mint: Non-fungible Tokens

Emily Thornberry: [\[74594\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what quantity of Non Fungible Tokens for Britain designed by the Royal Mint his Department plans to purchase; and how much funding from the public money has been allocated for financial years (a) 2022-23 and (b) 2023-24 to pay for those purchases.

Andrew Griffith:

The Government announced in April 2022 that the Royal Mint intended to create and issue a non-fungible token. The Royal Mint operates as a commercial business, and a non-fungible token would be a collectable digital artwork marketed to consumers as an extension of its existing collectables range. No public funding has been allocated to purchase this product. An update on this work will be provided in due course.

Tax Allowances: Attendance Allowance

Seema Malhotra: [\[72283\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment his office has made of the potential merits of extending eligibility for free vehicle tax to recipients of Attendance Allowance.

James Cartlidge:

The Government is absolutely committed to supporting disabled people and is determined that support should be focused on people who need it most. The aim of existing Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) exemptions for recipients of some disability

benefits is to provide additional help for people who become disabled early, or relatively early, in life and as a result experience economic disadvantage. These allowances are therefore only available to people who become disabled before State Pension age.

For individuals who develop a disability after State Pension age, Attendance Allowance (AA) is a non-means-tested benefit which provides targeted help with the extra costs of disability and helps them maintain their independence. Unlike Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payment, AA does not have a mobility component and is intended to cover the need for care or supervision an individual requires as a result of their disability rather than specific mobility needs. Individuals can however choose to use their AA to fund mobility aids.

As with all taxes, VED remains under review and any changes are considered by the Chancellor as part of the tax policy making cycle and Budget process.

■ Tax Rates and Bands

Sarah Olney: [\[74829\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he plans to raise the rates of (a) income tax, (b) national insurance and (c) VAT.

Victoria Atkins:

The Government is committed to fiscal stability and credibility, ensuring sustainable public finances underpin economic growth.

The Government keeps all taxes under review, and any tax reforms will be announced at the Autumn Statement on the 17 November.

■ Treasury: ICT

Rachel Reeves: [\[74636\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will provide details of any government business he has conducted from his own personal devices or accounts.

James Cartlidge:

The Cabinet Office has published guidance to departments on the use of private email that covers how information is held for the purposes of access to information, and how formal decisions are recorded for the official record. This guidance is being updated to reflect changes in technology and ways of working and will be published by the Cabinet Office in due course.

It is Government policy not to comment on individual Ministers' security arrangements. Ministers receive support and expert advice to help them meet their obligations in the most appropriate and secure fashion. That includes regular security briefings for Ministers, and advice on protecting their personal data and mitigating cyber threats.

■ Treasury: Mobile Phones

Rachel Reeves:

[\[74635\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what procedures are in place to prevent the use of personal mobile phones for government business in his Department.

James Cartlidge:

There is a place for the use of a variety of digital channels in fast moving modern environments. Ministers will have informal conversations from time to time, in person or remotely, and relevant content from such discussions is passed back to officials. They will also use a variety of digital communications channels for personal, political and Parliamentary matters.

■ Treasury: Security

Rachel Reeves:

[\[74637\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has been made aware of any security breaches in his Department relating to Ministers in his Department during his time in post.

James Cartlidge:

It is a long-established practice of the Treasury not to comment either on whether a security breach has been identified, or any subsequent outcome.

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

■ Conversion Therapy

Julian Sturdy:

[\[65721\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, if she will make it her policy to ban conversion therapy for trans and non-binary people.

Alicia Kearns:

[\[69817\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what recent progress the Government has made on bringing forward legislative proposals to ban conversion therapy; and what his timetable is for the publication of the Government response to the consultation entitled Banning conversion therapy which closed in February 2022.

Stuart Andrew:

We will give careful consideration to our public consultation on the issue and respond in due course. In the meantime, we have launched a support service open to all victims or those at risk of conversion practices regardless of their background or circumstances.

Mr Ben Bradshaw:

[\[74493\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what work has been undertaken by her Department on transgender conversion practices since the Government set out its plans on this topic in its background briefing to the Queen's Speech in May 2022.

Michael Fabricant: [\[74504\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what work has been undertaken by her Department on transgender conversion practices since the Government set out its plans on this topic in its background briefing to the Queen's Speech in May 2022.

Vicky Foxcroft: [\[74794\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what work has been undertaken by her Department on transgender conversion practices since the Government set out its plans on this topic in its background briefing to the Queen's Speech in May 2022.

Dan Carden: [\[74865\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what work has been undertaken by her Department on transgender conversion practices since the Government set out its plans on this topic in its background briefing to the Queen's Speech in May 2022.

Stephen Morgan: [\[74877\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what work has been undertaken by her Department on transgender conversion practices since the Government set out its plans on this topic in its background briefing to the Queen's Speech in May 2022.

Layla Moran: [\[74884\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what work has been undertaken by her Department on transgender conversion practices since the Government set out its plans on this topic in its background briefing to the Queen's Speech in May 2022.

Charlotte Nichols: [\[74945\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what work has been undertaken by her Department on transgender conversion practices since the Government set out its plans on this topic in its background briefing to the Queen's Speech in May 2022.

Kim Johnson: [\[74965\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what work has been undertaken by her Department on transgender conversion practices since the Government set out its plans on this topic in its background briefing to the Queen's Speech in May 2022.

Stuart Andrew:

Since May 2022, the Government has launched a support service open to all victims or those at risk of conversion practices regardless of their background or circumstances. The Government has committed up to £360,000 over three years to this service. The service includes a helpline, instant messaging service, and website to enable people to get the support they need.

More widely, the Government remains committed to protecting everyone from these practices. We are carefully considering the responses to the public consultation which closed earlier this year and will respond in due course.

Mr Ben Bradshaw:

[\[74494\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, whether her Department has consulted (a) NHS England, (b) NHS Wales, (c) the Royal College of GPs, (d) the Royal College of Psychiatrists, (e) the British Psychological Society and (f) the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy as part of its work to explore the issue of transgender conversion practices further.

Mr Ben Bradshaw:

[\[74495\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, which accredited medical, counselling or psychological organisations support the Government's plan to exclude transgender people from a ban on conversion practices.

Michael Fabricant:

[\[74505\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, whether her Department has consulted (a) NHS England, (b) NHS Wales, (c) the Royal College of GPs, (d) the Royal College of Psychiatrists, (e) the British Psychological Society and (f) the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy as part of its work to explore the issue of transgender conversion practices further.

Dan Carden:

[\[74866\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, whether her Department has consulted (a) NHS England, (b) NHS Wales, (c) the Royal College of GPs, (d) the Royal College of Psychiatrists, (e) the British Psychological Society and (f) the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy as part of its work to explore the issue of transgender conversion practices further.

Dan Carden:

[\[74867\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, which accredited medical, counselling or psychological organisations support the Government's plan to exclude transgender people from a ban on conversion practices.

Stephen Morgan:

[\[74878\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, whether her Department has consulted (a) NHS England, (b) NHS Wales, (c) the Royal College of GPs, (d) the Royal College of Psychiatrists, (e) the British Psychological Society and (f) the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy as part of its work to explore the issue of transgender conversion practices further.

Stephen Morgan:

[\[74879\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, which accredited medical, counselling or psychological organisations support the Government's plan to exclude transgender people from a ban on conversion practices.

Layla Moran:

[\[74885\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, whether her Department has consulted (a) NHS England, (b) NHS Wales, (c) the Royal College of GPs, (d) the Royal College of

Psychiatrists, (e) the British Psychological Society and (f) the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy as part of its work to explore the issue of transgender conversion practices further.

Layla Moran: [\[74886\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, which accredited medical, counselling or psychological organisations support the Government's plan to exclude transgender people from a ban on conversion practices.

Charlotte Nichols: [\[74946\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, whether her Department has consulted (a) NHS England, (b) NHS Wales, (c) the Royal College of GPs, (d) the Royal College of Psychiatrists, (e) the British Psychological Society and (f) the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy as part of its work to explore the issue of transgender conversion practices further.

Charlotte Nichols: [\[74947\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, which accredited medical, counselling or psychological organisations support the Government's plan to not include transgender people in a ban on conversion practices.

Kim Johnson: [\[74966\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, whether her Department has consulted (a) NHS England, (b) NHS Wales, (c) the Royal College of GPs, (d) the Royal College of Psychiatrists, (e) the British Psychological Society and (f) the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy as part of its work to explore the issue of transgender conversion practices further.

Kim Johnson: [\[74967\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, which accredited medical, counselling or psychological organisations support the Government's plan to exclude transgender people from a ban on conversion practices.

Stuart Andrew:

The Equality Hub Ministers and officials have met with healthcare professionals in developing the policy approach to protecting all individuals from conversion practices. Many such organisations responded to the public consultation that closed in February 2022.

We will continue to meet with healthcare professionals to inform our approach and will respond to the consultation in due course.

Mr Ben Bradshaw: [\[74496\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what discussions she has had with her counterparts and legislators in (a) Malta, (b) France, (c) Canada, (d) New Zealand, (e) Greece and the relevant regional or state governments of the (i) US, (ii) Spain and (iii)

Australia on their legislation on banning conversion practices and their protection of transgender people.

Michael Fabricant: [\[74501\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what discussions she has had with her counterparts and legislators in (a) Malta, (b) France, (c) Canada, (d) New Zealand, (e) Greece and the relevant regional or state governments of the (i) US, (ii) Spain and (iii) Australia on their legislation on banning conversion practices and their protection of transgender people.

Vicky Foxcroft: [\[74795\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what discussions she has had with her counterparts and legislators in (a) Malta, (b) France, (c) Canada, (d) New Zealand, (e) Greece and the relevant regional or state governments of the (i) US, (ii) Spain and (iii) Australia on their legislation on banning conversion practices and their protection of transgender people.

Dan Carden: [\[74868\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what discussions she has had with her counterparts and legislators in (a) Malta, (b) France, (c) Canada, (d) New Zealand, (e) Greece and the relevant regional or state governments of the (i) US, (ii) Spain and (iii) Australia on their legislation on banning conversion practices and their protection of transgender people.

Stephen Morgan: [\[74880\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what discussions she has had with her counterparts and legislators in (a) Malta, (b) France, (c) Canada, (d) New Zealand, (e) Greece and the relevant regional or state governments of the (i) US, (ii) Spain and (iii) Australia on their legislation on banning conversion practices and their protection of transgender people.

Layla Moran: [\[74887\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what discussions she has had with her counterparts and legislators in (a) Malta, (b) France, (c) Canada, (d) New Zealand, (e) Greece and the relevant regional or state governments of the (i) US, (ii) Spain and (iii) Australia on their legislation on banning conversion practices and their protection of transgender people.

Charlotte Nichols: [\[74948\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what discussions she has had with her counterparts and legislators in (a) Malta, (b) France, (c) Canada, (d) New Zealand, (e) Greece and the relevant regional or state governments of the (i) US, (ii) Spain and (iii) Australia on their legislation on banning conversion practices and their protection of transgender people.

Kim Johnson: [\[74968\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what discussions she has had with her counterparts and legislators in (a) Malta, (b) France, (c) Canada, (d) New Zealand, (e) Greece and the relevant regional or state governments of the (i) US, (ii) Spain and (iii) Australia on their legislation on banning conversion practices and their protection of transgender people.

Amy Callaghan: [\[76123\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, whether she has had discussions with her counterparts in (a) Malta, (b) France, (c) Canada, (d) New Zealand, (e) Greece and (f) representatives of regional or state governments in the (i) USA, (ii) Spain and (iii) Australia on protection for transgender people and banning conversion practices.

Stuart Andrew:

The Government has engaged with a wide range of international counterparts including Canada, Australia, New Zealand, France, and Malta, to understand the approaches they have taken to ban conversion therapy. We will continue to engage with counterparts around the world that are committed to protecting everyone from conversion practices to share insight and develop our approach.

■ Conversion Therapy: Scotland

Mr Ben Bradshaw: [\[74497\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the recommendations made by the Ending Conversion Practices Expert Advisory Group in Scotland on 4 October 2022.

Mr Ben Bradshaw: [\[74498\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what discussions she has had with the Welsh Government on banning sexual orientation and transgender conversion practices.

Michael Fabricant: [\[74502\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the recommendations made by the Ending Conversion Practices Expert Advisory Group in Scotland on 4 October 2022; and what discussions she has had with the Welsh Government on banning sexual orientation and transgender conversion practices.

John Nicolson: [\[74736\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the recommendations made by the Ending Conversion Practices Expert Advisory Group in Scotland on 4 October 2022.

Lloyd Russell-Moyle: [\[74840\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what discussions she has had with the Welsh Government on banning sexual orientation and transgender conversion practices.

Dan Carden: [\[74869\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the recommendations made by the Ending Conversion Practices Expert Advisory Group in Scotland on 4 October 2022.

Dan Carden: [\[74870\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what discussions she has had with the Welsh Government on banning LGBT conversion practices.

Stephen Morgan: [\[74881\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the recommendations made by the Ending Conversion Practices Expert Advisory Group in Scotland on 4 October 2022.

Stephen Morgan: [\[74882\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what discussions she has had with the Welsh Government on banning sexual orientation and transgender conversion practices.

Layla Moran: [\[74888\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the recommendations made by the Ending Conversion Practices Expert Advisory Group in Scotland on 4 October 2022.

Layla Moran: [\[74889\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what discussions she has had with the Welsh Government on banning sexual orientation and transgender conversion practices.

Charlotte Nichols: [\[74949\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the recommendations made by the Ending Conversion Practices Expert Advisory Group in Scotland on 4 October 2022.

Charlotte Nichols: [\[74950\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what discussions she has had with the Welsh Government on banning sexual orientation and transgender conversion practices.

Kim Johnson: [\[74969\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the recommendations made by the Ending Conversion Practices Expert Advisory Group in Scotland on 4 October 2022.

Kim Johnson: [\[74970\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what discussions she has had with the Welsh Government on banning sexual orientation and transgender conversion practices.

Stuart Andrew:

The Government has been liaising with territorial offices and the devolved administrations including the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and the Northern Ireland Executive on this important issue.

Officials will continue to work with their counterparts across the devolved administrations to discuss the UK Government's approach to protecting everyone in England and Wales from conversion therapy practices.

Equal Pay**Stella Creasy:**[\[73835\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, with reference to The Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017, SI 172/2017, on what date the report required by Section 16 of that regulation was due to be published.

Maria Caulfield:

We are required to publish a review of the gender pay gap reporting regulations after they've been in force for five years; as is the case for many other business regulations.

Given the impact of the pandemic, it is important that we take time to properly consider the evidence we have from the last five years, so that the review accurately reflects the implementation and impact of reporting. The final review will be published in due course.

Females: Carers**Karin Smyth:**[\[72312\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what assessment she has made of the financial implications for women who act as unpaid family carers where social care provision is limited or unavailable.

Maria Caulfield:

This Government recognises and values the vital contribution made by carers in supporting some of the most vulnerable in society. Unpaid carers can receive a range of support depending upon their circumstances, including from local authorities, the NHS and through the benefit system.

In England, the Care Act 2014 requires local authorities to deliver a wide range of sustainable high-quality care and support services, including support for unpaid carers, and local authorities are required to undertake a Carer's Assessment for any unpaid carer who appears to have a need for support and to meet their eligible needs on request from the carer.

■ Females: Employment

Claire Hanna:

[\[72479\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, if she will make an assessment of the potential impact of changes in the cost of childcare during the cost of living crisis on (a) workforce participation rates by and (b) career progression opportunities for women.

Maria Caulfield:

Over the last decade we have seen strong growth in the number of women in full-time work, and we are committed to ensuring that every woman is able to reach her full potential in her working life.

In June to August 2022, 19.2% of people (1.7 million people) were economically inactive as a result of looking after family/home and of working age (16 to 64 years). This is part of a long-term declining trend since comparable data started to be collected June to August 1993 when it was 34.6% (3 million people). We continue to carefully monitor these figures.

We are also committed to improving the cost, choice, and availability of childcare. We continue to look at ways to make childcare more affordable and to encourage families to use the government-funded support they are entitled to.

In assessing the impact of its free childcare entitlements, the Department for Education regularly reviews the impact on parents from a range of different research publications. This includes the [Families and the Labour Market](#) release (from the Office for National Statistics) and the [Childcare and Early Years Survey of Parents](#).

As part of the Childcare and Early Years Survey of Parents, parents are asked about the effect that 30 hours free childcare has on families, including their ability to work. Almost 2 in 5 families using the 30 hours offer said that without the entitlement they would work fewer hours.

■ Females: Lone Parents

Rachael Maskell:

[\[72319\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what steps he is taking with Cabinet colleagues to support single parents who are women into employment by removing barriers to childcare.

Maria Caulfield:

Over the last decade we have seen growth in the number of women in full-time work, and we are committed to ensuring that every woman is able to reach her full potential in her working life. In June to August 2022, 19.2% of people (1.7 million people) were economically inactive as a result of looking after family/home and of working age (16 to 64 years). This is part of a long-term declining trend since comparable data started to be collected June to August 1993 when it was 34.6% (3 million people). We continue to carefully monitor these figures.

We are also committed to improving the cost, choice, and availability of childcare. We continue to look at ways to make childcare more affordable and to encourage families to use the government-funded support they are entitled to.

All parents of three- and four-year-olds are eligible for 15 hours free early education per week. Parents who earn the equivalent of 16 hours per week at National Minimum or Living Wage can benefit from the full 30 hours free childcare, which can help save families around £6,000 a year per child. Working parents on Universal Credit can claim back up to 85% of childcare costs every month.

■ Working Mothers: Childcare

Olivia Blake: [\[71308\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what steps she is taking to ensure that women are not forced out of the labour market because of childcare costs.

Olivia Blake: [\[71309\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what assessment she has made of the implications of a reported increase in the proportion of women leaving the workforce for childcare purposes.

Maria Caulfield:

Over the last decade we have seen strong growth in the number of women in full-time work, and we are committed to ensuring that every woman is able to reach her full potential in her working life.

In June to August 2022, 19.2% of people (1.7 million people) were economically inactive as a result of looking after family/home and of working age (16 to 64 years). This is part of a long-term declining trend since comparable data started to be collected June to August 1993 when it was 34.6% (3 million people). We continue to carefully monitor these figures.

The UK has some of the highest quality childcare provision in the world, but we recognise that it is also one of the biggest costs facing working families today. Improving the cost, choice and availability of high-quality childcare and early education remains a key priority for this government.

That is why we have spent over £3.5bn in each of the past three years on our early education entitlements to support families with their childcare costs.

At the Spending Review on 27 October 2021, we announced that we are investing additional funding for the early years entitlements worth £160m in 2022-23, £180m in 2023-24 and £170m in 2024-25, compared to the 2021-22 financial year. This is for local authorities to increase hourly rates paid to childcare providers.

On 21 September, the then Business Secretary additionally announced a new Energy Bill Relief Scheme to support eligible schools and businesses large and small, including early years providers, with their energy costs.

WORK AND PENSIONS**■ Department for Work and Pensions: Termination of Employment**

Alison McGovern: [\[74659\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many staff have left his Department since June 2022.

Mims Davies:

4453 staff left the DWP June 2022 to September 2022, of which, 1379 staff were Fixed Term Appointments (FTA).

■ Employment and Support Allowance: Cost of Living Payments

Zarah Sultana: [\[74941\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will extend eligibility for the £650 Cost of Living payment to people in receipt of Contributory Employment and Support Allowance.

Tom Pursglove:

The Cost of Living Payment is being targeted at low income households who are in receipt of a means-tested income replacement benefit. Contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance is a non-means tested benefit. Non-means tested benefits are not qualifying benefits for the Cost of Living Payment in their own right because people receiving these benefits may have other financial resources available to them. We have no plans to change the current eligibility criteria.

This payment comes on top of extensive Government support with the cost of living, including six million disabled people having been paid a separate £150 Disability Cost of Living Payment.

These payments are part of the Government's £15bn package of support and sit alongside:

- a £300 Pensioner Cost of Living Payment to anyone entitled to a Winter Fuel Payment for winter 2022 to 2023;
- the extension of the Household Support Fund with an additional £421 million to support households in England with the cost of essentials;
- a £150 Council Tax rebate sent earlier this year to those in Council Tax bands A-D in England, creating a total of at least £1,200 in direct support for millions;
- a £400 reduction on energy bills given to all domestic electricity customers over the coming months, and the Energy Price Guarantee is supporting millions of households with rising energy costs, and the Chancellor made clear it will continue to do so from now until April next year.

The guidance with the full list of support can be found at:

[Overall government support for the cost of living: factsheet - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

■ Employment and Support Allowance: Mental Illness

Dr Rosena Allin-Khan: **[73105]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many income-related Employment and Support Allowance claimants have been found to have a diagnosable mental health illness.

Tom Pursglove:

The latest available data on the Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) caseload with 'Mental and Behavioural disorders' as their primary medical condition, split by payment type (i.e. 'Income based' and 'Both income and contributions based'), can be found on [Stat-Xplore](#).

Data is based on primary medical condition as recorded on the ESA computer systems. Claimants may have multiple disabling conditions on which their entitlement is based, but only the primary condition is available for statistical purposes and shown in these statistics.

Guidance on how to use Stat-Xplore can be found [here](#).

■ Employment: Menopause

Kate Osamor: **[72380]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what measures the government is taking to ensure menopausal employees in (a) Edmonton constituency, (b) Greater London, (c) England and across the UK are fully supported in their workplaces.

Guy Opperman:

The Women's Health Strategy published by the Department of Health sets out a range of commitments including encouraging employers to implement evidence-based workplace support and introduce workplace menopause policies.

An independent [menopause and the workplace report](#) was published and the [Government's response](#) was outlined in July.

Kate Osamor: **[72381]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what measures the government is taking to ensure employers in (a) Edmonton constituency, (b) Greater London, (c) England and across the UK fully support menopausal employees in their workplaces.

Guy Opperman:

The Women's Health Strategy published by the Department of Health sets out a range of commitments including encouraging employers to implement evidence-based workplace support and introduce workplace menopause policies.

An independent [menopause and the workplace report](#) was published and the [Government's response](#) was outlined in July.

■ Employment: Young People

Fiona Bruce: [\[74621\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps the Government is taking to improve job opportunities for young people with employment access needs.

Guy Opperman:

Jobcentre Plus partnership and employer adviser teams work closely with national and local employers to help address their labour market needs by recruiting suitable claimants.

To promote opportunities for young people with access needs, Jobcentre Plus offers additional support to employers who are committed to helping these young people succeed in the labour market. Through the Disability Confident scheme, for example, DWP is providing advice and support to help employers feel more confident about employing disabled people. This in turn helps to promote the skills, talents and abilities of people with disabilities and health conditions.

As part of the DWP Youth Offer, Youth Employability Coaches work alongside Disability Employment Advisers to support claimants who have a disability or health condition to enter and stay in employment. Some Youth Hubs also offer mental health support and services, alongside skills, training, and employment provision.

There are a range of initiatives businesses can get involved in to give opportunities and experience to young people, including apprenticeships, traineeships, mentoring circles, and work experience. In addition, Access to Work and the Access to Work Mental Health Support Service provide personalised support to enable disabled people and those with a health condition to move into or keep employment.

■ Housing Benefit: Employment

Mrs Sharon Hodgson: [\[71008\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps he is taking to help support people living in supported housing, who have their housing costs supported through the Housing Benefit, access employment opportunities.

Guy Opperman:

DWP provides a range of employment support to different groups including those who may live in Supported Housing. This includes measures such as helping claimants to make a Universal Credit claim as well as providing specialised tailored support through Jobcentre Plus including access to the Flexible Support Fund, individual work coach support and priority access to the Work and Health Programme.

■ Jobcentres: Staff

Alison McGovern:

[\[74657\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many work coaches were employed in job centres as of 31 October 2022; and how many such coaches were employed in job centres on the same date in each of the previous five years.

Mims Davies:

Please find the data and number in relation to Work Coaches as listed below. For clarity these are Full time equivalents (FTE) and not individual staff members.

	WORK COACH ABM FTE
Oct-22	15,249.07
Oct-21	21,469.57
Oct-20	16,427.89
Oct-19	12,324.98
Oct-18	12,493.22
Oct-17	13,008.98

Alison McGovern:

[\[74658\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether his Department has set a target for the number of staff to be re-deployed to other roles as a result of job centre closures.

Mims Davies:

The Department's Written Statement on 20 July 2022 set out plans to gradually improve the Jobcentre estate. When the Department closes a poor quality site and relocates to better-quality accommodation it is anticipated, due to the close proximity of the better sites, that all public facing Jobcentre staff will be able to move to the new site. There is therefore no target for the redeployment of staff when an established Jobcentre closes.

If a member of staff is unable to relocate to the alternative Jobcentre location in their current job role, then every effort is made to redeploy them to another role within the Department.

■ Maternity Allowance and Maternity Pay

Dr Rupa Huq:

[\[73087\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of increasing the rate of (a) statutory maternity pay and (b) maternity allowance during the cost of living crisis.

Mims Davies:

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions is currently conducting his statutory annual review of State Pensions and benefit rates. The outcome of that review will be announced in due course.

■ Pensions: Widowed People**Liz Saville Roberts:**[\[74813\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment he has made of the equitability between married and unmarried bereaved couples' ability to access their deceased partner's pension.

Laura Trott:

In defined benefit occupational pension schemes, there are no statutory requirements for pension schemes to provide any survivor benefits unless the scheme was contracted out of the additional State Pension. Surviving partners of members do not automatically receive benefits when the member dies. These survivor benefits are a matter for the scheme rules and the sponsoring employer, subject to HMRC tax restrictions. Some schemes may choose to provide survivor benefits for those who are not in a legal partnership, but they are not required to. Where a scheme was contracted out, the pension must include a minimum level of benefits for certain widows, widowers and surviving civil partners, reflecting the provisions in the additional State Pension.

The new State Pension, applicable to those who reach State Pension age from 6 April 2016, is based on an individual's own National Insurance contributions only, although there are transitional rules that mean an individual can inherit State Pension in some circumstances, where there was a legal marriage or civil partnership before 6 April 2016.

■ Personal Independence Payment: Appeals**Vicky Foxcroft:**[\[73874\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 27 October 2022 to Question 69711 on Personal Independence Payment, how much his Department estimates it would cost to provide the information requested.

Tom Pursglove:

To provide a reply to Question 69711 would require us to undertake new analysis, involving collating information from several complex datasets and assuring the quality of the results. Although it is theoretically possible to answer, it is estimated this would take in excess of 4 working days and exceed the costs threshold of £850. An appraisal of the resources needed to enable the collation and publication of the requested statistics has not been made. We will consider our development priorities within the [Statistical Work Programme](#).

■ Restart Programme

Alison McGovern:

[\[74660\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 10 May 2022 to Question 234 on Restart Scheme, when the National Audit Office plans to release its findings of their review of the Restart Scheme.

Mims Davies:

The National Audit Office have advised us that the report on the Restart Scheme is due for publication on 2 December 2022.

■ Social Security Benefits: Appeals

Kate Osamor:

[\[72382\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much her Department has spent on defending benefit appeals in each year from 2010 to 2022.

Mims Davies:

DWP cover the administration costs of an Appeal. However, the Department is unable to provide the total government spend on defending appeals.

This is because appeals are a joint process between DWP and HM Courts and Tribunals Service. DWP do not handle tribunals for appeals; the cost of handling appeal tribunals sits with HM Courts and Tribunal Service (HMCTS) and we do not hold their cost information. If this information was required, we would suggest that this element of your request be submitted to HMCTS.

The only DWP staff who attend actual Tribunals (and therefore defend appeals) are Presenting Officers. We do not have information before 2013-14.

The information for the financial years covered by the request are detailed in the tables below:

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	
£3.69m	£5.18m	£4.45m	£5.42m	
2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
£7.93m	£7.16m	£6.47m	£1.45m	£5.77m

Cost figures are rounded to the nearest £0.1m

Data Source: ABM

The cost figures quoted are estimated DWP level 1 operating costs, including both direct delivery staff and non-staff costs. Non-staff costs are only those costs incurred in local cost centres, relating to direct delivery staff.

Costs provided are for Presenting Officers only and excludes Admin Support or Decision Making operational staff dealing with the Appeals processing work. Child Maintenance Group figures include Enforcement Presenting Officers.

Please note that the data supplied is from the Departmental Activity Based Models. This data is derived from unpublished management information, which was collected for internal Departmental use only, and has not been quality assured to National Statistics or Official Statistics publication standards. It should therefore be treated with caution. The Departmental Activity Based staffing models are a snapshot of how many people were identified as undertaking specified activities as assigned by line managers.

The data is frequently revised and changes to definitions / benefits / DWP structure effect comparisons over time. It should therefore be treated with caution and must be seen as an indication of cost, rather than the actual cost.

2020/21 figures impacted by COVID

■ **Social Security Benefits: Disability**

Rachael Maskell:

[\[73855\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps he will take to help ensure that disabled people with physical and psychological ill health, where there is fluctuation or periods of remission, can demonstrate the nature and history of their condition qualifies longer awards of benefit without regular reassessment.

Tom Pursglove:

Healthcare professionals carrying out assessments provide advice to DWP decision makers and case managers on when claims should be reviewed. As part of the assessment, healthcare professionals take fluctuations in the claimant's medical condition into account. For example, in PIP, paragraph 1.9.3 of the Assessment Guide states: "Where a condition can fluctuate significantly over a period of time consideration should be given as to when a review would be appropriate."

Rachael Maskell:

[\[73861\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will make a comparative assessment of the average additional costs that disabled people incur at home with the cost of living and the level of social benefits payable to people with disabilities.

Tom Pursglove:

The Government is not intending to make an assessment of the average additional costs disabled people may incur at home and the level of social security benefits.

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is intended to act as a contribution towards extra costs that arise as a result of a long-term health condition or disability. PIP is not means-tested, non-contributory and thus paid regardless of any income or savings.

The Government is providing extensive support to disabled people and those with a health condition to help them live independent lives.

In 2022/23 we will spend over £64bn on benefits to support disabled people and people with health conditions in Great Britain.

In response to the cost of living pressures, the Government announced over £37bn of cost of living support earlier this year, which includes:

- a Disability Cost of Living Payment of £150 to six million people in recognition of the extra costs they face, including with energy costs;
- up to £650 in Cost of Living Payments for the eight million households in receipt of a means-tested benefit;
- a one-off payment of £300 through, and as an addition to, the Winter Fuel Payment from November to pensioner households;
- the £400 non-repayable discount to eligible households provided through the Energy Bills Support Scheme in addition to the Energy Price Guarantee from now until April next year.

■ Social Security Benefits: Disqualification

Rachael Maskell:

[\[74764\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many and what proportion of people subject to a benefits sanction had a known (a) physical, (b) mental and (c) physical and mental disability in the last 12 months.

Guy Opperman:

The department has not made any assessment of sanctioned claimants with a disability.

Claimants with severe mental health conditions are not subject to work-related requirements or sanctions. Claimants found to have limited capability for work and work-related activity are not subject to sanctions related to work search

Conditionality requirements are tailored to the claimant's circumstances, including any mental health conditions, so they are reasonable and achievable and are agreed between the claimant and their Work Coach.

People are only sanctioned if they fail to meet their requirements without good reason.

■ Social Security Benefits: Fraud

Dr Rupa Huq:

[\[74809\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will publish data on current levels of social security fraud; and what steps he is taking to reduce social security fraud.

Tom Pursglove:

Data on the levels of fraud in the benefit system is published annually, with the latest figures available via the following link:

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

Our Fraud Plan, Fighting Fraud in the Welfare System, published on 19 May 2022, sets out our plans for reducing the level of fraud and error in the welfare system by:

- Investing in DWP's frontline counter-fraud professionals and data analytics, including recruiting 2,000 trained specialists to review over two million Universal Credit cases.
- Creating new legal powers to investigate potential fraud and punish fraudsters (subject to legislation).
- Bringing together the full force of the public and private sectors to keep one step ahead.

The full document can be found at: [Fighting Fraud in the Welfare System-GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)\(opens in a new tab\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/fighting-fraud-in-the-welfare-system).

The Government is investing £1.4bn of funding over the next three years to combat fraud and error. This includes additional invest to save funding, which will help stop over £2.0bn of loss in fraud and error during this time.

■ Social Security Benefits: Medical Examinations

Rachael Maskell:

[\[73856\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what weight his Department gives to consultants and other clinical leads assessments of their patients' conditions when decision makers are considering awards of benefit.

Tom Pursglove:

Decision makers give due consideration to all evidence, including that from clinicians, when making decisions on benefit assessments.

■ Social Security Benefits: Pensioners

Sarah Olney:

[\[74830\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether he plans to keep the (a) triple lock on pensions, (b) winter fuel payment, (c) the older person's bus pass and (d) all other pensioner benefits.

Laura Trott:

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions is currently conducting his statutory annual review of State Pension and benefit rates. We cannot pre-empt the outcome of that review, which will be announced in due course.

■ Social Security Benefits: Telecommunications**Alberto Costa:**[\[72309\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department is taking to assist people in receipt of benefits by expanding access to social tariffs offered by telecommunication companies.

Guy Opperman:

DWP is working with DCMS to encourage Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to expand eligibility for broadband social tariffs to all claimants in receipt of Universal Credit and other means-tested benefits.

We have developed an Application Programme Interface (API) service, which allows ISPs to verify, with the customers' permission, if they are in receipt of an eligible benefit for the broadband social tariffs.

DWP is working with Ofcom to raise awareness of this important Help for Households initiative amongst claimants and staff in Jobcentres, Universal Credit Service Centres, and Pensions Centres.

■ Social Security Benefits: York**Rachael Maskell:**[\[74762\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people have been subject to a benefits sanction in (a) York and (b) York Central constituency in each of the last five years.

Guy Opperman:

Monthly decisions are available for JSA, ESA and IS for the last five years and for UC Live Service from August 2015 to July 2020. Statistics are available from April 2019 to May 2022.

These statistics are all available by local authority and Westminster parliamentary constituency on [Stat-Xplore](#). If needed, you can access [guidance](#) on how to extract the information required from Stat-Xplore.

Rachael Maskell:[\[74763\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what proportion of benefits claimants have been subject to a benefits sanction in (a) York and (b) the UK in the last 12 months.

Guy Opperman:

Monthly Universal Credit sanction rate statistics for Great Britain are available from April 2019 to May 2022 by local authority on [Stat-Xplore](#).

If needed, you can access [guidance](#) on how to extract the information required from Stat-Xplore.

■ State Retirement Pensions: Cost of Living Payments

Emma Hardy:

[\[72435\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he has considered the potential merits of making the Cost of Living Payment available to households that are receiving state pension but are not eligible for pension credit.

Laura Trott:

The Cost of Living Payment is deliberately targeted at low-income households in receipt of a qualifying means tested benefit. For people above State Pension age, this is those in receipt of Pension Credit. Non-means tested benefits, such as the State Pension are not eligible benefits for the Cost of Living Payment in their own right because people receiving these benefits may have other financial resources available to them. Pension Credit claimants are eligible for the Cost of Living Payment if they are entitled to Pension Credit at the time of the qualifying period, even if entitlement was determined after this. We urge pensioners to check their eligibility for Pension Credit, using the GOV.UK online calculator or by calling the freephone claim line.

The qualifying period for the second £324 Cost of Living Payment is 26 August to the 25 September 2022. Pension Credit can be backdated for up to 3 months from the date of claim, for those who are eligible, so it is not too late to make a claim and qualify for the second Cost of Living Payment. The last date for making a successful backdated application to qualify for the second Cost of Living payment is 18 December.

For pensioners not eligible for the Cost of Living Payment, or for those that need more support, government is providing a range of help. Pensioners who are entitled to a Winter Fuel Payment for winter 2022 to 2023 will get an extra £300 for their household paid with their normal payment from November. That means over 8 million pensioner households across the UK will receive an increased Winter Fuel Payment of £500/£600 this winter, depending on age, and this will be paid on top of any other one-off support a pensioner household is entitled to.

Pensioners are also being supported through the Energy Price Guarantee and the Energy Bills Support scheme, and government is providing an additional £500 million to help households with the cost of essentials through the Household Support Fund, bringing the total funding for this support to £1.5 billion.

■ Terminal Illnesses: Cost of Living

Zarah Sultana:

[\[74940\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps the Government is taking to support people with terminal illnesses during the period of increases to the cost of living.

Tom Pursglove:

The Government wants to do all it can to alleviate the pressures on those nearing the end of their lives, and on their families.

The main way that the department does this is through special benefit rules, sometimes referred to as “the Special Rules”. These enable people who are nearing the end of their lives to get faster, easier access to certain benefits, without needing to attend a medical assessment, serve waiting periods and in most cases, receive the highest rate of benefit.

Furthermore, the Government understands the pressures people are facing with the cost of living and has taken further decisive action to support people with their energy bills. The Energy Price Guarantee is supporting millions of households with rising energy costs, and the Chancellor made clear it will continue to do so, from now until April next year. This is in addition to the over £37bn of cost of living support announced earlier this year, which includes the £400 non-repayable discount to eligible households provided through the Energy Bills Support Scheme. Also included in the £37bn is a Disability Cost of Living Payment of £150 to six million people who are receiving additional-needs disability benefits, and up to £650 in cost of living payments (paid in two separate payments of £326 and £324) for the eight million households in receipt of a means-tested benefit.

Pensioner households entitled to a Winter Fuel Payment will receive a pensioner Cost of Living Payment this winter of £300 per household. This will be paid as a top up to their Winter Fuel Payment and payments will be increased to £500 for a household with someone of State Pension age and £600 for a household with someone aged 80 or over.

■ Universal Credit**Charlotte Nichols:**[\[71293\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will make it her policy to allow Universal Credit claimants who report to her Department that their circumstances have changed from self-employed to employed to continue claiming the rate awarded previously during the review period.

Guy Opperman:

We have no plans to change this policy.

■ Universal Credit: Deductions**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:**[\[71003\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the (a) total and (b) average size of deductions from Universal Credit claimants were in the most recent month for which data is available.

Mrs Sharon Hodgson: [\[71004\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, (a) how many and (b) what proportion of Universal Credit claimants had deductions taken in the most recent month for which figures are available.

Guy Opperman:

Household level figures have been provided as deductions are applied at the household level and not at claimant level.

In May 2022, the total deductions for Universal Credit households was £130,530,000 and the average deduction was £62. For the same period, the total number of households on Universal Credit with a deduction was 2,100,000. This accounts for 45% of all households on Universal Credit.

Notes:

1. Total deductions have been rounded to the nearest thousand pounds and average deductions to the nearest pound
2. Total number of households on UC have been rounded to the nearest thousand and percentages to the nearest percent
3. Figures are provisional and are subject to retrospective change as later data becomes available.
4. The methodology used is different to those used to derive the Official Statistics Household series and therefore, figures may not be comparable.
5. Data for May 2022 has been provided in line with the latest available UC Household Statistics

Mrs Sharon Hodgson: [\[71005\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the total deductions for Universal Credit claimants aged under 25 were in the most recent month for which figures are available; and what the average such deduction was.

Mrs Sharon Hodgson: [\[71006\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, (a) how many and (b) what proportion of Universal Credit claimants aged under 25 had deductions taken in the most recent month for which figures available.

Guy Opperman:

Household level figures have been provided as deductions are applied at the household level and not at claimant level.

In May 2022, the total deductions for Under 25 households on Universal Credit was £9,783,000 and the average deduction was £41. For the same period, the total number of households on Universal Credit with a deduction was 238,000. This accounts for 36% of all under 25 households.

Notes:

1. Total deductions have been rounded to the nearest thousand pounds and average deductions to the nearest pound
2. Total number of households on UC have been rounded to the nearest thousand and percentages to the nearest percent.
3. For couple claims an under 25 household has been defined as both claimants in the household being under 25.
4. Figures are provisional and are subject to retrospective change as later data becomes available.
5. The methodology used is different to those used to derive the Official Statistics Household series and therefore, figures may not be comparable.
6. Data for May 2022 has been provided in line with the latest available UC Household Statistics

■ Universal Credit: Mental Illness

Dr Rosena Allin-Khan: [\[73106\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what support her Department plans to provide to legacy claimants whose mental health condition may prevent them from acting on a Migration Notice, in the context of managed benefits migration.

Dr Rosena Allin-Khan: [\[73107\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of managed migration on exacerbating existing mental health conditions among legacy claimants.

Guy Opperman:

I refer the Hon member to the written answer to Question [362](#) tabled on 10th of May 2022 by the previous Minister.

■ Universal Credit: Poverty

Sir Stephen Timms: [\[74490\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of the number of Universal Credit claimants who are estimated to be living in poverty.

Guy Opperman:

Statistics on poverty levels for Universal Credit claimants in 19/20 are available at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/> on the HBAI dataset.

It is not possible to provide a robust estimate for 2020/21 due to the impact the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic had on data quality in 2020/21.

Guidance on how to extract the information required can be found at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Getting-Started.html>

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

■ **British Indian Ocean Territory / Chagos Archipelago**

Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs (James Cleverly): [\[HCWS354\]](#)

Following the meeting between the then Prime Minister, my Rt Hon Friend the Member for South West Norfolk, and Prime Minister Jugnauth at the UN General Assembly, the UK and Mauritius have decided to begin negotiations on the exercise of sovereignty over the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT)/Chagos Archipelago.

Through negotiations, taking into account relevant legal proceedings, it is our intention to secure an agreement on the basis of international law to resolve all outstanding issues, including those relating to the former inhabitants of the Chagos Archipelago. This will allow the UK and Mauritius, as close Commonwealth partners, to work even more closely together to tackle the regional and global security challenges that face us all. We will seek to strengthen significantly our cooperation on Indian Ocean security, maritime security and marine protection, the conservation of the environment, climate change, respect for human rights, and to tackle illegal migration, illegal fishing, drugs and arms trafficking, as well as bilateral cooperation on a range of other issues. We will work to do this in cooperation with key allies and partners in the region.

The UK and Mauritius have reiterated that any agreement between our two countries will ensure the continued effective operation of the joint UK/US military base on Diego Garcia, which plays a vital role in regional and global security. We recognise the US's and India's interests and will keep them informed of progress.

The UK and Mauritius have agreed to engage in constructive negotiations, with a view to arriving at an agreement by early next year.

HOME OFFICE

■ **Publication of Volume 2 of the Manchester Arena Inquiry Report**

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Suella Braverman): [\[HCWS356\]](#)

Today the Manchester Arena Inquiry has published Volume 2 of its report, which has been laid before the House. The report can be found at www.manchesterarenainquiry.org.uk and on GOV.UK. The third and final volume of the Inquiry's report will be published at a later date.

This report relates to the emergency response into the Manchester Arena attack. I am grateful for the strength and courage of the victims' families and the survivors, and the engagement of all those who have shared their experiences to ensure the Inquiry can

deliver its vital work. I am grateful too for the bravery of the emergency services who responded to the attack.

Steps have already been taken to implement learning from the attack to improve joint working between the emergency services when responding to terrorist attacks. The Government will review this report and consider where further improvements can be made and will respond to its content in due course.

I would also like to thank Sir John Saunders for his continued and considerable efforts in ensuring that the Inquiry is a success and that lessons are learned for the future from this tragic attack.

PRIME MINISTER

■ Cabinet Committees

Prime Minister (Rishi Sunak):

[\[HCWS355\]](#)

Today I am publishing an updated Cabinet Committee list. I have placed a copy of the new list in the Libraries of both Houses.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) Annual Report and Accounts 2021-2022

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Pensions & Growth (Laura Trott):

[\[HCWS353\]](#)

My honourable Friend, The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions (The Baroness Stedman-Scott) has made the following Written Statement.

Later today I will lay before this House the Office for Nuclear Regulation Annual Report and Accounts 2021-2022. These documents will also be published on the ONR website.

I can confirm, in accordance with Schedule 7, Section 25(3) of the Energy Act 2013, that there have been no exclusions to the published documents on the grounds of national security.