



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 14 November 2022 and the information is correct at the time of publication (07:00 P.M., 14 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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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

■ Visits Abroad: Poland

Emily Thornberry:

[\[80661\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, pursuant to the Answer of 7 November 2022 to Question 75829 on Visits Abroad: Poland, what the individual cost was of her predecessor's (a) return flight, (b) overnight hotel accommodation and (c) meals and other non-flight and non-accommodation expenses for her trip to Poland on 6 May 2022.

Michael Tomlinson:

The individual costs of the former Attorney General's trip to Poland were, the return flight £261.12, the accommodation £340.65, and, no other costs were claimed for meals or non-accommodation expenses.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Alternative Fuel Payments

Martyn Day:

[\[76011\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential impact of the timing of payments from the Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Fund on people who have not yet received a payment.

Graham Stuart:

The Department has made no such assessment. The Government recognises that those households who do not have a domestic electricity meter or a direct relationship with an energy supplier and who are not benefitting from the main Energy Bills Support Scheme are in need of energy support over the winter. The Government is working to deliver this support through the EBSS Alternative Funding as soon as possible.

■ Aviation: Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Clive Lewis:

[\[80791\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an estimate of the proportion of UK greenhouse gas emissions from aviation that derived from flights where the plane was over 20 tonnes and equipped to carry fewer than 19 passengers in each of the last five years.

Graham Stuart:

UK greenhouse gas emissions from aviation are compiled in the context of the UK's Greenhouse Gas Inventory and this data is published annually in the UK's greenhouse gas emissions national statistics. Emissions estimates for domestic and international aviation in each of the last five years up until 2020 can be found in tables 1.2 and 6.1 respectively, although these are not broken down by plane weight or number of passengers:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/final-uk-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics-1990-to-2020>.

Biofuels**Mr Virendra Sharma:****[82220]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to Answer of 17 October 2022 to Question 59578, what assessment his Department makes of the proportion of biomass that is generated sustainably.

Graham Stuart:

The Government only supports sustainable biomass and there are strict sustainability criteria. Suppliers must demonstrate to the regulator Ofgem that they have met the criteria and their evidence is independently verified.

Consequently only biomass that complies with stringent sustainability criteria is eligible for support.

Bulb Energy: Finance**Dr Alan Whitehead:****[82140]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the total amount of customers' credit balances held by Bulb Energy.

Graham Stuart:

The amount of customers' credit balances held at Bulb Energy is commercially sensitive and will not be published. Bulb customers' credit balances are protected.

Bulb Energy: Insolvency**Dr Alan Whitehead:****[82142]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 7 November 2022 to Question 77243 on Bulb Energy: Insolvency, if he will make an assessment of the potential impact on customer bills of use of the shortfall recovery mechanism in relation to this case.

Graham Stuart:

The Government is committed to maximising value for money for taxpayers and has the option to recover costs through the shortfall recovery mechanism which would see a levy charged on industry. The decision of how this process will be carried out lies with the Secretary of State.

■ Bulb Energy: Octopus Energy

Dr Alan Whitehead:

[\[82138\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether Octopus Energy is required to repay the costs of the energy that the Government will buy for Bulb customers in winter 2022.

Graham Stuart:

The Government will provide financial support to the new entity for the procurement of energy for Bulb customers over the course of Winter 2022. This financial support will be repaid by the new entity in accordance with an agreed repayment schedule.

Dr Alan Whitehead:

[\[82139\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will provide details of the profit share agreement that will apply until Octopus Energy has repaid the public funding from Government for the cost of the energy bought for Bulb customers.

Graham Stuart:

A profit-share agreement will be put in place for the ringfenced business until agreed funding is repaid by Octopus. Under this structure, payments to shareholders or the wider Octopus group from the ringfenced entity would be restricted until the repayable funding to Government is complete.

The details of the profit share agreement are commercially sensitive and will not be published.

■ Business: Cost of Living

Bill Esterson:

[\[80689\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the impact of the cost of living crisis on businesses in Sefton Central constituency.

Kevin Hollinrake:

The Government monitors a range of data sources including national statistics and industry surveys. These confirm the pressures faced by businesses from increased input costs since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, notably food ingredients, fertilizer and energy.

The Energy Bill Relief Scheme will provide a price reduction so that eligible businesses and other non-domestic customers are protected from excessively high energy bills over the winter period.

The SME Finance Monitor for Q2 2022 (the most recent period available) notes that 16% of businesses using finance in the period were concerned about repayment, down from 19% in Q2 2021. These figures are not available at constituency level.

■ Business: Energy**Julian Knight:** [\[79314\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what criteria his Department plans to apply to determine which sectors will receive support with their energy bills after 31 March 2023.

Graham Stuart:

In January 2023 the Government will publish a review of the Energy Bill Relief Scheme.

The review will focus on identifying the most at risk non-domestic customers. It will consider how effective the scheme has been in giving support to at risk non-domestic customers and which groups of non-domestic customers (by sector, size or geography) remain particularly at risk to energy price rises, considering the latest price position and other cost pressures.

Liz Saville Roberts: [\[80821\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 31 October 2022 to Question 72386 on Business: Energy, whether multi-function premises used for both residential and business purposes which have business electricity accounts will be eligible for support under the Energy Bills Support Scheme; and whether further information will be provided in that guidance.

Graham Stuart:

The Government recognises that there are some domestic energy users who receive their energy through business contracts. The Government is working to ensure that eligible households are not excluded from the Alternative Funding scheme on that basis. The Government is engaging with a range of organisations, such as local authorities, as well as Devolved Administrations and across UK Government, to finalise the details of the Alternative Funding and have the process up and running for applications this winter.

■ Business: Energy Price Guarantee**Justin Madders:** [\[79318\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, for what reasons the energy price cap was originally unavailable to businesses who signed their contract before April 1, 2022.

Graham Stuart:

Following additional evidence on high wholesale energy prices prior to April 2022, the eligibility criteria for the Energy Bill Relief Scheme was extended to include all fixed contracts signed from 1 December 2021. This is to ensure a fair and equitable scheme, where support offered to businesses and other non-domestic energy users covers all recent energy price increases, helping those businesses that have seen increased bills for a sustained period.

■ Cannabis: Medical Treatments

Christopher Pincher:

[\[79295\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 20 October 2022 to Question 62806 on Cannabis: Medical Treatments, with reference to the Government's Life Sciences Vision, published 6 July 2021, if he will make an assessment of the compatibility of the decision not to assess the potential economic merits of establishing a British-based medical cannabis industry with the UK's aspiration to be the world leader for the development, testing, access and uptake of new and innovative treatments and technologies; and if he will make a statement.

George Freeman:

In developing the UK's Life Science Vision we have conducted wide engagement across the sector, including those involved with a wide range of therapeutic modalities, to understand matters of regulation, access and uptake of new products.

The Government is confident that its broad based strategy, focussed on improving the competitiveness of every aspect of the UK Life Science environment, is the correct approach, and will enhance the UK's competitiveness across all therapeutic modalities.

As part of BEIS work on regulation for innovation we are reviewing the TIGRR report and will be continuing delivery plans in due course.

■ Charities: Energy

Julian Knight:

[\[79315\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he plans to offer energy bills support to charities after 31 March 2023.

Graham Stuart:

The Government cannot confirm which sectors will receive further support after 31st March 2023 until the review has concluded.

■ Copyright

Jeff Smith:

[\[75992\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the Government plans to reopen a consultation on its text and data mining exemption proposals.

George Freeman:

The Government's proposal on text and data mining supports its ambition for the UK to be a world leader in artificial intelligence research and innovation. However, the Government recognises the concerns of affected sectors including the creative industries, and the importance of making sure the balance is right. The Government will soon launch a period of stakeholder engagement to consider the best way to implement the policy.

■ **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Departmental Responsibilities**

Jonathan Reynolds: [82275]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when his Department plans to publish the list of ministerial responsibilities.

Kevin Hollinrake:

The details of ministerial portfolios in the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy will be published shortly and will then be found on www.gov.uk/beis.

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

Alex Davies-Jones: [82489]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the Permanent Secretary of his Department was informed by his predecessor the Rt hon. Member for North East Somerset of the stake held in Yandex Ltd by Somerset Capital Management LLP on taking up his post on 6 September 2022; and whether an assessment was made of whether this could have constituted a conflict of interest.

Kevin Hollinrake:

My Rt Hon. Friend the Member for North East Somerset declared his interests to the Permanent Secretary soon after his appointment as Secretary of State, in line with the requirements of the Ministerial Code. I refer the Hon. Member to the answer given to her today by my Rt. Hon. Friend the Member for Horsham to Question [82488](#) for further detail on the ministerial conflicts of interest process.

■ **Energy Bill Relief Scheme: Arfon**

Hywel Williams: [80613]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many small businesses have received support under the Energy Bill Relief Scheme in Arfon constituency.

Graham Stuart:

The Energy Bill Relief Scheme will provide a discount on energy bills for all eligible non-domestic customers, including small businesses, whose current gas and electricity prices have been significantly inflated in light of global energy prices. Discounts to eligible customers are provided directly by energy suppliers. The Government cannot provide an estimate of how many small businesses in the Arfon constituency have received support under the scheme.

■ Energy Bills Rebate

Catherine West:

[79321]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has had recent discussions with representatives of British Gas on delays in sending energy rebate vouchers to customers with prepaid meters.

Graham Stuart:

The Department is in regular contact with suppliers to understand any operational issues and to check on the redemption of vouchers.

Vouchers are sent each month, between October and March, via text, email or post and are valid for three months from the relevant monthly Qualifying Date. Suppliers must make several attempts to contact customers who have not redeemed vouchers and can reissue expired or lost vouchers.

Andrea Leadsom:

[80694]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to support individuals on shared energy meters with the Energy Bills Support Scheme.

Graham Stuart:

The Government has announced an unprecedented package of support to help households with the cost of living crisis, including support of £400 for energy bills for those who do not have a domestic electricity meter or a direct relationship with an energy supplier, such as heat network consumers on a private wire system.

The Government is working with a range of organisations to finalise the details of the Alternative Funding and have the process up and running for applications this winter.

Tonia Antoniazzi:

[80836]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when off-grid customers will be able to access financial support through the Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Fund.

Graham Stuart:

I refer the hon Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for St Albans on 22nd September to Question [48498](#), and the answer given by my noble Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State to the noble Lord Teverson on 8th November 2022 to Question [HL2900](#).

Bill Esterson:

[82261]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he plans to include off-grid domestic users, such as liveaboard boaters, in the Energy Bill 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 the households who will not be reached

through the EBSS. This includes those who do not have a domestic electricity meter or a direct relationship with an energy supplier.

The Government is working with a range of organisations, such as local authorities, as well as Devolved Administrations and across UK Government, to finalise the details of the Alternative Funding and have the process up and running for applications this winter.

Munira Wilson:

[\[82452\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how the Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Fund and the Alternative Fuel Payments Fund will distribute payments to households ineligible for the Energy Bills Support Scheme, and when these payments will begin.

Graham Stuart:

The Alternative Funding will provide equivalent support of £400 for energy bills for the small minority of households who will not be reached through the Energy Bills Support Scheme. Full details on eligibility, timescales and method of delivery will be announced in the coming weeks.

The Alternative Fuel Payment will provide £100 to support households who do not use mains gas for heating. It is designed to compensate for the rise in the price of heating oil from October 2022 in a way which is equivalent to the Energy Price Guarantee. Further details for both schemes will be set out in due course.

■ Energy Bills Rebate: Houseboats

Ruth Cadbury:

[\[80734\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when his Department plans to release further information on how individuals living on houseboats can access the Government's energy 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 the households who will not be reached through the EBSS. This includes those who do not have a domestic electricity meter or a direct relationship with an energy supplier.

The Government is working with a range of organisations, such as local authorities, as well as Devolved Administrations and across UK Government, to finalise the details of the Alternative Funding and have the process up and running for applications this winter.

■ Energy Bills Rebate: Northern Ireland

Peter Kyle:

[\[77501\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many meetings the joint taskforce for the £400 energy support scheme in Northern Ireland has had since 15 August 2022.

Graham Stuart:

Two taskforce meetings have been held to support the UK Government delivering £400 off energy bills in Northern Ireland this winter.

Energy Bills Rebate: Park Homes**Tonia Antoniazzi:****[80835]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when park home customers will be able to access financial support through the Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Fund.

Graham Stuart:

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

The Government is working with a range of organisations, such as local authorities, as well as Devolved Administrations and across UK Government, to finalise the details of the Alternative Funding and have the process up and running for applications this winter.

Energy Bills Rebate: Rented Housing**Alex Sobel:****[79338]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 22 September to Question 48487 on Energy Bills Rebate: Rented Housing, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure that landlords do not charge tenants paying for gas and electricity via coin meter more than they paid suppliers for the energy.

Graham Stuart:

Under Ofgem's Maximum Resale Price rules, landlords with a domestic contract with an energy supplier are required not to charge tenants more than they have paid suppliers for the energy.

Attachments:

1. Ofgem - Resale of gas electricity guidance [[Ofgem-Resale of gas electricity guidance.pdf](#)]

Energy Company Obligation**Bill Esterson:****[82262]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the ECO+ proposals published by Energy UK in September 2022, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the proposals in that document.

Graham Stuart:

The Government has been working closely with stakeholders, including Energy UK, on the proposed policy design of ECO+. BEIS intends to consult on the design of ECO+ shortly.

■ Energy Price Guarantee**Dr Alan Whitehead:**[\[80564\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the impact of the Smart Meter Data Access and Privacy Framework 2012 on proposals to collect data from electricity meters as part of the Energy Price Guarantee Scheme.

Graham Stuart:

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer I gave the Hon. Member for Newcastle upon Tyne Central on 7 November 2022 to Question [77419](#).

Chi Onwurah:[\[83815\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Answer of 7 November 2022 to Question 72508 on Energy: Meters, if he set out how the Energy Price Guarantee complies with the Data Access and Privacy Framework for smart metering.

Graham Stuart:

The smart metering Data Access and Privacy Framework (DAPF) ensures that households have control over who can access their energy consumption data and for what purposes, except where this is required for regulated purposes. It establishes specific provisions relating to the processing of energy consumption data, which are designed to complement, but not replace, wider data protection legislation.

Electricity and Gas meter personal data collected through the Energy Price Guarantee scheme will be processed in the public interest under Article 6(1)(e) of UK GDPR and processing will be compliant with the provisions set out in the DAPF.

Smart meters only record energy consumption data. Personal information such as names, addresses and bank details are not stored on a smart meter.

■ Energy: Advisory Services**Wera Hobhouse:**[\[77536\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate his Department has made of how much people using the Government's online energy saving advice service have saved on their energy bills in each year since 2019.

Graham Stuart:

The GOV.UK online service which launched at the end of July 2022 has received a total of 54k users to date. A full evaluation of the advice provision is expected to start by September 2023.

■ Energy: Conservation

Wera Hobhouse:

[\[77535\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department plans to introduce a telephone advice service to help people save energy and improve energy efficiency.

Graham Stuart:

The Government plans to launch a free phonenumber service later this year that will help consumers in England with tailored and impartial information about how to improve the energy performance of their homes. The phonenumber will also provide a digital assistance service for the energy advice tool on GOV.UK.

■ Energy: Taxation

Dr Alan Whitehead:

[\[82141\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 7 November 2022 to Question 77243 on Bulb Energy: Insolvency, whether there is a cap on the cost of the shortfall recovery mechanism that can be charged via a levy on energy suppliers.

Graham Stuart:

The Special Administrators of Bulb are required by law to keep costs as low as possible and we continue to engage closely with them to ensure maximum value for money for taxpayers.

■ EU Law

Justin Madders:

[\[82344\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many Statutory Instruments are within the scope of the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill; and if he will place a list of all affected instruments in the House of Commons Library.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The Retained EU Law (REUL) Dashboard, published in June 2022, lists the 2,417 pieces of REUL identified at that point in time. This Dashboard will be updated on a quarterly basis as REUL is repealed and replaced, or more REUL is identified.

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has worked closely with The National Archives on the underlying dataset. As part of this, the Department has asked The National Archives to search their archive for REUL that is no longer associated with an existing ministerial department. The aim of this work is to ensure that all REUL has been identified and the results will be added to the REUL dashboard.

■ Fireworks: Regulation

Dr Rupa Huq: [\[79319\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of updating fireworks regulations to (a) reduce the maximum permitted noise level of fireworks for public sale from 120dB to 90dB, (b) introduce a licensing system for the (i) purchase and (ii) sale of fireworks by and to members of the public and (c) introduce firework control zones.

Kevin Hollinrake:

The Government endorses the considerate use of fireworks and action taken to reduce the risks and disturbances to individuals, animals and property. The majority of individuals who use fireworks do so in a responsible and safe manner and there are enforcement mechanisms in place to tackle situations when fireworks are misused. The Government has no current plans to legislate further but continues to monitor the situation.

■ Foreign Companies: Registration

Stephen Kinnock: [\[82329\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many entities registered with Companies House for the Register of Overseas Entities in (a) August 2022, (b) September 2022 and (c) October 2022.

Kevin Hollinrake:

The number of accepted registrations for the Register of Overseas Entities in August 2022 was 221, with a further 958 registrations in September 2022, and 1,430 registrations in October 2022.

Stephen Kinnock: [\[82330\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many entities required to register with Companies House for the Register of Overseas Entities by 31 January 2023 have not done so.

Kevin Hollinrake:

At the end of 2021, there were around 32,000 unique overseas company names attached to property in England and Wales and around 95,000 properties registered to overseas companies in England and Wales. As at 8 November, 3214 entities have registered. Existing entities have until the end of the transitional period to register. The overwhelming majority of existing overseas entities that must register hold property in England and Wales.

■ Fuel Oil

Andrea Leadsom: [\[80693\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to support people who rely on heating oil for domestic use.

Graham Stuart:

Households reliant on oil to heat their homes will receive the Alternative Fuel Payment (AFP).

Households eligible for these payments in Great Britain will receive £100 as a credit on their electricity bill this winter. Households who are eligible but do not have a relationship with an electricity supplier will receive the £100 via the AFP Alternative Fund. These payments will limit the average user's heating cost increase to a similar percentage to those using on grid gas.

Heat Pumps**Janet Daby:****[80887]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to increase the number of heat pump installers registered under the Microgeneration Certification Scheme.

Graham Stuart:

The Government's £6 million Home Decarbonisation Skills Training competition in 2020 and 2021 supported almost 7,000 training opportunities, including training for over 2,000 heat pump installers. On 20 September the Government launched the next phase of the competition with a further £10 million to fund training for people working in the energy efficiency, retrofit and low carbon heating sectors in England. It is expected that many of these installers will seek to register with the Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) or equivalent schemes.

Housing: Fuel Oil**Peter Kyle:****[80807]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 27 October 2022 to Question 67265 on Housing: Fuel Oil, what were the values used in the calculation of (a) heating oil demand for a typical Northern Ireland home, (b) the Northern Ireland heating oil price and (c) a typical Northern Ireland heating oil bill.

Graham Stuart:

As set out in the Impact assessment published on GOV.UK:

- The heating oil demand for an average off-grid home in Northern Ireland has been modelled as 1817 litres over the past year.
- The average price of heating oil in Northern Ireland was 45.1 pence per litre in September 2021 and 104.6 pence per litre in September 2022.

It is on the basis of these figures that we have calculated that the cost of an average heating oil bill in Northern Ireland over the past year, based on typical demand, was £820 at September 2021 prices, and £1900 at September 2022 prices.

Attachments:

1. EPG (Domestic) Impact Assessment, Oct 2022 [[EPG Impact Assessment.pdf](#)]

■ Intellectual Property: Regulation

Bill Esterson: [\[80687\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether it is his policy that intellectual property practitioners who operate in the UK should be regulated in the UK.

George Freeman:

The Government supports appropriate regulation of intellectual property practitioners where this is necessary to ensure that applicants and rights holders are effectively represented.

■ Members: Correspondence

Bill Esterson: [\[82263\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to respond to the letter from the hon. Member for Sefton Central of 3 November 2022 on steel production.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The Department acknowledges receipt of the hon Member's correspondence of 3rd November. It aims to answer 80% of correspondence within 15 working days.

A response to the hon. Member will be issued shortly.

■ Offshore Industry: Licensing

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[77383\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to help protect Marine Protected Areas during new oil and gas licensing rounds.

Graham Stuart:

I refer my hon. Friend to the answers I gave the hon. Member for Brighton Pavilion on 8th November 2022 to Questions [74614](#), [74616](#) and [74617](#).

■ Ports: Energy Bill Relief Scheme

Bill Esterson: [\[82259\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he plans to include the residential marinas sector in the list of vulnerable sectors subject to an extension of the Energy Bill Relief Scheme beyond 31 March 2023.

Graham Stuart:

The Government cannot confirm which sectors will receive further support after 31st March 2023 until the review has concluded. The Government is committed to publishing the findings of the review by January 2023.

■ Ports: Energy Price Guarantee

Bill Esterson:

[\[82260\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether she plans to include energy purchases of marina operators under the Energy Price Guarantee.

Graham Stuart:

The Energy Price Guarantee applies to domestic consumers and, therefore, marina operators are ineligible.

■ Research

Mr Jonathan Lord:

[\[71058\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to support the UK's research and development sector.

George Freeman:

At the 2021 Spending Review, the Government announced an increase in public expenditure on R&D, including a commitment to £20 billion per annum by 2024/2025.

R&D investment supports delivery of the Innovation Strategy, by creating the conditions to grow private sector investment. To develop R&D strengths across the country, Government is increasing domestic public investment in R&D outside the Greater South East by at least 40% by 2030. We have also committed £800 million to the Advanced Research and Invention Agency, a new science and research funding agency, to fund research that will develop new technologies.

■ Science: Research

Chi Onwurah:

[\[80699\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 3 November 2022 to Question 72254 on Science: Research, how much has been spent on government funded fellowships available to international researchers; and if he will provide a spending breakdown.

George Freeman:

BEIS supports a range of fellowships for individuals to carry out excellent research in the UK, principally through UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and the four National Academies. Across the Spending Review (2022/23 to 2024/25) BEIS has allocated: £25.1 billion to UKRI, of which £2 billion is for a new collective approach to talent initiatives, covering studentships and fellowships; and £634 million to the National Academies, of which the majority is for fellowships.

BEIS also expects to allocate funding for fellowships from its new £750 million partnerships fund, building on previous spend under our R&D ODA funds.

■ Self-employed

Angela Rayner: [82327]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether it is his policy to launch a review to explore how the Government can better support the self-employed.

Kevin Hollinrake:

Enterprise and backing long term growth is one of the main priorities of the Department. This focus on enterprise encompasses a number of different areas, including boosting enterprise by making the UK the best place to start and grow a business, taking advantage of Brexit to build the UK's competitive advantage, creating jobs and encouraging investment.

■ Sizewell C Power Station

Bill Esterson: [80686]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether it is his policy to support the development of Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station.

Graham Stuart:

The Government is in constructive ongoing negotiations on Sizewell C, with the aim of delivering a key objective of the British Energy Security Strategy, to take one large-scale nuclear project to a Final Investment Decision (FID) this Parliament, subject to value for money and all relevant approvals.

The Government has announced its intention to provide up to £700m of funding to the project, subject to the outcome of these negotiations.

■ Small Businesses: Energy

Wera Hobhouse: [78805]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what is the average gas and electricity consumption of small and medium sized businesses broken down into non-domestic EPC bands.

Graham Stuart:

BEIS publishes information on the gas and electricity consumption of non-domestic buildings, including splits by occupying business size, in England and Wales. This is available for total gas/electricity consumption, as well as the median gas/electricity intensity (which accounts for the size of the building, which can vary considerably). This is available in tables 12 and 13 of the Non-Domestic National Energy Efficiency Data-framework (2022): <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/non-domestic-national-energy-efficiency-data-framework-nd-need-2022>.

Total consumption figures are given only for non-domestic buildings which have occupying business information (around 50%), so will be underestimated. These figures also exclude any businesses working from domestic premises.

Average consumption and splits by EPC band are not available due to data limitations.

■ **STEM Subjects: Females**

Sir Mark Hendrick:

[\[75805\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking with Cabinet colleagues to help (a) tackle gender disparities and (b) increase female representation in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) workforce.

George Freeman:

The Government funds programmes, delivered by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), to support STEM and the creation of a more diverse STEM workforce now and in the future.

STEM Inspiration programmes such as STEM Ambassadors particularly focus on engaging with under-represented groups, including young women, to develop their skills and interest in STEM careers.

UKRI is also working with funders and the wider sector to co-design a joined-up talent offer that is open to the full diversity of people in the UK across all career stages.

■ **STEP Programme: Metals**

Alexander Stafford:

[\[76165\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to help ensure that the STEP project is supported by companies in the UK on out sourcing and forming operations for the metals required by that project, including Tungsten.

George Freeman:

UK companies will play a critical role in helping to deliver STEP by 2040 and in turn, the Programme will develop capacity in the wider UK supply chain. Plans for the sourcing of materials including metals necessary for the success of STEP are in development and the UK Atomic Energy Authority continue to work closely with UK companies to maximise opportunity. The Department recently published the Critical Minerals Strategy which outlines how the UK will take collaborative action to diversify and increase the resilience of our supply chains.

CABINET OFFICE

■ **Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility**

Florence Eshalomi:

[\[80984\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, when he plans to publish the responsibilities of the Cabinet Office Minister of State (Minister without Portfolio).

Jeremy Quin:

A revised List of Ministerial Responsibilities reflecting current Ministerial appointments will be published in due course. In the meantime, departments are updating their ministers' pages on GOV.UK which also include portfolio information.

■ **Cabinet Office: Public Expenditure**

Angela Rayner: **[80723]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will place in the Library a copy of expected annual spend on the following projects in the major projects portfolio (a) Future Service Programme, (b) One Public Estate, (c) Digital Identity, (d) Whitehall Campus, (e) Civil Service Pensions 2015 Remedy, (f) Government Hubs Programme, (g) Commercial Capability Expansion Programme, (h) National Underground Asset Register, (i) Vetting Transformation Programme, (j) Transforming CCS, (k) GOV UK Verify and (l) Workplace Services Transformation Programme, for each of the financial years from 2022 until the end year of each project, and split into current and capital spending.

Jeremy Quin:

The Government Major Projects Portfolio (GMPP) data is published annually in the Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA) annual report. The current report is available here: [Infrastructure and Projects Authority annual report 2022 - GOV.UK](#) with further detail in the "[Transparency and freedom of information releases](#)" section of [GOV.UK](#). This data includes whole life costs and financial information for the preceding year for each GMPP project. This ensures the Government provides a consistent picture on time cost and quality at the right point in time in the project lifecycle.

■ **Cabinet Office: Redundancy Pay**

Christine Jardine: **[82405]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the cost to the public purse has been of Ministerial severance pay in their Department in each year between 1 January 2016 and 8 November 2022.

Jeremy Quin:

Under the Ministerial and Other Pensions and Salaries Act 1991, eligible Ministers who leave office are entitled to a one off payment equivalent to one quarter of their annual salary at the point at which they leave Government.

This applies only where a Minister is under 65 and is not appointed to a ministerial office within three weeks of leaving government.

Individuals may waive the payment to which they are entitled. That is a matter for their personal discretion, but this approach has been taken in the past.

Details of such payments are published in departmental annual reports and accounts, and ministerial salaries are published on GOV.UK at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ministerial-salary-data>.

■ Cabinet Office: Yandex

Alex Davies-Jones:

[\[82488\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Cabinet Secretary was informed by the Rt hon. Member for North East Somerset of the shares in Yandex Ltd held by Somerset Capital Management LLP while he held his positions as (a) Leader of the House and (b) Minister of State for Brexit Opportunities; and whether an assessment was made of whether this could have constituted a conflict of interest.

Jeremy Quin:

I refer the hon Member to the answer given by my Rt Hon Friend the member for Northampton North on 14 March 2022 ([UIN 122754](#)) and to the Annual Report of the Independent Adviser on Ministers Interests, together with the List of Ministers Interests, which were published on 31 May 2022.

■ Death

Wes Streeting:

[\[80804\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate he has made of the number of non-covid-19 excess deaths since 1 January 2022; and what the causes of those deaths were.

Jeremy Quin:

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

A response to the Hon. Member's Parliamentary Question of 7 November is attached.

Attachments:

1. Non-Covid-19 deaths [\[UKSA_Response_to_PQ80804.pdf\]](#)

■ Death: Statistics

Ben Lake:

[\[80837\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether he has had recent discussions with representatives from the Office for National Statistics regarding an analysis of excess deaths since June 2022.

Jeremy Quin:

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

A response to the Hon. Member's Parliamentary Question of 7 November is attached.

Attachments:

1. Excess deaths [\[UKSA response to PQ80837.pdf\]](#)

■ Government Departments: Public Expenditure

John Penrose:

[\[83593\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what proportion of spending on Government programmes will be covered by the work of the Evaluation Task Force this year; and what

plans he has to increase this figure to assess the effectiveness of all or most of those programmes in future.

Jeremy Quin:

The Evaluation Task Force (ETF) was set up to improve the way government programmes are evaluated to improve our assessment of whether programmes should be continued, expanded, modified or stopped. The ETF provides all government Departments with reactive evaluation advice and support on request, as well as a proactive scrutiny and challenge function, which is responsive to requests from Treasury and Cabinet Office ministerial priorities. Departments, however, are responsible for evaluating their own programmes.

HM Government spends about £1 trillion each year, including £400 billion on public services. Since the establishment of the ETF 18 months ago, the team has advised on how to best evaluate 169 programmes worth £81.7bn. This includes the ETF's recently published top 10 priority areas where they will provide more significant evaluation support and challenge to ensure that evaluation is used to understand the effectiveness of the most important policies and programmes across government. In addition, through the £15m Evaluation Accelerator Fund, the ETF has awarded 16 programmes funding to support actionable evaluations in priority areas.

The ETF advises on programmes covering single-year and multi-year expenditure and therefore cannot accurately determine the proportion of spending on government programmes that will be covered by the ETF this year.

The ETF will be updating the government major projects conducted by the Prime Minister's Implementation Unit in 2019. The findings will be used to identify projects where the ETF can make a significant difference by providing evaluation support. The ambition is, by 2025, all new major programmes in government will have a robust evaluation in place, delivering value for money for the public, and ensuring the impact of taxpayer money is maximised.

■ **Internet and National Security**

Alex Davies-Jones:

[\[82487\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, which (a) members of the Cabinet and (b) other Ministers have been involved in discussions on the content of (i) the Online Safety Bill and (ii) the National Security Bill since 24 July 2019.

Jeremy Quin:

Both the Online Safety Bill led by DCMS and the National Security Bill led by the Home Office include measures that touch on policy areas covered by a range of government departments. As such, Ministers from across government have been involved in their development from initial policy discussions to introduction to Parliament over several years. In line with normal process, both of these Bills come under Cabinet collective agreement.

■ IX Wireless: Contracts

Mr Kevan Jones:

[82207]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether IX Wireless has been awarded a government contract in this financial year.

Jeremy Quin:

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

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

■ Public Sector: Procurement

Mr Kevan Jones:

[82209]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what his Department's policy is on the awarding of public procurement contracts to companies that have never declared a profit.

Jeremy Quin:

The driving principle behind public procurement policy is to award contracts on the basis of value for money, which means the optimum combination of cost and quality over the lifetime of the project, not just price alone. The best way to test for and to demonstrate this principle is via an open competition, as is required in most cases by public procurement legislation.

It is open to organisations to consider and bid for contract opportunities where appropriate. This Government is committed to ensuring procurement opportunities are accessible to a range of organisations, and in supporting start-ups, small businesses and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises to participate in government procurement.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

■ Housing: Older People

Jim Shannon:

[65769]

To ask the Member for South West Bedfordshire, representing the Church Commissioners, if the Church of England will make an assessment of the potential merits of providing accommodation on their land for people aged 55 and over with shared values.

Andrew Selous:

The Church of England's Social Impact Investment Programme has committed £2m towards the second Social and Sustainable Housing Fund [SASH II] managed by Social and Sustainable Capital. SASH II seeks to enable charities and social sector organisations to acquire and own portfolios of property so that they can provide a combination of high quality housing and targeted support to vulnerable people. More information can be found here: [Church of England commits £2m to enable charities to purchase housing to support vulnerable people | The Church of England](#)

The Archbishops' Housing Commission made recommendations to the Church and Government about building new communities and the future use of land. An example is St Bride's Church in Trafford, which worked with Trafford Housing Trust (THT) to release land that was used to build a new church and the Limelight Centre: 81 extra-care apartments for over 55 year-olds and a new expanded community centre. The full report from the Commission can be found here: [Archbishops Housing Commission](#)

■ Persecution of Christians Across the Globe Independent Review

Jim Shannon: **[80707]**

To ask the Member for South West Bedfordshire, representing the Church Commissioners, whether the Church Commissioners have taken recent steps to help support the implementation of recommendations in the report entitled Bishop of Truro's independent review of FCDO support for persecuted Christians, published on 4 July 2022.

Andrew Selous:

The Church of England is in regular contact with officials at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office regarding the implementation of the Bishop of Truro's Review Recommendations and what further measures might be needed to support freedom of religion our belief for all. The Church of England offered support and advice in advance of the Ministerial on International Religious Freedom that the Government hosted in July 2022 and is assisting with follow up to the Ministerial.

DEFENCE

■ Antitank Missiles: Contracts

John Healey: **[80585]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to his oral contribution of 7 November 2022, who the parties are to the Government's recently signed contract on NLAWs.

Alex Chalk:

A tranche of several hundred NLAW missiles will be delivered to UK stockpiles from 2023. We remain on schedule to sign a contract for a larger subsequent order imminently. It is not possible to comment further on the exact details and costs of establishing individual contracts, as this information is both commercially and operationally sensitive.

■ Armoured Fighting Vehicles: Sales

Clive Lewis: **[80795]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many surplus vehicles have been listed for sale by his Department since 1 January 2022; and if he will publish a list of those vehicles.

Alex Chalk:

The following vehicles have been disposed of via sale/auction or as scrap since 1 January 2022:

VEHICLE TYPE	SALE/AUCTION	SCRAP
Bulldog	50	0
Combat Vehicle Reconnaissance (Tracked)	102	0
Land Rover Truck Utility Light, Truck Utility Medium, and Battlefield Ambulance	112	2
Land Rover Panama	5	0
Land Rover Snatch	15	0
Truck Cargo 4T Bedford	0	1
Truck Cargo 4T Leyland Daf	0	1
MAN Support Vehicle 6T	147	4
Mowag Duro Truck Utility Heavy Duty	0	2
Pinzgauer Truck Utility Medium (Heavy Duty)	22	0
Quad Bikes	82	0
Remover	6	0
Revivor	1	0
All-Terrain Vehicle Trailers	67	19
Lightweight Trailers	203	0
Miscellaneous Trailers	0	15
White Fleet and Miscellaneous Vehicles	292	190
Totals	1,105	234

■ **Boxer Vehicles**

Mr Kevan Jones:[\[80621\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to ensure that there are enough qualified (a) programme managers and (b) engineers to accept the Army's Boxer variant.

Alex Chalk:

The BOXER programme has the appropriate governance structure in place. Defence Equipment & Support (DE&S) keeps required project team resources under active review in accordance with evolving Army and wider Ministry of Defence priorities. As part of that resourcing process, Acceptance activity will be staffed with a range of personnel including P3M (Portfolio, Programme, Project Management) and Engineering specialists from OCCAR, DE&S and Army. Plans are being developed to meet the necessary timelines to facilitate this acceptance activity.

■ **China: Armed Forces****Mr Kevan Jones:**[\[80623\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what sanctions his Department has to prevent former servicemen and servicewomen from taking on advisory roles with the People's Republic of China.

James Heappey:

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) does not track former Armed Forces personnel, where they travel to, or roles they undertake in a private capacity after leaving the Armed Forces. The behaviours and actions of former UK Armed Forces personnel may become of interest to MOD if it is reported that they or their activity poses a threat to National Security.

The MOD would not hesitate to bring criminal charges against any individuals who are in breach of the Official Secrets Act. The Department are looking at options to tighten the contractual obligations of Service leavers and are encouraging the reporting of any recruitment activity that is damaging to National Security.

UK Government roles with access to sensitive information require the postholder to have an appropriate national security vetting clearance, which will consider the applicants' overseas connections. If a significant and unmanageable risk, such as previous concerning foreign connections, is identified this may block people from taking up such roles in future.

The Government's National Security Bill (led by the Home Office) will capture a range of relevant activity and provide additional possible routes to prosecution.

John Healey:[\[82179\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Chinese Armed Forces personnel were provided with training at UK military bases in each year since 2010.

James Heappey:

The numbers of Chinese Armed Forces personnel attending courses at UK Armed Forces establishments from 2010 is as follows:

FINANCIAL YEAR	NO. OF CHINESE NATIONALS
2010/2011	6

FINANCIAL YEAR	NO. OF CHINESE NATIONALS
2011/2012	5
2012/2013	4
2013/2014	5
2014/2015	5
2015/2016	4
2016/2017	3
2017/2018	14
2018/2019	5
2019/2020	7
2020/2021	0
2021/2022	0

The UK has never provided training that contained any sensitive or classified information and it did not compromise the Official Secrets Act. No training has been provided to Chinese personnel since 2020, either in the UK or in the People's Republic of China.

■ **Defence Science and Technology: Staff**

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[80626\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether numbers of staff at DSTL have increased in the last five years.

Alex Chalk:

The average Full-Time Equivalent number of staff (including Board members) employed by the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) has increased from 3,654 in financial year (FY) 2017-18 to 4,456 in FY 2021-22.

■ **Detention Centres: Manston**

Luke Pollard:

[\[77599\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 2 November to Question 73134 on Detention Centres: Manston, what estimate he has made of the (a) daily and (b) monthly cost to the public purse of deploying Ministry of Defence staff.

James Heappey:

There are three shifts of between 13 and 19 Army personnel assigned to Manston, assisting the Border Force with logistical support and initial processing of migrants

upon arrival at the site. Aside from some modest incidental allowances (such as travel and subsistence payments), there is no additional cost to the public purse presented by the deployment of Service personnel on this task beyond that which Defence would expect if the individuals were deployed on alternative tasking. All costs are therefore not charged elsewhere and fall to the Army's budget.

Luke Pollard:

[77600]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 2 November 2022 to Question 73134 on Detention Centres: Manston, which departmental budget is used for the costs of deploying staff from his Department to the Manston immigration facility.

James Heappey:

There are three shifts of between 13 and 19 Army personnel assigned to Manston, assisting the Border Force with logistical support and initial processing of migrants upon arrival at the site. Aside from some modest incidental allowances (such as travel and subsistence payments), there is no additional cost to the public purse presented by the deployment of Service personnel on this task beyond that which Defence would expect if the individuals were deployed on alternative tasking. All costs are therefore not charged elsewhere and fall to the Army's budget.

Luke Pollard:

[77601]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 2 November 2022 to Question 73134 on Detention Centres: Manston, how many armed forces personnel from the (a) British Army, (b) Royal Air Force and (c) Royal Navy are deployed at the Manston immigration facility.

James Heappey:

There are three shifts of between 13 and 19 military personnel, all from the Army, assigned to the Manston site. These personnel assist with logistics and the initial triage of migrants upon arrival at the site. There are no personnel from the Royal Navy or Royal Air Force currently deployed at Manston on this task.

■ **Elbit Systems UK: Defence Equipment**

Chris Evans:

[82256]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether Elbit Systems UK Ltd will continue to provide the detect and destroy system for the British Army.

Alex Chalk:

I am answering this question on the assumption that the hon. Member referring to the Dismounted Joint Fires Integrator system, which is currently being developed with Elbit Systems UK Ltd.

The system design and way ahead is currently under review by the MOD. The Department is working with the company to take the system design through its Critical Design Review, after which a decision will be made on the way forward based on the proposed delivery plan.

■ **Elbit Systems UK: Electronic Warfare**

Chris Evans: [\[82255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether Elbit Systems UK Ltd provide electronic warfare capabilities for his Department as of 8 November 2022.

Alex Chalk:

Elbit Systems UK provide Electronic Warfare capabilities as part of a consortium with Babcock and QinetiQ, for the Maritime Electronic Warfare System Integrated Capability (MEWSIC) programme announced in November 2021.

■ **Elbit Systems UK: LE TacCIS Programme**

Chris Evans: [\[82254\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether Elbit Systems UK Ltd will continue to provide the MORPHEUS Battlefield Management Application.

Alex Chalk:

The Battlefield Management Application (BMA) was delivered under the terms of the contract with Elbit, which expired on the 30 April 2022. As all obligations had been met, there was no requirement to extend this contract further.

The Ministry of Defence is actively considering how best to deliver the totality of the MORPHEUS project, including the delivery of a number of subsequent capability elements necessary for a fielded system, including the BMA.

■ **Elbit Systems UK: Trident Submarines**

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[82206\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether Elbit will continue work on the Dreadnought crew training programme after its departure from Selborne.

Alex Chalk:

Elbit Systems UK formally departed this contract on 08 November 2022, and will take no further part in the Dreadnought Crew Training programme.

■ **F-35 Aircraft: Accidents**

John Healey: [\[78924\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 12 September to Question 48240 on F-35 Aircraft: Accidents, when he expects to publish the final report of the Service Inquiry into the loss of F-35B ZM152 on 17 November 2021.

James Heappey:

The Defence Safety Authority Service Inquiry into the loss of F-35B ZM152 is nearing completion and will be published as soon as practical.

■ F-35 Aircraft: Procurement

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[82200\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether all countries participating in the F-35 programme, including non-partner countries, must purchase components through the Joint Programme Office.

Alex Chalk:

All F-35 Partner Nations, Programme Participants, and Foreign Military Sales customers procure their aircraft, including their constituent components through the F-35 Joint Programme Office.

■ Merlin Helicopters

Dave Doogan: [\[82448\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many EH101 aircraft are available for service; and where those aircraft are stationed or embarked.

Alex Chalk:

The Royal Navy operates thirty Merlin (EH101) Mk2 aircraft parented at Royal Naval Air Station (RNAS) Culdrose, and twenty-five Merlin Mk4 aircraft parented at RNAS Yeovilton. We do not comment on the number of aircraft embarked at any specific time, as to do so would, or would be likely to, prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces.

■ Military Aircraft

John Healey: [\[82178\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many and what proportion of the air mobility fleet including the (a) C-137, (b) C-130J and (c) A400M were fit for purpose in each month since March 2021.

Alex Chalk:

Figures for the average number of Globemaster C-17, Hercules C-130J and Atlas A400M aircraft available and as a proportion of each fleet are given below.

DATE	C-17	%	C-130J	%	A400M	%
Available	% of Fleet	Available	% of Fleet	Available	% of Fleet	
1 March 2021	7	88	9	60	14	70
1 April 2021	7	88	9	60	13	65
1 May 2021	6	75	8	53	14	70
1 June 2021	6	75	8	53	13	65
1 July 2021	7	88	9	60	13	65
1 August 2021	7	88	9	60	13	65
1 September 2021	7	88	10	71	14	70
1 October 2021	7	88	10	71	14	70
1 November 2021	7	88	9	64	14	70
1 December 2021	7	88	8	57	13	65
1 January 2022	7	88	8	57	14	70
1 February 2022	7	88	8	57	14	70
1 March 2022	7	88	10	71	14	70
1 April 2022	7	88	9	64	13	65
1 May 2022	6	75	10	71	13	65
1 June 2022	6	75	10	71	14	70
1 July 2022	6	75	9	64	13	65
1 August 2022	7	88	9	64	14	70
1 September 2022	7	88	9	64	14	70

Figures are rounded to the nearest whole aircraft

■ Ministry of Defence: Asylum

John Healey:

[78923]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many of his Department's sites in the UK are being used as processing centres for asylum claimants.

James Heappey:

In December 2021, in response to a request for estate to enable processing of cross-channel migrants, Defence made available the former Defence Fire Training and Development Centre at Manston, Kent. The site is operated by the Home Office under a Memorandum of Transfer of Occupation and is the only site within the Defence Estate used for processing of migrants.

In addition, while not used for 'processing' asylum claimants, Napier Barracks in Kent has been made available to the Home Office for a five-year period from 2020 to provide additional asylum accommodation capacity.

■ **Ministry of Defence: Land**

John Healey: [\[83528\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many homes have been built on land formerly owned by his Department since 2010.

Alex Chalk:

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) does not retrospectively track the development of its former sites to validate how many homes have been built. The Housing Unit Potential scored at the time of sale, represents the estimated number of houses that could be built.

Since 2010 the MOD has sold 912 parcels of land, totalling circa 5,858 hectares, with a potential for circa 53,500 housing units as well as additional commercial and agricultural use.

■ **Multi Role Ocean Surveillance Ship**

Luke Pollard: [\[80883\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, where he plans to base the new Multi Role Ocean Surveillance ships.

Alex Chalk:

The Ministry of Defence is considering options for basing the Multi Role Ocean Surveillance Ships, and an announcement will be made in due course.

■ **Multi Role Ocean Surveillance Ship: Contracts**

Luke Pollard: [\[80884\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he expects to (a) award contracts for and (b) take delivery of the Multi Role Ocean Surveillance ships.

Alex Chalk:

The Secretary of State for Defence announced the acceleration of the procurement of the first Multi-Role Ocean Surveillance ship during Defence Oral Questions on 7 November 2022. For reasons of commercial confidentiality, I am at the present time unable to comment further on the contractual position or delivery schedule of that ship, as to do so would be prejudicial to the commercial interests of the Ministry of

Defence and other parties. Planning work has commenced for the concept and assessment phase of the project for the second Multi Role Ocean Surveillance capability.

■ Refugees: Afghanistan

Dan Jarvis:

[\[80712\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he has taken to reduce the processing times for the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy since August 2021.

James Heappey:

It is recognised that processing times within ARAP can vary considerably, dependent upon a number of factors including the complexity of the case, the need to conduct checks with other Government Departments, or the length of time it takes an applicant to respond to follow-up queries.

Significant progress has been made to accelerate the process in recent months, including additional Defence resource being made available and an enhanced casework system. Whilst a high number of applications continue to be received, the majority of these are duplicates or are ineligible and the team are actively processing and issuing decisions on more applications per month than are being received. MOD Officials also continue to work closely with partners across Government in order to ensure necessary checks are completed as soon as is practicable.

I would also like to assure the hon. Member that the continued effective operation of the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP) scheme is kept under regular review within the department by senior officials and Ministers, reflecting the priority of the scheme. Having successfully relocated over 11,600 individuals under the ARAP scheme so far, the primary focus for the ARAP team is identifying and relocating the estimated remaining 4,900 eligible individuals (including dependents), using HMG employment records to target efforts.

■ Submarines: Fires

John Healey:

[\[82183\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many fires have been reported on UK submarines in each year since 2010.

Alex Chalk:

We do not disclose information or comment on Royal Navy submarines. To do so could prejudice the capability, effectiveness, or security of the Armed Forces.

■ Supply Chains: Security

John Healey:

[\[82180\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 7 November 2022 to Question 77287 on Supply Chains: Security, what is the scope of the work underway to

provide industry with a clear requirement supporting defence priorities; who is leading on this work; and when he plans for it to be completed.

Alex Chalk:

Defence continually manages and analyses its stocks of equipment, stores, weapons and munitions, whilst also reviewing industrial capacity and supply chains, both domestically and internationally, as part of normal planning processes. The MOD remains fully engaged with industry, allies and partners throughout, so as to ensure they fully understand our Armed Forces' immediate and future requirements. This is especially true today as we work to maintain the continuation of supply to the Armed Forces of Ukraine in addition to our own, whilst ensuring that all equipment and munitions granted in kind from UK stocks are replaced as expeditiously as possible.

This delivers on our commitment in the Defence and Security Industrial Strategy to work more closely with industry, while the Defence Capability Framework published in July sets out our pipeline of requirements for the next ten years.

■ **Team Resolute: Contracts**

Mr Kevan Jones:

[80632]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, who the prime contractor on the Team Resolute bid is.

Alex Chalk:

I refer the right hon. Member to the answer given on 23 September 2021 to question 51616.

Attachments:

1. Fleet Solid Support Ships: Procurement [[51616 - Fleet Solid Support Ships.docx](#)]

■ **Team Resolute: Fleet Solid Support Ships**

Mr Kevan Jones:

[80633]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, who the prime contractor is on the Team Resolute bid for the Fleet Solid Support Ship contract.

Alex Chalk:

I refer the right hon. Member to the answer given on 23 September 2021 to question 51616.

Attachments:

1. Fleet Solid Support Ships: Procurement [[51616 - Fleet Solid Support Ships.docx](#)]

■ **Type 26 Frigates: Contracts**

Mr Mark Francois:

[83554]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what is the most recent estimated total life cycle cost for the Type 26 frigate programme.

Alex Chalk:

The Type 26 frigate will be procured in two batches. Batch 1 contract costs are £3.7 billion with a programme cost uplift of £233 million. Batch 2 costs and in-service costs are currently commercial in confidence.

■ Type 26 Frigates: Finance**Mr Kevan Jones:**[\[80616\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he expects to allocate funding for Batch 2 of the Type 26 Frigate.

Alex Chalk:

A deal in principle has been reached with BAES for manufacture of Batch 2 and is currently proceeding through Ministry of Defence and Government approvals. Funding lines are continually reviewed as part of routine programme management to ensure value for money is maximised for the taxpayer, drive the schedule and manage risk and opportunity.

■ Ukraine: Armoured Fighting Vehicles**Clive Lewis:**[\[80794\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of (a) selling and (b) loaning to Ukraine the UK's surplus (i) main battle tanks, (ii) infantry fighting vehicles and (iii) armoured personnel carriers.

James Heappey:

Defence continually manages and analyses its stocks of equipment, including armoured vehicles, against commitments and threats. These considerations have informed the amount of military aid granted in kind to the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

The UK has gifted almost 200 armoured vehicles to Ukraine which include Mastiff protected mobility vehicles and variants of Combat Vehicle Reconnaissance (Tracked).

■ Undocumented Migrants: English Channel**Luke Pollard:**[\[73132\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the cost was for the involvement of the Royal Navy in tackling small boats crossing the English Channel in the last two years.

James Heappey:

Defence assumed primacy for managing small boat migration in April 2022. The cost of Defence activity relating to Channel crossings in Financial Year 2022-23 will not be known until the accounts have closed in the summer of 2023. Prior to this, supporting activity was undertaken by the Navy through ad hoc, infrequent military assistance tasks.

Operation ISOTROPE is being fulfilled by naval assets drawn from the Coastal Forces Squadron and, as such, the additional costs to the Department for their tasking on ISOTROPE as opposed to other taskings in Home Waters is estimated to be relatively modest.

John Healey: [77291]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the costs to his Department of Operation Isotrope are.

James Heappey:

I refer the right hon. Member to the answer I gave on 26 July 2022 to question 33682.

Attachments:

1. Undocumented Migrants: English Channel [[UIN 33682.docx](#)]

■ **Unmanned Air Vehicles: English Channel**

John Healey: [77292]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many unmanned aerial vehicles operated by the Armed Forces have been used during Operation Isotrope.

James Heappey:

The Armed Forces have not operated any uncrewed aerial systems or remotely piloted vehicles as part of operations related to small boat migrant crossings of the English Channel.

The Home Office contracts a supplier to deliver this capability over the Channel and His Majesty's Coastguard also operates an uncrewed drone system in support of search and rescue activities.

■ **Veterans: Medical Records**

John Healey: [75781]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the Answer of 31 October to Question 62707 on Veterans: Medical Records, what percentage of veterans who left the Armed Forces before 2010 have had their medical records digitised by his Department.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The Ministry of Defence Central Healthcare Records Library (CHRL) maintains primary healthcare record of veterans, civilians, foreign nationals and others. Of the 1,185,000 records held by CHRL, some 1,000,000 (84%) have been scanned and saved digitally. It is not possible to identify the total number of digitised records of veterans specifically from the other patient types.

In addition, there are more than three million paper medical records for veterans held in the Crown Archives. Currently, none (0%) have been digitised, but a digital copy of an individual record can be provided on request.

■ Veterans: Social Rented Housing

John Healey:

[\[80586\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 26 October 2022 to Question 68037 on Veterans: Repossession Orders, what information his Department holds on how many people who had served as a regular or reservist took up new social housing lettings in 2020/21.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The Ministry of Defence does not collect or hold any information about veterans and social housing lettings.

■ Watchkeeper WK450

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[80617\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of whether Watchkeeper remains an effective capability for the Army Air Corps.

James Heappey:

Full assessments were made of all capabilities retained under the Integrated Review, including Watchkeeper, and on this basis, it was determined that Watchkeeper would be retained as an Army Capability.

Watchkeeper is operated by the 47th Regiment Royal Artillery - the Army's Tactical Unmanned Aerial Systems (TUAS) Regiment.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Arts: Finance

Pete Wishart:

[\[80635\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department is taking to protect public funding for creative industries during the period of increases to the cost of living.

Pete Wishart:

[\[80636\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department is taking to support the livelihoods of people in the creative industries during the period of increases to the cost of living.

Julia Lopez:

The Government is aware of the number of issues facing the creative industries as a result of rising inflation and rising energy prices.

In September 2022 the government announced support for businesses, including businesses within the creative industries, through the Energy Bill Relief Scheme. This is expected to cut non-domestic energy bills by between one-quarter and one-third up until March 2023. BEIS recently launched a 3 month review into the effectiveness of

the Energy Bill Relief Scheme. DCMS continues to work with BEIS and industry to analyse the impact of the current Energy Bill Relief Scheme on our sectors.

Support is also available through the targeted support package announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in May, worth over £37 billion in total, to ease the cost of living burden on millions of households with the greatest need, including those working in the creative industries.

The creative industries are some of the fastest growing sectors in the UK economy, contributing £116 billion in GVA and employing 2.1 million people. That is why we are developing a Sector Vision to set out our ambitions for the sector between now and 2030, which we will publish in the coming months.

Supporting the resilience of the creative industries' workforce in the long-term is a key objective of the Policy and Evidence Centre's Review of Job Quality and Working Practice in the Creative Industries which was co-funded by DCMS and is due to be published later this year. The Government will work with industry to consider its recommendations.

The Government is also supporting the creative industries through Arts Council England, which recently announced support for 990 organisations across the creative and cultural sectors as part of its 2023-2026 Investment Programme.

■ Arts: Greater London

Mr Virendra Sharma:

[82217]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department is taking to support the arts and culture in London.

Stuart Andrew:

Through the unprecedented Culture Recovery Fund (CRF), HM Government supported London's vibrant cultural sector against the impact of COVID-19. London-based groups and venues received just over a third of total CRF funding – £494 million in grants and loans – supporting over 1,200 organisations. That included 21 organisations in Ealing, such as Colour Sound Experiment Ltd (just under £500,000) and Marquee Entec Ltd (£524,000). The Southbank Centre, the Royal Opera House and Historic Royal Palaces were just a few of the many other acclaimed London institutions which received significant amounts of CRF funding, demonstrating our commitment to supporting our iconic cultural and heritage venues through the pandemic.

In addition to this, Arts Council England – the arm's length body which is responsible for distributing public funding – is committed to supporting arts and culture in the capital. Around a third of its investment through the 2023–26 Investment Programme will be directed to organisations in London, amounting to £143.7 million. The new Investment Programme includes a wider spread of investment to outer London boroughs, meaning more Londoners will benefit from creative and cultural investment. Arts Council England will also continue to prioritise a number of London

boroughs in its existing set of priority places (Barking & Dagenham, Brent, Croydon, Enfield, and Newham).

I am pleased that, through this Investment Programme, Arts Council England is supporting 56 cultural organisations in the capital for the first time. These organisations will sit alongside our acclaimed institutions such as the Royal Opera House, London Transport Museum, the National Theatre, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Institute of Contemporary Arts, and Southbank Centre, which will continue to receive funding. Organisations leaving the portfolio are eligible to apply for support from Arts Council England's £12.6 million Transition Programme. This fund will provide those leaving the portfolio with up to 12 months' funding at the current levels from the point of notification. Both the amount of money available, and the length of transition, have been extended.

■ **BBC Radio: Local Broadcasting**

Dan Jarvis:

[82309]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment he has made of the impact of the potential cuts to BBC local radio on (a) people who are housebound and (b) people who live in rural area's ability to access local news.

Julia Lopez:

The Government recognises the important role that radio plays in terms of the provision of local news and information, and of community engagement, including for those who are housebound, and those living in rural areas. The Government is disappointed that the BBC is planning to reduce parts of its local radio output.

The BBC is operationally and editorially independent from the government as set out in its Royal Charter, and decisions on service delivery are a matter for the BBC. However, my officials engage the BBC and Ofcom on these issues. I have also raised them, including reflections on recent parliamentary discussions, with the BBC.

■ **Broadband**

Ben Everitt:

[82483]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment her Department has made of the need for regulatory certainty for companies deploying full fibre broadband on meeting the Government's target of reaching 85 per cent of premises with gigabit connectivity by 2025.

Julia Lopez:

In 2018, the government published the Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review (FTIR), which set out our strategy to deliver nationwide gigabit-capable broadband. Central to this strategy is our desire to see a regulatory system which incentivises competition and investment in UK fixed telecoms. In this document, DCMS called for regulation that is limited to where it is necessary, and provides the longer-term stability and predictability that investors need.

We followed this with our 2019 Statement of Strategic Priorities for Ofcom. This document implemented the regulatory strategy we established in the FTIR, including through extending market review periods to at least five years.

In 2021, Ofcom published its Wholesale Fixed Telecoms Market Review (WFTMR) which set out Ofcom's decisions for regulation of the fixed telecoms markets until 2026. The WFTMR makes explicit mention of the government's desire for regulatory stability and certainty set out in the Statement of Strategic Priorities.

This approach is working; thanks to our stable regulatory environment, there are now over 80 companies investing over £35bn to connect premises all over the UK, and gigabit coverage has increased to over 70%, rising from just 6% in 2019.

■ Channel Four Television: Privatisation

Emily Thornberry: [\[80659\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how much money her Department has spent on (a) staff activity, (b) external research and advice, (c) public consultation and (d) stakeholder engagement related to the proposed privatisation of Channel 4 since the start of the 2021-22 financial year.

Julia Lopez:

In the 2021-22 financial year, the department's costs for policy development related to Channel 4, including staff activity, external research and advice, public consultation and stakeholder engagement, were approximately £600,000. For the 2022-2023 financial year to date, these activities are estimated to have costs of £1.4 million.

This work has supported the development of options to help address the challenges that Channel 4 is facing to its long term success and sustainability. The Secretary of State has said that she is reviewing the business case for a sale of Channel 4 and will set out more detail in due course.

■ Charities: Cost of living and Energy

Julian Knight: [\[79317\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions she has had with representatives of charities on rising (a) energy costs and (b) costs of living.

Stuart Andrew:

With government support, charities from across the Civil Society sector have shown significant resilience over the past two years, and will again be crucial in supporting communities and households through the winter.

My Department has ongoing engagement on the cost of living and energy costs with stakeholders across the Civil Society sector.

DCMS will continue to engage constructively with these stakeholders and across government to monitor the impact of rising costs, and to ensure DCMS is engaged on policy which impacts charities.

■ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: EU Law

Stella Creasy:

[\[82270\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will set out the process by which her Department is (a) identifying and (b) reviewing retained EU law which may be in scope of the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill.

Paul Scully:

DCMS' work on the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill is coordinated by departmental officials and draws on work from a range of staff in teams across DCMS. This work has been made transparent through the Cabinet Office Retained EU Law (REUL) Dashboard. 35 distinct pieces of REUL have been published on this dashboard.

Since the dashboard was published in June, DCMS continues to review it.

Government officials across Whitehall are currently working to quality assure this data and any amendments to the data will be reflected in an update of the dashboard.

■ English Football League: Sky Betting and Gaming

Carolyn Harris:

[\[80785\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment she has made of the nature of the financial relationship between the EFL and SkyBet.

Paul Scully:

Football clubs can enter a wide variety of commercial partnerships and all partnerships with gambling operators must be conducted in a socially responsible fashion and never target children or vulnerable people. Sky Bet's title sponsorship of the EFL is a long-standing commercial arrangement established in 2013 with the current contract running to 2024. The arrangement includes a number of social responsibility commitments, such as ensuring there is no branding in family areas of the stadia and mandatory inclusion of safer gambling messaging on kits and in stadia.

Gambling sponsorship and the relationship between sports and gambling is included in the scope of the government's wide-ranging Review of the Gambling Act. A White Paper setting out our conclusions and next steps will be published in the coming weeks.

■ Gambling Act 2005 Review

Justin Madders:

[\[80752\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what the timetable is for the publication of the gambling review White Paper.

Carolyn Harris: [\[80786\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will make an assessment of the potential impact of the timing of the publication of the gambling white paper on (a) the economy and (b) society.

Paul Scully:

The Gambling Act Review is an extensive evidence-led review, which aims to ensure regulation is fit for the digital age. We will publish a White Paper setting out our vision and next steps in the coming weeks.

■ Hikvision: CCTV

Navendu Mishra: [\[80943\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether she has made an assessment of the potential impact of the use of Hikvision CCTV on national security.

Julia Lopez:

The UK takes its national security extremely seriously, including the security of its critical infrastructure and all sectors of the economy. However, the government does not comment on the details of national security assessments.

We encourage all organisations to follow NCSC supply chain security guidance when selecting a technology supplier. This guidance clearly sets out the considerations that organisations should be making during the procurement process.

Under the National Cyber Strategy, we are taking forward legislation to protect consumers in the Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Bill, and working with the National Cyber Security Centre to assist private and public sector users of connected devices, such as surveillance cameras, to operate in a safe and secure way.

■ IX Wireless: Contracts

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[82208\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether capital adequacy testing was undertaken on IX Wireless before it was awarded government contracts.

Julia Lopez:

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has not awarded any government contracts to IX Wireless.

■ Local Press: Costs

Dan Jarvis: [\[82308\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment he has made of the (a) cost of newsprint and (b) the impact of those costs on the viability of local newspapers.

Julia Lopez:

The Government is committed to supporting local newspapers as vital pillars of our communities. We are in regular contact with local news publishers to understand the financial pressures they face, and we are mindful of particular concerns about rising newsprint costs.

We will continue to consider all possible options in the interest of promoting and sustaining the sector.

Twitter: Fees and Charges**Charlotte Nichols:**[\[79354\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made with Cabinet colleagues of the potential impact of charging for Twitter verification on (a) child safeguarding, (b) fraud and cyber-crime and (c) other online harms; and if she will make a statement.

Paul Scully:

While the government cannot comment on the policies of individual companies, the Online Safety Bill will introduce new duties on search services and user-to-user services, including social media platforms, to protect their users. Companies will have flexibility in how they comply with their new duties, but they will need to meet standards set by Ofcom, the regulator, with regard to child safe-guarding and tackling illegal activity, including fraud.

Companies will be able to fulfil their duties by taking the recommended measures in the codes of practice that Ofcom will issue or by taking alternative action provided the outcome is as good or better.

EDUCATION**Arts: Curriculum****Rachael Maskell:**[\[72323\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will take steps through the national curriculum to help encourage children and young people to learn arts and creative subjects.

Nick Gibb:

The Department believes in a high quality education for all pupils. Cultural education is a key part of this, including the wider arts, music and creative subjects. All state-funded schools are required to teach a broad and balanced curriculum, which includes promoting pupils' cultural development.

The Department published the Model Music Curriculum in 2021 and a refreshed national plan for music education earlier this year to support teachers in delivering high quality music education. The Department will publish a Cultural Education Plan in 2023, working with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, and Arts

Council England, to support the arts and heritage. This will include how best to support young people who wish to pursue careers in the creative and cultural industries.

With real terms per pupil increases to core school funding, and nearly £5 billion announced for education recovery, schools will continue to have the flexibility to deliver a broad and ambitious curriculum, along with enrichment activities, including the arts and creative subjects.

■ Children's Social Care Independent Review

Sir Desmond Swayne: [\[80561\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what progress has been made in implementing the recommendations of the Independent Review of Children's Social Care published in May 2022.

Claire Coutinho:

The department has established a National Practice group to begin work on the National Children's Social Care Framework, a Ministerial Child Protection Group, and a National Implementation Board. The National Implementation Board will meet on November 16 2022, following an interim meeting in July, and is made up of people with lived experience of the care system and those with experience of leading transformational change.

We have also been working closely with other departments across government to rapidly agree on an ambitious and detailed implementation strategy that will respond fully to all three reviews. Ministers from across government are engaged on emerging policies and will agree on the final implementation strategy in due course.

■ Free School Meals

Mrs Sharon Hodgson: [\[79273\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Social Mobility Pledge and PwC's report Building Relationships, Creating Value, published in October 2022, what assessment she has made of that report's findings on her review of free school meals eligibility; and if she will make a statement.

Mrs Sharon Hodgson: [\[79274\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of research commissioned by the Impact for Urban Health and analysed by PwC on the cost-benefit of expanding free school meals.

Nick Gibb:

The Department continues to monitor the consequences arising from the increasing cost of living and is working with other Government Departments in providing support. The latest published statistics show that around 1.9 million pupils are claiming free school meals (FSM). This equates to 22.5% of all pupils, up from 20.8% in 2021. With

a further 1.25 million infants supported through the Universal Infant Free School Meal policy, 37.5% of school children are now provided with FSM.

The Department will continue to keep FSM eligibility under review to ensure that these meals are supporting those who need them most. In setting a threshold, the Government believes that the current level, which enables children to benefit from FSM, while remaining affordable and deliverable for schools, is the right one.

■ Free School Meals: Cost of Living

Colleen Fletcher:

[80728]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment she has made of the impact of rising food prices and increased inflation on the ability of (a) primary and (b) secondary schools to provide free school meals; and what plans she has to review the rate paid to schools to provide free school meals to help schools mitigate the effects of the rising cost of living.

Nick Gibb:

Schools pay for the provision of Free School Meals (FSM) from their core funding allocations. Overall, core schools funding, including funding for both mainstream schools and high needs, is increasing by £4 billion in 2022/23 compared to the previous year. This is a 7% increase in cash terms per pupil.

The core allocations that schools attract through the National Funding Formula (NFF) include funding in respect of Free School Meals. This is intended to broadly reflect the costs schools face in providing school meals. Following extensive consultation when the NFF was first introduced, schools attracted £440 per pupil through Free School Meals in 2018/19 and 2019/20. Each year, we set the NFF factor values to be used in the forthcoming funding year. Since the introduction of the NFF, the per pupil FSM rate has increased in line with forecast inflation in every year, as measured by the latest GDP deflator at the time.

The FSM factor is worth £470 per eligible pupil in 2022/23. This will increase to £480 in 2023/24. The factor values for each year are published on GOV.UK at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-funding-formula-for-schools-and-high-needs>. In reviewing future FSM rates, many factors will be taken into consideration, including cost of living pressures and inflation.

The Department also spends around £600 million on Universal Infant Free School Meals each year. The per meal rate has been increased from £2.34 to £2.41, and backdated to 1 April 2022, in recognition of increased costs.

The Department continues to keep FSM eligibility under review to ensure that these meals are supporting those who most need them.

■ Free School Meals: Lewisham East

Janet Daby: [80888]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many children were in receipt of free school meals in Lewisham East constituency in each academic year since 2018-19.

Nick Gibb:

The Department publishes annual figures based on school census data on the number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals. The most recently published figures are for January 2022. The full collection of publications can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-school-and-pupil-numbers>.

The attached table provides detail for Lewisham East from the 2018/19 to 2021/22 academic years.

Attachments:

1. Free_school_meals_table [80888 FSM table.xlsx]

■ Free School Meals: Primary Education

Ms Harriet Harman: [70930]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he plans to implement the National Food Strategy's recommendation of raising the earnings threshold for Free School Meals to £20,000 per year before benefits.

Ms Harriet Harman: [70931]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of (a) funding free school meals for all primary school children and (b) raising the earnings threshold for Free School Meals to £20,000 per year before benefits.

Ms Harriet Harman: [70932]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to analysis by the Child Poverty Action Group published on 1 September 2022, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of that analysis's findings on the proportion of children living in poverty in London who are not eligible for free school meals; and whether he plans to take steps to reduce that proportion.

Ms Harriet Harman: [70933]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the finding of Impact on Urban Health Cost in its report Investing in Children's Future: A Cost Benefit Analysis of Free School Meal Provision Expansion that provision of free school meals to all primary school students would generate £41.3bn in direct benefits to schools, families and the NHS and a further £58.2bn in benefit to the wider economy, if he will make it his policy to expand eligibility for free school meals to all primary school students.

Nick Gibb:

The Department continues to monitor the consequences of the rising cost of living and is working with other Government Departments in providing support. The

Department will continue to keep free school meal (FSM) eligibility under review, ensuring that these meals are supporting those who most need them. In setting a threshold, the Department believes that the current level, which enables children to benefit from FSM, while remaining affordable and deliverable for schools, is the right one.

The latest published statistics show that around 1.9 million pupils are claiming FSM. This equates to 22.5% of all pupils, up from 20.8% in 2021. Together with a further 1.25 million infants supported through the Universal Infant Free School Meal policy, 37.5% of school children are now provided with FSM.

■ Nurseries: Stockport

Navendu Mishra:

[\[80946\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, in the context of rising inflation, whether specific additional support has been provided to (a) Lark Hill, (b) Hollywood and (c) Freshfield maintained nursery schools.

Claire Coutinho:

I refer the hon. Member for Stockport to the answer given on 26 October 2022 to question [68604](#). This referred to all maintained nursery schools in the constituency, including Lark Hill, Hollywood and Freshfield.

■ Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education

Sir Stephen Timms:

[\[80572\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans she has to improve young people's understanding of financial products.

Sir Stephen Timms:

[\[80573\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans she has to improve young people's understanding of buy-now-pay-later schemes.

Nick Gibb:

The Department wants all young people to manage their money well, make sound financial decisions and know where to seek further information when needed. Financial education is included in the National Curriculum at Key Stages 3 and 4 but can be taught by schools at all Key Stages.

Pupils should be taught about the functions and uses of money, budgeting, money management, and managing financial risk. At secondary school, pupils are taught about income and expenditure, credit and debt, insurance, savings and pensions, financial products and services and the need to understand financial risk, including any emerging financial trends.

The mathematics curriculum includes a strong emphasis on the essential arithmetic that primary pupils should be taught. A strong grasp of mathematics will underpin pupils' ability to manage budgets and money.

The Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) published financial education guidance for primary and secondary schools in England in November 2021, to support head teachers to enhance their financial education provision. Guidance for this can be found here: <https://maps.org.uk/2021/11/11/financial-education-guidance-for-primary-and-secondary-schools-in-england/>.

The guidance includes links to quality assured resources for schools, including content and activities on cryptocurrencies and buy now, pay later schemes. It also sets out the knowledge and skills pupils need to protect their personal data, critically evaluate online content, and identify scams.

The Department and MaPS are planning a series of joint financial education webinars during this academic year, to help schools to improve pupils' skills and knowledge and build teachers' confidence in this area.

Sir Stephen Timms: [80574]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of including financial education in the primary school national curriculum.

Sir Stephen Timms: [80575]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment her Department has made of the potential disparities in the (a) access to and (b) quality of financial education between primary schools.

Nick Gibb:

Education on financial matters helps to ensure that young people are prepared to manage their money well, make sound financial decisions and know where to seek further information when needed.

The primary school curriculum already includes financial education within the mathematics curriculum, which provides young people with the knowledge and financial skills to make important financial decisions. In the primary mathematics curriculum, there is a strong emphasis on the essential arithmetic that pupils should be taught. This knowledge is vital, as a strong grasp of mathematics will underpin pupils' ability to manage budgets and money. The mathematics curriculum also includes specific content about financial education, such as calculations with money.

Primary schools can also teach financial education through citizenship. Although this is not part of the National Curriculum until Key Stage 3, the Department has published a non-statutory citizenship curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2. This supports schools to make sure that pupils are taught how to look after their money and realise that future wants, and needs may be met through saving. There is a wide range of resources available for schools, including the Money and Pension Service's (MaPS) financial education guidance for primary and secondary schools in England. This guidance can be found here: <https://maps.org.uk/2021/11/11/financial-education-guidance-for-primary-and-secondary-schools-in-england/>.

The Department does not monitor financial education in primary schools, but the Department continues to work with MaPS and HM Treasury to consider the evidence

and explore opportunities to promote the importance of financial education to schools. The Department is currently working with MaPS on a series of joint financial education webinars during this academic year, to help primary and secondary schools to improve pupils' skills and knowledge and build teachers' confidence in this area.

Mr Virendra Sharma:

[82219]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of adding financial education to the primary school national curriculum; what assessment she has made of the potential merits of Talk Money Week for encouraging financial literacy among young people; and if she will make a statement.

Nick Gibb:

Education on financial matters helps to ensure that young people are prepared to manage their money well, make sound financial decisions, and know where to seek further information when needed.

The current mathematics curriculum at primary level includes financial education, including calculations with money and using percentages, which provides young people with the knowledge to make important financial decisions.

Primary schools can also teach financial education through citizenship. This is not part of the National Curriculum until Key Stage 3, but the Department has published a non-statutory citizenship curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2, to support schools to inform pupils of the benefits of saving.

There are resources available for schools, including the Money and Pension Service's (MaPS) financial education guidance for primary and secondary schools in England. The guidance is available at: <https://maps.org.uk/2021/11/11/financial-education-guidance-for-primary-and-secondary-schools-in-england/>. The Department is working with MaPS on a series of joint financial education webinars during the 2022/23 academic year, to help both primary and secondary schools, to improve pupils' skills and knowledge and build teachers' confidence in this area.

The Department supports wider initiatives that aim to improve financial confidence and resilience, including Talk Money Week, which is led by MaPS. Talk Money Week is useful for encouraging all UK citizens, including at home, within families and at school, to talk openly about managing money. Departmental officials will continue to work closely with MaPS and other stakeholders such as HM Treasury, to consider what can be learned from such initiatives and how to provide further support for the teaching of financial education in schools .

■ **Physical Education and Sports: Primary Education**

Jonathan Gullis:

[80956]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether her Department plans to continue Primary PE and Sport Premium funding for the 2022-23 academic year.

Nick Gibb:

The Department announced on 25 June 2022 that funding for the Primary PE and Sport Premium will continue at £320 million for the 2022/23 academic year.

■ **Post-16 Qualifications at Level 3 and Below in England Review**

Rachel Hopkins: [R] [82499]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 4th November 2022 to Question 71347 on Post-16 Qualifications at Level 3 and Below in England Review, how many 16-18 year old students are enrolled on (a) the 1,510 level 3 qualifications included in his Department's review of post-16 qualifications and (b) each of the 134 Applied General Qualifications approved for inclusion in performance tables.

Robert Halfon:

Our most recent assessment, covering the full impact of the reforms to level 3 qualifications, stated that of the 2.9 million 16 to 19-year-old enrolments studying level 3 qualifications, in future an estimated 742,000 could instead be studying T Levels, A levels, or a study programme that includes an alternative high-quality qualification that we are confident will help them to progress.

Separately, Applied General Qualifications (AGQs) are a subset of qualifications which are subject to our reforms. Published participation data from the end of 2021 shows that there were 268,000 16 to 18 year old students studying AGQs.

■ **Private Education: Registration**

Bridget Phillipson: [82258]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many institutions in England are under investigation by her Department on the suspicion that they may be operating as unregistered independent schools.

Nick Gibb:

It is a criminal offence under Section 96 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 to conduct an unregistered independent school. The Department and Ofsted continue to investigate institutions believed to be operating illegally.

There are currently 10 institutions under investigation on suspicion of operating an unregistered independent school.

■ **Pupils: Data Protection**

Bridget Phillipson: [79287]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the audit by the Information Commissioner's Office of national pupil data handling by her Department, carried out in February 2020, what her planned timetable is for the (a) implementation of the required actions arising from that audit and (b) publication of her Department's action plan.

Nick Gibb:

In February 2020, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) conducted a wide-ranging audit into the Department's data practices. The Department requested that the audit be widened to cover an emerging issue on the 'Learning Records Service', so that the Department could take early action against any recommendations. As at 9 November 2022, 15 of the original 139 recommendations are outstanding. The Department continues to work closely with the ICO to complete the remainder of the outstanding recommendations by April 2023. The Department will publish an update on progress by the end of 2022, and a copy will be placed in the libraries of both Houses.

■ Pupils: Food Poverty**Rachael Maskell:**[\[72321\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what support her Department is providing to schools to tackle child hunger.

Nick Gibb:

The Department spends over £1 billion on free, nutritious meals for disadvantaged children in school. The latest published statistics show that around 1.9 million pupils are claiming free school meals (FSM). This equates to 22.5% of all pupils, up from 20.8% in 2021. Together with a further 1.25 million infants supported through the Universal Infant Free School Meal policy, 37.5% of school children are now provided with FSM.

In addition to this, the Department is committed to continuing support for school breakfast clubs. We are investing up to £24 million to continue the national programme until the end of the summer term in 2023. This funding will support up to 2,500 schools in disadvantaged areas, meaning that thousands of children from low-income families will be offered free nutritious breakfasts to better support their attainment, wellbeing and readiness to learn.

The Department is investing over £200 million in the Holiday Activities and Food programme over the next three years, providing disadvantaged children and families with access to healthy food and enriching activities during the longer school holidays.

■ Pupils: Refugees**Rachael Maskell:**[\[80777\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether she has taken recent steps with Cabinet colleagues to help ensure that children of refugees are able to access (a) schools and (b) colleges.

Claire Coutinho:

The department has contributed to the Home Office welcome pack for adults, who have recently been granted refugee or Humanitarian Protection status, to support them in applying for a place at school or college. The pack has been translated into

several languages. The department has also contributed similar information to specific welcome packs for arrivals from Afghanistan, Hong Kong and Ukraine.

The department provides online resources for local authorities and schools which makes it clear that refugees and asylum seeker children and young adults have a right to access schools and colleges. Local authorities are required to ensure all children living in their areas receive an appropriate education.

■ Reading: Teaching Methods

Munira Wilson: [\[73898\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what criteria Ofsted uses to assess the quality of the teaching of systematic synthetic phonics by primary schools.

Munira Wilson: [\[73899\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what weight Ofsted inspectors give to whether a school uses a systematic synthetic phonics programme validated by her Department when assessing the quality of the teaching of phonics; and how Ofsted assesses the quality of phonics teaching in schools that do not use a validated programme.

Nick Gibb:

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

■ School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme

Wera Hobhouse: [\[59977\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of extending the School Fruit and Vegetable scheme to more children in state funded primary schools.

Wera Hobhouse: [\[59978\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department has assessed the potential merits of sourcing more British produce for the School Fruit and Vegetable scheme.

Nick Gibb:

In the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' food strategy, published in June 2022, the Government set out its commitment to conduct a review of the policy and delivery of the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme. The Department is working together with officials from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) on the review. The scope of the programme and sustainability of produce will be factors for consideration.

The School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme is operated by a private contractor on behalf of DHSC. Seasonal produce is used as part of the scheme and organic produce may

be used. Officials in DHSC and the Department have been working together in recent months on how the scheme might be improved in the future.

■ **Schools: Sports**

Justin Madders:

[\[78756\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the timetable is for the publication of the School Sport and Activity Action Plan.

Nick Gibb:

The update to the Government's School Sport and Activity Action Plan will be published in due course to align with timing of the Government's new sport strategy.

■ **Ukrainian Language: GCSE**

Luke Pollard:

[\[82445\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has plans to introduce a Ukrainian language GCSE.

Nick Gibb:

Awarding Organisations (AOs) can produce a GCSE in any modern language. This decision would be informed by several factors, including the level of demand from schools and the proportion of the population in the UK speaking the language. There is no reason why a GCSE in Ukrainian could not be introduced, but it would be at the discretion of AOs to determine whether there was a strong case to do so.

There are currently 18 GCSEs in different modern languages produced and offered by AOs in England. The specification for these qualifications must meet the Department's GCSE subject content requirements for modern languages, and be accredited by the independent qualifications regulator, Ofqual. The development and accreditation of a new GCSE would take at least two years.

Departmental officials have been working with AOs on creating an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) in Ukrainian. Pearson Edexcel recently published new guidance on using the Level 3 (EPQ) in Ukrainian to help Ukrainian students work towards a qualification that can complement their studies in the UK.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ **Avian Influenza: Poultry**

Daniel Zeichner:

[\[80733\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department has taken to support the poultry industry in response to the 2022 bird flu outbreak; how much financial support has been provided to that industry in response to that outbreak; and how many compensation claims have been (a) made and (b) processed as of 7 November 2022.

Mark Spencer:

Outbreaks of avian influenza in both kept and wild birds continue to occur at an unprecedented scale across Europe and the UK with cases continuing to be confirmed into year two of the outbreak for the first time. We recognise that these outbreaks are very distressing for the individual poultry farmers that are affected.

On 28 October we announced a new package of measures to support domestic producers with the impacts of AI. This included changes to the compensation scheme (effective from the 1st October) in response to significant concerns from industry on the impact the rapid mortality caused by the current H5N1 strain and risk that escalating case numbers leading to substantial delays to culling can have on the amount of compensation paid.

Compensation will now be linked to decisions taken at the start of planned culling rather than at the end. This will allow us to give earlier certainty about entitlement to compensation, better reflect the impact of outbreaks on premises and lead to swifter payments to help stem any cash flow pressures.

Compensation paid for birds culled by HM Government for disease control purposes is designed to promote prompt reporting of suspicion of disease and is only payable for healthy birds as set out in the Animal Health Act 1981. There is no compensation available for sick birds or birds that have died. Compensation is not paid for consequential losses, including business interruption caused by control measures, nor for eggs or poultry meat. Compensation is also not paid for other things that have to be seized because they pose a risk of transmitting disease.

The amount of compensation is established by APHA using the relevant [valuation rate card](#) (or for specialist stock by a specialist valuer). We do not comment on individual claims and the amount of compensation that keepers receive is not disclosed.

In addition, in England, the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) operates a financial support payment scheme for those farmers most in need. More information is available on gov.uk and from the RPA helpline.

Furthermore, in consultation with the Food Standards Agency, an easement to marketing rules is also being introduced in Great Britain. The measures mean that farmers who breed turkeys, geese, ducks or capons for their meat will have the option to slaughter birds early, and to freeze them, which can then be defrosted and sold to consumers as whole birds, stuffed crowns or 2/3 bird roasts between the period 28 November and 31 December 2022. Products will also need to be properly labelled and accompanied by in-store signage and online information for customers. This option is being introduced to give producers certainty over business planning.

We produce over 11 million turkeys in the UK every year. Over the Christmas period approximately 8 million turkeys, 200,000 geese and 100,000 ducks are sold to some of the highest standards in the world. Around 50% of these are usually sold frozen.

There is no immediate threat to the food supply chain as a result of the current outbreak, with the introduction of this measure helping mitigate any potential risks to the supply of seasonal poultry products for the Christmas market.

■ **Cats: Animal Breeding**

Gavin Newlands:

[\[78766\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if her Department will bring forward legislative proposals on cat breeding that are equivalent to regulations in Scotland.

Rebecca Pow:

The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 (the 2018 Regulations) introduced licencing requirements in England for specified activities involving animals: selling animals as pets, providing for or arranging for the provision of boarding for cats and dogs, hiring out horses, dog breeding and keeping or training animals for exhibition.

The 2018 Regulations are due to be reviewed in 2023. This will be an appropriate time to re-examine the scope of the Regulations and consider whether there is evidence to explore potential licencing of additional activities. As part of this review, we are proactively working with partners, including local authorities to collate data that can provide a picture of licensed and unlicensed activities involving animals in England. A wide range of stakeholders including key trade associations and the Canine and Feline Sector Group will be integral to coordinating input from this diverse sector to inform Defra's review.

Whilst animal welfare is a devolved matter, Defra officials liaise closely with their counterparts across the whole of the UK.

■ **Deposit Return Schemes: Plastics and Tin**

Christopher Pincher:

[\[79294\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of the effectiveness of plastic and tin deposit return schemes; and when she plans to set out the Government's position on such schemes.

Rebecca Pow:

In its 2019 manifesto, the Government committed to introduce a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) for drinks containers. We expect the introduction of a DRS to deter littering of in-scope containers; increase recycling of in-scope containers; provide higher quality recyclate for reprocessors; and change consumer behaviours with potential knock-on effects to other environmental activities. Further details on when a Deposit Return Scheme will be introduced will be set out in due course in the Government consultation response.

■ Flood Control: Capital Investment

Bill Esterson:

[79289]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the policy paper entitled The Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution, published on 18 November 2020, how much his Department has spent on the six-year capital investment programme for flood and coastal defences through point nine on protecting our natural environment since the publication of that plan.

Rebecca Pow:

Investment in flooding and coastal erosion in England is provided by the Department for Food, Environment and Rural Affairs (Defra).

HM Government has invested £761 million in 2021/22, the first year of the capital Flood and Coastal Risk Investment Programme.

Information on government spending on flood and coastal erosion risk management is available on GOV.UK within the document [Central Government Funding for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management in England](#), March 2022.

■ Food: Exports

Ian Murray:

[79285]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she is taking to consult UK farmers and food processors on her decision to change pre-export requirements from a farmer declaration to a veterinary attestation with immediate effect on 13 December 2022.

Mark Spencer:

Businesses exporting goods from GB to the EU are required by the EU to use Export Health Certificates (EHCs) signed by an official vet. EU law sets out the rules which animals and products from third countries must meet via an EHC. Since the introduction of the EU's Animal Health Regulation in April 2021, these requirements have included a need for 'regular' animal health visits by a veterinarian to establishments of origin of animals providing products of animal of origin for export i.e., for meat, the farm where the animals were kept before slaughter. These requirements are set by the EU and are not within the control of the UK Government. The purpose of the veterinary visit is to detect or provide information on the signs of disease and these visits must take place at a frequency proportionate to risk.

Official Veterinarians (OV) are required to meet the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons principles when signing Export Health Certificates. The process of providing evidence of regular vet visits is outlined to Official Veterinarians and exporters in the Notes for Guidance. We are aware of the concerns raised by industry about the process of providing evidence of regular vet visits for non-assured farms and we are engaging with businesses and the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons to try and ease the burden on exporters in meeting these EU requirements. Defra's published existing Notes for Guidance to support this export activity is clear that 13

December date for a change to the form of evidence a certifying vet can accept will be kept under review. We expect to issue further information to industry in the coming weeks.

■ Food: Standards

Kim Johnson:

[60163]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will make an assessment of the adequacy of food standards regulations.

Mark Spencer:

Maintaining the UK's high food standards remains our priority, underpinned by our goal to make the UK the best regulated economy in the world. HM Government remains committed to promoting robust food standards nationally and internationally, to protect consumer interests, facilitate growth and international trade, and ensure that consumers can have confidence in the food that they buy. We keep regulations under constant review to ensure they continue to meet the needs of consumers and businesses alike.

■ Livestock: Animal Housing

Cat Smith:

[77458]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether it remains his Department's policy to review the use of cages in farming.

Mark Spencer:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 03 November 2022 to the hon. Member for Glasgow North, PQ UIN [69670](#).

■ Pigs: Imports

Ian Murray:

[79286]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps are being taken to ensure that import controls are sufficient to protect UK pigs from African Swine Fever.

Mark Spencer:

We announced new controls restricting the movement of pork and pork products into Great Britain to help safeguard Britain's pig population. Travellers from the EU are no longer allowed to bring pork or pork products weighing over two kilograms into GB, unless they are produced to the EU's commercial standards. The new controls, which came into force on 1 September, will strengthen GB's biosecurity in relation to the standards for bringing pork and pork products into GB from the EU and EFTA states. More information on the new controls can be found on GOV.UK.

www.gov.uk/government/news/strict-new-controls-on-pork-and-pork-products-to-protect-britains-pig-sector-against-african-swine-fever

■ Sewage: Waste Disposal

Alex Sobel: [71263]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent research their Department has commissioned on the impact of sewage discharges on (a) the natural habitat, (b) species in inland waterways and (c) the marine environment.

Rebecca Pow:

Defra has commissioned recent research on the harm sewage from storm overflows may cause on English inland rivers as well as estimating the future impact in 2050. This research, the Storm Overflows Evidence Project has been published on gov.uk on 4 November 2021, with an addendum added on 29 March 2022.

■ Sustainable Farming Incentive

Tim Farron: [78671]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much funding was provided to farmers through the Sustainable Farming Incentive in 2021.

Mark Spencer:

We started the early roll out of Sustainable Farming Incentive in June 2022. That spend will be accounted for in financial year 23/24. We recently published the first annual report that set out spend across farming reforms in financial year 2021/22 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-farming-and-countryside-programme-annual-report-2021-to-2022/future-farming-and-countryside-programme-annual-report-2021-to-2022-html-version>

Tim Farron: [78672]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will make an estimate of the level of funding that will be provided to farmers through the Sustainable Farming Incentive in 2022.

Mark Spencer:

We will not have fixed allocations (or 'pillars', as they were known while 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 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.

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE**■ Afghanistan: Females**

Chris Law: [77454]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to help ensure that girls of all ages can return to school in Afghanistan.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

The Government is committed to upholding women and girls' rights in Afghanistan, including the right to an education. We have repeatedly condemned the Taliban's decisions to restrict girls' access to education, including through public statements and UN Security Council and Human Rights Council resolutions, most recently on 19 October. We continue to press the Taliban on women and girls' rights in our political engagement. We are providing education funding through NGO partners, the UN system, and multilateral funds including the World Bank Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, Education Cannot Wait and the Global Partnership for Education.

■ Afghanistan: Humanitarian Aid**Chris Law:**[\[77452\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps he is taking to ensure that the Humanitarian Plan for Afghanistan is fully funded.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

Our commitment to Afghanistan is enduring and work on priority areas, including responding to the humanitarian crisis, remains one of our highest priorities. On 11 January 2022, the UN launched an appeal for \$4.4 billion for 2022, the largest humanitarian appeal on record, reflecting the magnitude of the humanitarian challenge ahead. The UK has played a leading role in responding to the humanitarian crisis. On 31 March 2022, the UK co-hosted a donor conference with the UN, Qatar and Germany. At this, the UK committed £286 million humanitarian and development assistance for Afghanistan in this financial year, matching the previous year's commitment. The conference raised over \$2.4 billion for the UN's humanitarian appeal. \$2.26 billion has been provided to the appeal so far. This is the second largest global contribution in 2022 after Ukraine and we continue to work closely with other donors to ensure funding is available for the humanitarian response in Afghanistan.

■ Africa: Humanitarian Aid**Liz Saville Roberts:**[\[77517\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies on funding for (a) climate impacts, (b) protecting civilians from harm, (c) gender inequality, and (d) supporting inclusive peace processes of Oxfam's request for £900 million of funding for humanitarian appeals for Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and South Sudan.

Mr Andrew Mitchell:

The FCDO is committed to promoting the protection of civilians, tackling inequality and the impact of climate change, and where possible and appropriate support peace through our humanitarian efforts. The FCDO is prioritising spending that is vital to protect against immediate threat to life and wellbeing, will prevent people falling into humanitarian need, or will prevent delays to accessing healthcare, primary education, sanitation and clean water. Ministers will make any adjustments and final aid

prioritisation decisions based on additional Official Development Assistance pressures this autumn.

■ **Alaa Abdel Fattah**

Fleur Anderson: [\[78859\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to obtain consular access to Alaa Abdel Fattah.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

Since obtaining his British Citizenship in December 2021, the Egyptian authorities have not permitted consular staff to visit Mr Alaa Abd El-Fattah in prison. A first request for consular access was submitted to the Egyptian authorities on 20 December 2021, and there have been a number of follow-up requests at the highest levels, including by the Prime Minister when he spoke to President Sisi on 7 November, by the Foreign Secretary in September 2022 with Foreign Minister Shoukry and during a visit to Cairo by the former FCDO Minister for Africa in October 2022, also with Foreign Minister Shoukry.

■ **Brazil: Elections**

Patrick Grady: [\[77456\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the outcome of the 2022 presidential election in Brazil on the UK's climate ambitions for COP27 in Egypt.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

The UK and Brazil have been working together increasingly closely on climate and nature. Both our countries committed to the Glasgow Climate Pact at COP26: we need to deliver on our climate and biodiversity pledges. At COP26 the UK committed £300 million to help protect the rainforest throughout the Amazonian biome through the International Climate Finance Programme. We welcomed Brazil's commitments to eliminate illegal deforestation by 2028 and restore 18 million hectares of forest by 2030. The UK looks forward to engaging with Brazil at COP27 and to working with this Brazilian government and the next to protect Earth's natural resources.

■ **British Nationals Abroad: Diplomatic Service**

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[82410\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether his Department is taking steps to improve its (a) lists of lawyers and (b) prisoner packs for the use of UK nationals who require them overseas; and when those (i) lists and (ii) packs were last updated.

David Rutley:

FCDO posts overseas maintain lists of local English-speaking lawyers which are published on gov.uk. We have introduced a simpler system when looking for local service providers abroad, such as lawyers, on gov.uk. This allows the public to

search for the type of lawyer they require by expertise and/or locality. Country-specific prisoner packs are also available on gov.uk and contain information about the local legal system, including whether legal aid is available, as well as practical information about detention conditions and what to expect in that country. Posts are asked to review lawyers lists and prisoner packs annually and update them whenever there is new information to include, or in response to feedback.

■ **Chelsea Football Club: Sales**

Andrew Bridgen:

[\[78726\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what progress the Government has made on distribution of the proceeds of the sale of Chelsea Football Club.

David Rutley:

The proceeds from the sale of Chelsea FC are frozen in a UK bank account. They cannot be moved or used without a licence from the Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation (OFSI). An independent foundation is being established by humanitarian experts outside the UK Government to manage and distribute the funds for humanitarian purposes in Ukraine. Once the foundation has been established, a licence application will need to be made to move the funds to the foundation. The Government will assess this application against the risks of sanctions circumvention.

■ **Corruption and Human Rights: Sanctions**

Sir Iain Duncan Smith:

[\[77256\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the (a) Global Human Rights Sanctions and (b) Global Anti-Corruption Sanctions regimes for imposing Magnitsky sanctions in the context of the Government making no designations under either regime since January 2022.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

The UK has continued to impose sanctions on human rights violators and abusers to maximum effect, as well as corrupt actors. We will continue to use our Magnitsky sanctions regimes to pursue designations in response to human rights violations, abuses and serious corruption, and are currently investigating targets for further sanctions this autumn. Since the UK Magnitsky regimes were put in place in 2020 and 2021, we have sanctioned 81 persons under Global Human Rights and 27 under our Global Anti-Corruption regime.

■ **Crime: Victims**

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[\[83817\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he plans to make (a) his Department and (b) its Murder Manslaughter Team dealing with bereaved families overseas a service provider to the Victims' Code.

David Rutley:

The FCDO, alongside the Ministry of Justice, considered carefully whether the FCDO, or its Murder and Manslaughter Team, could, or should, become a service provider under the Victims' Code of Practice. There are no plans to do so. The Victims' Code relates to criminal offences which are committed, or subject to proceedings, in England and Wales. The FCDO supports victims of crimes committed outside the United Kingdom. Nevertheless, the FCDO is committed to working with partners, including those listed under the Code, to improve the experience of victims, including by providing information and tailored support.

■ **Development Aid: Polio**

David Linden: [\[77556\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will increase the Government's pledge to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative.

Mr Andrew Mitchell:

The UK supports the work of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI), to which we have provided £1.38 billion since 1995. We remain proud of our contribution to polio eradication, which has seen polio cases reduced by over 99%. To date, more than 20 million people are walking who may otherwise have been paralysed due to polio. The UK will continue to be a supportive partner to the GPEI in the future to ensure every child everywhere is safe from this disease. In light of ongoing crises, we have temporarily paused some overseas aid spending, including to GPEI, as we review our allocations.

■ **Diplomatic Service**

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[82408\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will publish his Department's guidance on the provision of consular assistance, including (a) how it decides who is entitled to consular assistance, (b) what criteria are considered, (c) how vulnerability is assessed and (d) what forms consular assistance can take.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[82411\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, in cases when his Department informs the media that it is providing consular assistance to (a) a UK national and (b) family members of a UK national, what steps it takes to ensure that the (i) UK national and (ii) family members understand what assistance is being provided.

David Rutley:

The FCDO provides information on the assistance we can provide, and to whom, in our publication: Support for British nationals abroad (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/support-for-british-nationals-abroad>). Each request for consular assistance is considered individually, with consular staff assessing an individual's needs in order to offer tailored assistance. We seek to

prioritise those whom we assess as vulnerable and in most need of our help. Our public guide explains when we would consider someone vulnerable and provides information on the types of assistance the FCDO can provide, which will depend on the individual's circumstances. Assistance is provided in agreement with the recipient, and our staff keep family members updated on any assistance provided where we have consent to do so.

■ **Diplomatic Service: Staff**

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[\[82407\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what proportion of overseas consular positions have been available to UK-based staff in each of the last five years.

David Rutley:

UK-based staff overseas make up 7- 8% of the overall Overseas Consular network, with the remainder being performed by Country Based staff, locally. This proportion has been consistent at this level for the last five years.

■ **East Africa: Food Supply**

Alexander Stafford:

[\[80980\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if his Department will increase humanitarian to help tackle the hunger crisis in East Africa.

Mr Andrew Mitchell:

The UK is a major humanitarian donor to the East Africa region. In financial year 2022/23 the UK intends to provide approximately £156 million in humanitarian aid across East Africa. Our support is providing millions of people with essential services and supplies including food, water and healthcare. We are keeping all aspects of the crisis under review.

Sir Stephen Timms:

[\[82151\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of levels of hunger in east Africa; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Stephen Timms:

[\[82152\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to help support east Africa in tackling the spread of hunger.

Mr Andrew Mitchell:

Across East Africa conflict, climate change and the Covid-19 pandemic are placing communities under huge pressure. More than 68 million people in the region now require life-saving aid of whom 51 million people face severe food insecurity. Needs are most pressing in Somalia, Ethiopia and South Sudan. The UK is playing a lead in responding. UK funding of £156 million will help to provide millions of people with

essential services and supplies including food, nutritional support, clean water and healthcare. We are also working with the UN and the World Bank to ensure appropriate responses from the multilateral system.

■ Ethiopia: Peace Negotiations

Ms Lyn Brown:

[78655]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the Agreement for Lasting Peace through a Permanent Cessation of Hostilities between the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Tigray People's Liberation Front, brokered by the African Union on 2 November 2022, what recent discussions he has had with representatives of the parties to this Agreement on peacefully resolving territorial disputes between Ethiopia's regions.

Mr Andrew Mitchell:

Our Ambassador in Addis Ababa has spoken to representatives of the Ethiopian Government and Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) welcoming their choice to end the devastating two-year-long conflict. The agreement affirms that political problems can only be addressed through political means and commits to addressing underlying political differences. The UK is encouraging both parties to implement in full the agreement, including resolving issues of contested areas in accordance with the Ethiopian constitution. We also support an inclusive national dialogue to allow all Ethiopians to participate in a resolution to political differences, including territorial disputes.

Ms Lyn Brown:

[78656]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to Agreement for Lasting Peace through a Permanent Cessation of Hostilities between the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Tigray People's Liberation Front, brokered by the African Union on 2 November 2022, what steps he plans to take to support the Transitional Justice Policy referred to in that agreement; and what steps he plans to take to support involvement by international human rights (a) experts and (b) organisations in accountability and redress processes following from that agreement.

Mr Andrew Mitchell:

We welcome the agreement by the Ethiopian Government and Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), in the peace agreement announced on 2 November, to implement a comprehensive national transitional justice policy aimed at accountability, ascertaining the truth, redress for victims, reconciliation, and healing. We have long called for accountability for the many atrocities and human rights violations and abuses carried out by all parties to this conflict. We continue to support the International Commission for Human Rights Experts in Ethiopia (ICHREE), co-sponsoring the resolution at the 51st session of the Human Rights Council extending their mandate. We are also providing £4.5 million to help build the capacity of the

Ethiopian Human Rights Commission through the UK's new Human Rights and Peacebuilding programme.

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[78658\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the Agreement for Lasting Peace through a Permanent Cessation of Hostilities between the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Tigray People's Liberation Front, brokered by the African Union on 2 November 2022, what steps he plans to take as part of his Department's programmes on (a) conflict prevention and (b) women, peace and security to support the preservation of peace; and whether he plans to offer the support of UK institutions to assist with (i) democratic and (ii) peacebuilding processes.

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[78660\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to Agreement for Lasting Peace through a Permanent Cessation of Hostilities between the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Tigray People's Liberation Front, brokered by the African Union on 2 November 2022, what steps he plans to take to help re-establish access to international communications within the Tigray region.

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[78661\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the Agreement for Lasting Peace through a Permanent Cessation of Hostilities between the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Tigray People's Liberation Front, brokered by the African Union on 2 November 2022, whether he is taking steps to help support the withdrawal of Eritrean forces from Ethiopian territory; and whether he is taking steps to support (a) evidence gathering and (b) accountability on potential crimes committed by forces in Ethiopia.

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[78662\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the Agreement for Lasting Peace through a Permanent Cessation of Hostilities between the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Tigray People's Liberation Front, brokered by the African Union on 2 November 2022, whether he plans to take steps to support independent monitoring of the implementation of that Agreement, including by the African Union.

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[78663\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the Agreement for Lasting Peace through a Permanent Cessation of Hostilities between the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Tigray People's Liberation Front, brokered by the African Union on 2 November 2022, whether he has made an assessment of the need for security guarantees for Tigrayan forces that have agreed to disarm.

Mr Andrew Mitchell:

The UK welcomes the important step towards peace taken by the Ethiopian Government and Tigray People's Liberation Front in signing a cessation of hostilities on 2 November, and commends their choice to end the devastating two-year-long conflict. We are grateful to the leadership shown in brokering this critical agreement by African Union Commission Chairperson Faki, African Union High Representative to the Horn of Africa Obasanjo, former South African Deputy President Mlambo-Ngcuka, former Kenyan President Kenyatta, and the South African Government in hosting the talks. The UK is ready to support the peace process. Our Embassy in Addis Ababa will discuss ways that we can support the implementation of the peace agreement with the Ethiopian Government and the African Union.

Ms Lyn Brown:[\[78664\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the Agreement for Lasting Peace through a Permanent Cessation of Hostilities between the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Tigray People's Liberation Front, brokered by the African Union on 2 November 2022, whether he has made an assessment of the potential impact of this agreement on people who are (a) internally displaced and (b) residing in refugee camps in Sudan.

Mr Andrew Mitchell:

We welcome the recent agreement between the Ethiopian Government and Tigrayan authorities to end the conflict in northern Ethiopia. The agreement should eventually pave the way for those displaced by the conflict to return home voluntarily and in a dignified manner. For this to happen all essential services, such as healthcare, must resume. At this juncture we assess conditions in Tigray are not conducive for the safe return of those displaced by the violence.

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Redundancy Pay**Emily Thornberry:**[\[77347\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what total amount of money has been paid out by his Department in severance payments for former (a) Ministers and (b) special advisers since 29 June 2022; how much of that money has subsequently been repaid to his Department as a result of individuals (A) rejecting the payment or (B) returning to new roles; and in how many cases where individuals were in post for (I) 0-3 months, (II) 3-6 months, (III) 6-12 months and (IV) more than 12 months has their full severance payment been retained as of 2 November 2022.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

The provision of severance payments for Ministers is set out in legislation. Details of the severance payments made to ministers when leaving office are published in departments' annual reports and accounts.

Similarly, the provision of severance payments for special advisers is set out in the Model Contract, which is available on gov.uk, including provisions for repayment of

severance if reappointed. The cost of severance payments made to special advisers across government is published annually by the Cabinet Office.

Christine Jardine:

[82406]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what the cost to the public purse has been of Ministerial severance pay in their Department in each year since 1 January 2016 to 8 November 2022.

David Rutley:

Under the Ministerial and Other Pensions and Salaries Act 1991, eligible Ministers who leave office are entitled to a one off payment equivalent to one quarter of their annual salary at the point at which they leave Government. This applies only where a Minister is under 65 and is not appointed to a ministerial office within three weeks of leaving government.

Individuals may waive the payment to which they are entitled. That is a matter for their personal discretion, but this approach has been taken in the past. Details of such payments are published in departmental annual reports and accounts, and ministerial salaries are published on GOV.UK at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1027301/Salaries_of_Members_of_Her_Majestys_Government_-_Financial_Year_2021-22_-_Publication.pdf

■ Haiti: Press Freedom

Fabian Hamilton:

[80600]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Haitian counterpart on reports of security issues affecting the production of newspapers in that country.

David Rutley:

The UK believes in the fundamental role of an independent media and works, as a committed member of the media freedom coalition, to support that goal. We use our platform in country and at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) towards a Haitian-led solution to their multifaceted challenges. This has included our support for Resolution 2653 (2022) which established a sanctions regime denying designated malicious actors access to external funding, significantly reducing their ability to operate within Haiti. We welcome further UNSC discussion on an international security assistance mission, proposed by the Secretary-General, at the request of the Haitian government.

■ Interpol

Kenny MacAskil:

[80898]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will take steps to ensure that UK travellers are made aware of any red notice placed on them by (a) a Gulf state and (b) another country.

David Rutley:

The UK Government has a long-standing policy to neither confirm nor deny (NCND) the existence of a Red Notice or Diffusion against any named individual. This is in order to support the functioning of our judicial processes. This policy is also applied by the National Crime Agency. Working with the National Crime Agency, the UK Border Force ensures that relevant information is made available to front-line officers working at the border.

■ **Israel: Palestinians****Caroline Lucas:**[\[77368\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made for the implications of his policies of the announcement of 27 October 2022 by the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory that it will investigate apartheid charges against Israel; and if he will make a statement.

Caroline Lucas:[\[77369\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will make it his policy to support the request in the report of 20 October 2022 by the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory for (a) an urgent advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of and (b) an investigation from the International Criminal Court prosecutor into the continued refusal on the part of Israel to end its occupation; and if he will make a statement.

Caroline Lucas:[\[77370\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the report by the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory published on 20 October 2022, what assessment he has made of the recommendations that (a) member states of the UN investigate and prosecute persons suspected of crimes under international law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and (b) the Security Council consider further action to require Israel to immediately bring its permanent occupation to an end; and if he will make a statement

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

The UK has been clear that we oppose the open-ended nature of the Commission of Inquiry on the situation in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza and its vaguely defined mandate. The cause of advancing human rights in Israel and the OPTs is not served by the disproportionate focus on Israel. We are also a firm supporter of the Human Rights Council and believe strongly in its mandate to protect human rights and secure accountability for abuses wherever these occur. However, this Commission of Inquiry does not further these goals. Any judgment on whether serious crimes under international law have occurred is a matter for judicial decision, rather than for governments or non-judicial bodies.

■ Mohamed Hasan

Paul Girvan:

[78809]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she has had discussions with her counterpart in Bahrain on the arrest of Hasan Mohammed.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

Officials and ministers have regular discussions with Bahraini counterparts on human rights issues, most recently during Lord Ahmad's meeting with Bahrain's Foreign Minister Dr Abdullatif Al Zayani in September in New York and discuss individual cases, as appropriate, both with the Bahraini Government as well as with the independent oversight bodies. We encourage those with concerns to raise them directly with the relevant oversight bodies.

■ Palestinians: Development Aid

Steve McCabe:

[77276]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 25 October 2022 to Question 63915 on Palestinians: Development Aid, if he will publish the review of the Palestinian Authority's commitment to the Partnership Principles with the UK.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

The FCDO last conducted an assessment of the Palestinian Authority's (PA) commitment to the Partnership Principles in December 2021. In common with other countries where the FCDO works, we only publish a summary of findings. In summary, we found that the PA demonstrated a partially credible commitment to the Partnership Principles. Officials at the British Consulate General in Jerusalem raise these issues at the highest levels of the PA and will continue to do so.

Steve McCabe:

[77277]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 25 October 2022 to Question 63915 on Palestinians: Development Aid, whether his Department made an assessment of the Palestinian Authority's commitment to non-violence as part of the December 2021 review.

David Rutley:

I refer the honourable Member to the answer given on 25 October 2022 to Question 63915, the answer can be found on the Q&A web pages on <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-10-17/63915>

■ Palestinians: Textbooks

Steve McCabe:

[77278]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 25 October 2022 to Question 63914 on Palestinians: Textbooks, whether the United Nations Relief and Works Agency committed to take steps

after his Department raised its concerns following the Review of 2022 UNRWA-Produced Study Materials in the Palestinian Territories published by IMPACT-se in July 2022.

David Rutley:

I refer the honourable Member to the answer given on 25 October 2022 to Question 63914, the answer can be found on the Q&A web pages on <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-10-17/63914>

■ **Refugee Convention**

Kate Osamor:

[77515]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he plans to withdraw the UK from the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.

Mr Andrew Mitchell:

The UK Government does not have plans to withdraw from the Refugee Convention and its Protocol.

■ **Tigray: Armed Conflict**

Ms Harriet Harman:

[82147]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has made an estimate of the number of civilians that have been killed in the conflict in the Tigray region of Ethiopia.

Mr Andrew Mitchell:

Information on casualties from the conflict in northern Ethiopia is scarce. Since the resumption of fighting on 24 August it is likely that there have been thousands of casualties.

The UK welcomes the peace agreement and cessation of hostilities announced on 2 November between the Ethiopian Government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), and their commitment to scale-up the delivery of life-saving aid to Tigray. The UK calls upon the Eritrean Government to support the agreement by withdrawing its troops from Ethiopia.

Ms Harriet Harman:

[82148]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she has held discussions with her counterparts in (a) Ethiopia and (b) Eritrea on ending aerial and ground bombardment of civilians in the Tigray region of Ethiopia.

Mr Andrew Mitchell:

The former Minister for Development visited Ethiopia on 19-20 October. She met Ethiopia President Sahle-Work and Deputy Prime Minister Demeke and raised the protection of civilians. The British Ambassador to Eritrea has regularly raised human rights issues, and the impact of its involvement in the war in northern Ethiopia on civilians, with the Eritrean Government. The indiscriminate targeting of civilian areas, no matter the weapon used, is against international law, and is unacceptable We

have made numerous public statements urging all parties to the conflict to prioritise the protection of civilians. We welcome the 2 November peace agreement.

Stella Creasy:

[\[82269\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the number of civilians killed in the Ethiopian and Eritrean offensive in the Tigray region since September 1 2022.

Mr Andrew Mitchell:

Information on casualties from the conflict in northern Ethiopia is scarce. Since the resumption of fighting on 24 August it is likely that there have been thousands of casualties.

The UK welcomes the peace agreement and cessation of hostilities announced on 2 November between the Ethiopian Government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), and their commitment to scale-up the delivery of life-saving aid to Tigray. The UK calls upon the Eritrean Government to support the agreement by withdrawing its troops from Ethiopia.

■ Tigray: Peace Negotiations

Kate Osamor:

[\[77512\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the African Union facilitated peace talks on the Tigray War.

Mr Andrew Mitchell:

The UK welcomes the important step towards peace taken by the Ethiopian Government and Tigray People's Liberation Front in signing a cessation of hostilities on 2 November and commends their choice to end the devastating two-year-long conflict.

We are grateful to the leadership shown in brokering this critical agreement by African Union Commission Chairperson Faki, African Union High Representative to the Horn of Africa Obasanjo, former South African Deputy President Mlambo-Ngcuka, former Kenyan President Kenyatta and the South African Government in hosting the talks.

■ Turkey: Human Rights

Fabian Hamilton:

[\[80599\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of reports of mass trials of members of the Confederation of Public Employees' Trade Unions (KESK) in Turkey.

Leo Docherty:

We are monitoring the ongoing trials of members of the Confederation of Public Employees' Trade Unions (KESK) through our Embassy in Ankara. The UK has no locus to intervene in Turkish domestic legal cases but we encourage the Turkish

government to ensure that all such legal proceedings are carried out in compliance with Turkey's judicial and international human rights obligations, including European Court of Human Rights' rulings.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ Adult Social Care Discharge Fund

Sir Desmond Swayne: [\[80562\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to announce the allocations from the Adult Social Care Discharge Fund.

Helen Whately:

The Department finalising the details of the Adult Social Care Discharge Fund and further information will be available in due course.

■ Anxiety: Drugs

Jim Shannon: [\[80702\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an estimate of the number of people who receive medication for High Functioning Anxiety as of 7 November 2022.

Maria Caulfield:

The information requested is not held centrally.

■ Blood: Donors

Carla Lockhart: [\[80969\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people donated blood in each of the last three years.

Neil O'Brien:

The following table shows the number of active blood donors in England from 1 November to 31 October in each year from 2019.

YEAR	NUMBER OF DONORS
1 November 2019 to 31 October 2020	764,966
1 November 2020 to 31 October 2021	789,943
1 November 2021 to 31 October 2022	797,263

Source: NHS Blood and Transplant, November 2022.

Note:

An active donor is an individual who has donated blood at least once in a 12 month period.

Carla Lockhart:

[80970]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many first-time blood donors gave blood in each of the last three years.

Neil O'Brien:

The following table shows the number of new blood donors in England from 1 November to 31 October in each year since 2019.

1 November 2019 to 31 October 2020	100,812
1 November 2020 to 31 October 2021	133,486
1 November 2021 to 31 October 2022	111,004

Source: NHS Blood and Transplant, November 2022.

■ **Breasts: Plastic Surgery**

Dan Carden:

[82433]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure UK women with PIP breast implants are able to access NHS medical care.

Maria Caulfield:

NHS England's advice for those who received a PIP breast implant is available at the following link:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pip-implants/>

This advice states that if the procedure was conducted by the National Health Service, individuals should contact their general practitioner (GP). If the procedure was undertaken by a private provider, individuals should contact the clinic in the first instance or consult their GP if this is no longer possible.

■ **Cancer: Coronavirus**

Andrea Leadsom:

[80697]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to support people whose cancer treatment was affected by covid-19.

Helen Whately:

The majority of cancer services were maintained throughout the pandemic. From March 2020 to August 2022, 758,000 people commenced cancer treatment, with 94% of those starting treatment within 31 days. The National Health Service continues to prioritise cancer and rescheduled diagnostic procedures or treatment where care has been affected by the pandemic, supported by local cancer teams.

■ Chronic Illnesses

Andrew Gwynne: [80657]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what step his Department is taking to help reduce rates of chronic illness among working-age adults.

Neil O'Brien:

We are expanding the NHS Health Check and home blood pressure monitoring to manage hypertension and through the Diabetes Prevention Programme, NHS England has secured providers of Low-Calorie Diet programmes in 10 local systems. With NHS England, we published 'Musculoskeletal health: 5 year prevention strategic framework' which prioritises supporting employers and employees to understand the benefits of good musculoskeletal health.

■ Coronavirus

Rachael Maskell: [82377]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an estimate of the level of covid-19 infections as of 8 November 2022; and if he will make an assessment of the impact of the level of covid-19 infections on NHS services.

Neil O'Brien:

The Office for National Statistics' Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection Survey publishes weekly estimates of the number of positive cases among the population living in private households in the United Kingdom. The most recent estimate for the week ending 11 November 2022 is available at the following link:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/bulletins/coronaviruscovid19infectionsurveys/pilot/latest>

No formal assessment of the most recent levels of Covid-19 infections and the impact on NHS services has been made. However, on 4 August 2022, the Government published 'Direct and indirect health impacts of COVID-19 in England: emerging Omicron impacts' which analyses the impact on National Health Service critical care capacity and secondary care, which is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/direct-and-indirect-health-impacts-of-covid-19-in-england-emerging-omicron-impacts/direct-and-indirect-health-impacts-of-covid-19-in-england-emerging-omicron-impacts#category-b-impact-of-covid-19-on-nhs-critical-care-capacity-1>

■ Coronavirus: Vaccination

Conor McGinn: [80757]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people in (a) St Helens and (b) Merseyside have received (i) one, (ii) two and (iii) three doses of covid-19 vaccination.

Neil O'Brien:

The following table shows the number of people aged 12 years old and over in St Helens local authority and Merseyside who have received a first, second and booster or third dose of the COVID-19 vaccination as of 3 November 2022. The data for Merseyside includes the local authorities of St Helens, Liverpool, Knowsley, Sefton and Wirral.

	FIRST DOSE	SECOND DOSE	BOOSTER OR THIRD DOSE
St Helens	141,243	135,109	108,607
Merseyside	1,065,236	1,013,032	795,213

Dental Services**Colleen Fletcher:**[\[80732\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to increase the number of NHS dentists accepting new patients in (a) Coventry, (b) the West Midlands and (c) England.

Neil O'Brien:

There are no geographical restrictions on which practice a patient may attend. NHS England's Customer Contact Centre or NHS 111 can also advise patients seeking urgent care. NHS England asked dental practices to return to full delivery of contracted activity from July 2022, including in Coventry and the West Midlands. In September, we announced 'Our plan for patients', which outlines how we will meet oral health needs and increase access to dental care.

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.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:[\[80855\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an estimate of the number of people who are unable to access NHS dental treatment in their local area as of 7 November 2022.

Neil O'Brien:

We have no plans to make a specific estimate, as this information is not collected centrally.

■ Dental Services: Bradford West**Naz Shah:** [\[80745\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to help improve access to NHS dental services in Bradford West constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

NHS England asked dental practices to return to full delivery of contracted activity from July 2022, including in Bradford West. 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 Bradford West.

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: Pregnancy**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[80854\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps his Department has taken to help ensure that all pregnant women are able to access free NHS dental care in their local area.

Neil O'Brien:

NHS England asked dental practices to return to full delivery of contracted activity from July 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 for pregnant women.

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: Telephone Services**Cherilyn Mackrory:** [\[72457\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to help reduce waiting times on and increase the capacity of the national dental helpline number.

Neil O'Brien:

In order to ensure patients are given appropriate advice and support, the NHS 111 service uses a nationally agreed clinical algorithm which can refer patients to the most appropriate service to meet their needs, for example, a dental practice or urgent treatment centre.

Additional urgent care provision is commissioned locally and NHS England works across each region to ensure these local services are accessible via NHS 111. This allows patients to be directed to a wider range of services in their area where these are available.

Increasing the NHS 111 call handling provision ahead of winter continues, with recruitment and training of staff to meet the growing demands on the service as a whole.

■ Dentistry: Migrant Workers**Mr Jonathan Djanogly:**[\[80615\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department has taken to streamline the process for the registration of qualified overseas dentists.

Neil O'Brien:

We have worked with the General Dental Council to develop and consult on legislative proposals which provide greater flexibility to amend its existing international registration processes and explore alternative registration pathways, as appropriate. The resulting draft order was laid in Parliament on 11 October 2022 and subject to Parliamentary approval, we expect it to come into force by early 2023.

■ Dialysis Machines**Peter Dowd:**[\[82339\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the average nurse-to-patient ratio was for (a) in-centre dialysis and (b) home therapy patients in the latest period for which data is available.

Will Quince:

The information requested is not held centrally.

■ Doctors: Training**Mr Nicholas Brown:**[\[80612\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department provides guidance to trainee doctors in the NHS on how to discuss child organ donation with bereaved parents.

Neil O'Brien:

Organs can only be transplanted shortly following death therefore donations are usually received from intensive care patients. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's guidance suggests that a discussion around organ donation will

involve the medical and nursing staff involved in the care of the patient following death. This process is led by a consultant and a specialist nurse for organ donation.

NHS Blood and Transplant provides training for doctors in intensive care on discussing organ donation with bereaved family members. The National Deceased Donation Course for Intensive Care Medicine Trainees uses actors as family members and high-fidelity simulation, including a paediatric specific pathway.

Specialist nurses for organ donation receive training for conversations and end of life care practices for paediatric donation.

■ **Electronic Cigarettes: Young People**

Carla Lockhart: [\[80967\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps the Government is taking to raise young people's awareness of the risks of vaping.

Neil O'Brien:

To raise awareness of the risks of vaping to children, we have updated information and advice online at the Better Health and Talk to Frank platforms. The Department of Health and Social Care also works with the Department of Education on communications to schools to prevent children from starting vaping.

■ **Fertility: HIV Infection**

Peter Gibson: [\[78831\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what scientific assessment has been made of the potential merits of updating current fertility legislation to provide access to gamete donation for people living with HIV.

Maria Caulfield:

The Advisory Committee on the Safety of Blood, Tissues and Organs has established a working group to review the current guidelines on gamete donation. This includes consideration of the position on gamete donors with HIV.

■ **General Practitioners: Havering**

Andrew Rosindell: [\[69543\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent progress her Department has made on increasing the number of GP appointments in the London Borough of Havering.

Andrew Rosindell: [\[69544\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if she will make an estimate of the number and proportion of GP appointments that were face-to-face in (a) Romford constituency, (b) the London Borough of Havering and (c) London in the latest period for which data is available.

Neil O'Brien:

This information is not collected in the format requested.

However, in the 12 months to September 2022, there were 47.80 million general practice appointments in London, excluding COVID-19 vaccinations. Of these, 27.89 million (58.4%) were conducted face-to-face.

■ **General Practitioners: Locums**

Hilary Benn:

[\[80595\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to bring forward legislative proposals to regulate the charges levied by agencies for the supply of locum GPs.

Neil O'Brien:

We have no plans to do so.

■ **Health Promotion Taskforce**

Rebecca Long Bailey:

[\[80741\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 20 October 2022 to Question 59825 on Health Promotion Taskforce, what his Department's plans are for the future of the Health Promotion Taskforce or any replacement of it.

Neil O'Brien:

We will continue to work with other Government Departments, employers, the National Health Service and local government on addressing health disparities.

■ **Health: Disadvantaged**

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[80656\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 3 November 2022 to Question 72221 on Health: Disadvantaged, when his Department plans to provide further information on tackling health disparities.

Neil O'Brien:

As we are currently reviewing measures to address health disparities, we are unable to confirm further information at this stage.

Janet Daby:

[\[80886\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to amend the Our Plan for Patients paper published on 22 September 2022 to include his plans to address health inequalities facing Black, Asian and ethnicity minority patients.

Neil O'Brien:

We have no plans to do so. The National Health Service has statutory duties to address health inequalities, including for black, Asian and ethnicity minority patients.

■ **Health: Rotherham**

Sarah Champion: [\[61931\]](#)

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

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 18 October 2022]: The Government is committed to supporting individuals to live healthier lives, and at the heart of this is improving access to and levelling-up health and care across the country, including in Rotherham. The Department continues to review how health disparities can be addressed and further information will be available in due course.

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities also works with services in Rotherham to support programmes to reduce health inequalities, including providing evidence and intelligence.

■ **Healthy Start Scheme**

Rachael Maskell: [\[82359\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, for what reason his Department no longer allows midwives and health visitors to issue Healthy Start scheme vouchers; and if he will make an assessment of the impact of that policy on the rate of uptake of that scheme.

Neil O'Brien:

Midwives and health visitors did not issue Healthy Start vouchers.

Rachael Maskell: [\[82360\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether people who are eligible for the Healthy Start scheme and do not have a bank account can benefit from that scheme.

Neil O'Brien:

The Healthy Start benefit is provided through a pre-paid card, which is unconnected to a bank account.

Rachael Maskell: [\[82361\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the impact of the Healthy Start scheme for families who have used it.

Neil O'Brien:

Through the National Institute for Health and Care Research, the Department has commissioned an evaluation of the Healthy Start scheme in England. The 30-month project commenced in June 2022.

Rachael Maskell: [\[82362\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of extending eligibility to the Healthy Start scheme to people in

receipt of any social security benefit with children under the age of (a) four and (b) 18 years old.

Neil O'Brien:

There are no current plans to do so.

Rachael Maskell:

[\[82363\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the potential impact of eligible people not accessing the healthy start scheme on the wellbeing of those people.

Neil O'Brien:

No specific assessment has been made.

■ **Heart Diseases: Diagnosis**

Steve McCabe:

[\[79256\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he is taking steps to increase the diagnostic capacity of heart failure in primary care through N-terminal-pro B-type natriuretic peptide testing.

Helen Whately:

NHS England is working with regions and networks to increase access to the N-terminal-pro B-type natriuretic peptide test and echocardiography, following early adopter sites testing clinical pathways in 2021/22.

■ **HIV Infection: Drugs**

Daisy Cooper:

[\[80894\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the potential impact of increasing resources for sexual health services on (a) capacity and (b) staff pressures relating to the dispensing of PrEP.

Daisy Cooper:

[\[80896\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what support and training is offered to clinicians in sexual health services to help them prescribe and dispense PrEP effectively.

Neil O'Brien:

There are no current plans to make a formal assessment. Local authorities are responsible for commissioning comprehensive, open access sexual health services, including the provision of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and for monitoring and taking action if required, to meet local demand. PrEP is now commissioned as a routine service through the Public Health Grant.

Individual providers are responsible for investing in post-registration training to ensure that staff can effectively deliver sexual and reproductive health services, including the prescription and dispensation of PrEP. In addition, Health Education

England's e-Learning for Healthcare includes programmes and material which focus on sexual and reproductive health.

Daisy Cooper: [\[80895\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if the Government will provide additional funding to sexual health commissioners to enable them to research (a) missed opportunities for PrEP initiation in individuals recently diagnosed with HIV, (b) targeted outreach programmes to demographic groups who are not accessing PrEP and (c) resource targeting in regions that are reporting long waiting lists or service caps for PrEP.

Neil O'Brien:

No additional funding is currently planned for sexual health commissioners' research on access to pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). However, we are developing a plan to improve access for specific groups, gathering evidence to understand why some groups which would benefit from PrEP are underrepresented and to identify potential barriers. The UK Health Security Agency has published the PrEP monitoring and evaluation framework, which consists of indicators to inform service improvement in commissioning and delivery.

Daisy Cooper: [\[80897\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential merits updating the current service commissioning models of PrEP services to fit examples of best practice.

Neil O'Brien:

No specific assessment has been made. Local authorities are responsible for commissioning comprehensive, open access sexual health services, including the provision of pre-exposure prophylaxis, as a routine service through the Public Health Grant. The HIV Action Plan commits to review the current model sexual health service specification.

Caroline Lucas: [\[82228\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of national monitoring and data collection on eligibility and uptake of PrEP.

Neil O'Brien:

No specific assessment has been made.

■ Infectious Diseases: Asylum

Daisy Cooper: [\[78843\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to implement public health measures that prevent spread of infectious diseases to new (a) immigration centres, (b) hotels and (c) other accommodation used to accommodating asylum applicants.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 8 November 2022]: The UK Health Security Agency's (UKHSA) national and regional health protection teams provide advice, guidance and support to immigration centres, hotels and other asylum accommodation settings in response to alerts of infectious disease. This may include advice on infection prevention and control, contact tracing, isolation, prophylaxis, screening, vaccination and safe transfer of cases or contacts. National Health Service and Home Office services will be responsible for implementing these recommendations as applicable.

■ Infectious Diseases: Detention Centres**Daisy Cooper:****[78839]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps the Government is taking to (a) screen for, (b) immunize against and (c) prevent outbreaks of infectious diseases in immigration centres.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 8 November 2022]: The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) provides advice to immigration centres in England on preventing and controlling infectious disease outbreaks. This includes national guidance and support for health security incidents such as outbreaks and, where appropriate, national incident response. Individuals entering an Immigration Removal Centre will have their health needs assessed on arrival and a subsequent general practitioner appointment. Those presenting with or having potentially been exposed to contagious disease are isolated in line with public health guidance and their health requirements managed accordingly with prophylactic interventions and immunisations. The UKHSA also convenes a regional migrant health network, to collate and respond to regional health issues related to accommodation settings.

■ Influenza and Pneumonia**Rachael Maskell:****[82378]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an estimate of the levels of (a) winter flu and (b) community-acquired pneumonia as of 8 November 2022; and if he will make an assessment of the impact of these illnesses on NHS services.

Neil O'Brien:

From 31 October to 6 November, influenza positivity amongst patients tested for respiratory illnesses remained at 6.6% in England. The weekly 'National flu and COVID-19 surveillance reports: 2022 to 2023 season' is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-flu-and-covid-19-surveillance-reports-2022-to-2023-season>

There is no surveillance of community acquired pneumonia in the United Kingdom, as this is a clinical diagnosis which can be caused by many bacteria and viruses.

The National Health Service is increasing bed capacity and staffing, maximising the use of virtual wards and is considering acute respiratory infection hubs to support same day assessment.

■ **Life Expectancy: Barking**

Dame Margaret Hodge:

[\[61692\]](#)

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 Barking constituency.

Neil O'Brien:

No specific assessment has been made.

■ **Malnutrition: Stockport**

Navendu Mishra:

[\[80945\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 3 November to Question 67248, for what reason no specific assessment has been made.

Neil O'Brien:

Local health and care providers are responsible for commissioning 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.

■ **Medical Equipment: Manufacturing Industries**

Emma Hardy:

[\[82427\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department is taking steps to help ensure that businesses involved in the manufacture of healthcare products have their energy supply prioritised in the event of energy rationing in winter 2022.

Emma Hardy:

[\[82428\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has had recent discussions with (a) Cabinet colleagues and (b) businesses on taking steps to ensure that energy supplies to businesses that manufacture healthcare products is maintained in the event of energy rationing in winter 2022.

Will Quince:

We regularly engage with businesses manufacturing healthcare products on a range of issues, including energy security. We are supporting the sector's continuity planning and contributing to cross-Government plans for any potential scenario.

■ NHS Blood and Transplant: Staff

Navendu Mishra:

[\[80944\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of staffing levels in NHS Blood and Transplant.

Neil O'Brien:

The budget headcount for NHS Blood and Transplant is 5,322.62 working time equivalent (WTE) in 2022/23. At the end of October 2022, there were 5,233.84 WTE staff in post and 88.78 WTE vacant posts. NHS Blood and Transplant is increasing its resourcing and plans to recruit and train a further 77.5 WTE by the end of 2022.

■ NHS: Agency Workers

Wes Streeting:

[\[80803\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the total cost to the public purse was of agency staff for the NHSE in the 2021-22 financial year.

Will Quince:

While NHS England collects data on agency expenditure from the National Health Service, information for 2021/22 has not yet been centrally validated.

■ NHS: Standards

Andrea Leadsom:

[\[80696\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to reduce NHS waiting times; and if he will make a statement.

Will Quince:

The National Health Service will increase bed capacity by the equivalent of at least 7,000 general and acute beds to improve patient flows through hospitals and reduce waiting times. A £500 million Adult Social Care Discharge Fund has been established to reduce delayed discharge and we have allocated an additional £150 million to ambulance services to increase response times and £20 million to upgrade the ambulance fleet.

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.

We have set an expectation that patients who need an appointment with a general practitioner practice within two weeks should receive one and patients with urgent needs should be seen on the same day. 'Our plan for patients' includes measures to assist patients to book general practice appointments and diversify general practice teams to deliver over a million additional appointments. The NHS Long Term Plan commits a further £2.3 billion a year to expand mental health services by 2023/24 and enable an additional two million people to be treated by NHS mental health

services. We also provided £500 million in 2021/22 to accelerate these plans and address waiting times for mental health services.

■ Notifiable Diseases: Disease Control

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[67989\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps her Department is taking to (a) support international public health and (b) maintain UK biosecurity in response to global outbreaks of (i) Monkeypox, (ii) Ebola and (iii) Cholera.

Neil O'Brien:

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) collects and analyses information from international sources on disease outbreaks such as monkeypox, Ebola and cholera and through the International Health Regulations National Focal Point mechanism. This information informs travel advice and to mobilise expertise in the United Kingdom to support international responses, if required.

The UKHSA shares data and scientific expertise and deployments of experts with countries or international agencies to increase capacity and provide direct support when needed. The UK Public Health Rapid Support Team can respond to disease outbreaks around the world within 48 hours, deploying directly or through the Global Outbreak and Response Network to tackle threats before health emergencies develop. It also conducts operational research to improve epidemic preparedness.

The UK is involved in the development of the International Pandemic Surveillance Network working with the World Health Organization (WHO) and mobilising the UKHSA's genomic capacity through the New Variant Assessment Platform. The UKHSA provides technical support and advice to the WHO and also manages Official Development Assistance projects.

■ Nutrition

Matt Vickers: [\[80961\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, for what reason products containing over 50 per cent of fruit, nuts and seeds are within scope of the regulations on products high in fat, salt and sugar under category seven on sweet biscuits but out of scope under category four on confectionery.

Matt Vickers: [\[80962\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, for what reasons the regulations on products high in fat, salt and sugar came into force before the publication of a consultation on which products would be in scope of those regulations; and whether his Department plans to publish a consultation.

Neil O'Brien:

Our intention is only to apply the restrictions of foods high in fat, salt or sugar in stores and online to those categories of food and drink which contribute substantially to children's sugar and calorie intakes and are therefore of most concern to childhood

obesity. To determine if a product is in scope of the Food (Promotion and Placement) (England) Regulations 2021, the product must firstly fall in one of 13 categories of food and drink listed in the regulations. Products such as sweet biscuits in category seven or confectionary in category four meet the first criteria. The approach taken regarding these specific products is aligned with the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities' sugar and calorie reduction and reformulation programmes.

The Nutrient Profiling Model 2004/05 and associated 2011 technical guidance is applied to determine if a product is subject to the restrictions. This takes into account the proportion of beneficial nutrients, including fruit, nuts and seeds and nutrients of concern, such as saturated fat, sugar, salt and calories. If a food product scores four or more or a drink product scores one or more, the product is considered less healthy and in scope of the restrictions. The Government consulted on the product categories in scope of the Food (Promotion and Placement) (England) Regulations 2021 between 12 January 2019 and 6 April 2019. The Government's response to the consultation was published on 28 December 2020.

■ **Ophthalmic Services: Children**

Bob Blackman:

[\[80684\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the impact of the NHS Special Schools Eye Care Service on local hospital paediatric ophthalmology services.

Bob Blackman:

[\[80685\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many and what proportion of children who had their first sight test under the NHS Special Schools Eye Care Service (a) had a history of hospital eye care and (b) no previous known history of eye care.

Neil O'Brien:

NHS England has commissioned an independent evaluation of their proof-of-concept pilot programme, which has been providing in-school sight testing for children and young people with learning disabilities and/or autism in special schools.

Views are being sought from a range of stakeholders on the benefits of the Special Schools Eye Care Service. Views to date, include the impact of the pilot on paediatric ophthalmology services, which will be taken into account in the evaluation.

Official data, including information on previous eye care provided and the number of first sight tests provided under the pilot, is not presently finalised but will be considered as part of the evaluation.

■ **Prescriptions: Fees and Charges**

Zarah Sultana:

[\[82458\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, in the context of the cost of living crisis, if he will extend eligibility for free prescriptions to (a) those in receipt of tax credits and (b) more widely to protect people's access to healthcare.

Neil O'Brien:

There are currently no plans to extend eligibility for free prescriptions. The NHS Business Services Authority issues NHS Tax Credit exemption certificates for full help with health costs, including free prescriptions, where the annual family income used to calculate Tax Credits is £15,276 or less and the person receives either Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit paid together or Working Tax Credit including a disability or severe disability element.

We have also frozen prescription charges this year and approximately 89% of prescription items in England are provided 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.

Public Health**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[\[83736\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps his Department has taken to (a) identify and (b) mitigate internationally emerging risks to public health.

Neil O'Brien:

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) collects and analyses information on disease outbreaks from international sources and through the International Health Regulations National Focal Point mechanism. This is used to monitor and assess the risk of infectious threats to the public, inform travel advice and mobilise United Kingdom expertise in support of international responses.

The UKHSA works with international partners to strengthen global epidemic and pandemic surveillance and emergency response capacity, increase global health security and tackling health threats at origin. This includes sharing data, expertise and deployments of experts to work with countries or international agencies to build capacity and provide direct support. The UK Public Health Rapid Support Team can also respond to disease outbreaks around the world within 48 hours and conducts operational research to improve epidemic preparedness.

The Department works with the UKHSA on global health security policy, informing the work of the Global Health Security Agenda and Global Health Security Initiative. The Government is involved in the development of the International Pandemic Surveillance Network with the World Health Organization (WHO) and mobilising the UKHSA's genomic capacity through the New Variant Assessment Platform. The UKHSA provides technical support and advice to the WHO and also manages Official Development Assistance projects.

■ Smoking

Andrew Gwynne: [\[80655\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 4 November 2022 to Question 60973, when he plans to provide the update on plans to deliver the smoke-free target.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[80658\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Khan review, published 9 June 2022, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies of the finding that without further action now, England will miss the smokefree 2030 target by at least seven years.

Neil O'Brien:

We are currently considering the recommendations made in 'The Khan review: making smoking obsolete' and further information on plans to meet the 2030 target will be available in due course.

Zarah Sultana: [\[82457\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the Government's progress against its target to make England smoke-free by 2030; and whether the Government will be providing additional investment to stop smoking support services to meet that objective.

Neil O'Brien:

We are currently considering the recommendations made in 'The Khan review: making smoking obsolete' and how these measures can ensure we meet the 2030 target. Further information on these plans, including on investment, will be available in due course.

■ Vaccination: Children

Jim Shannon: [\[65780\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to NHS Digital's Childhood Vaccination Coverage Statistics published on 29 September 2022, what recent assessment she had made of the adequacy of the numbers of vaccinations administered to children in 2021-22.

Neil O'Brien:

The Childhood Vaccination Coverage Statistics published on 29 September 2022 show that there has been a decline in the coverage of childhood vaccinations in England compared with the previous year and a general downward trend in coverage for most childhood vaccines over the past 5 to 10 years. One vaccine showed an increase, the pneumococcal conjugate vaccine.

Disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, beginning in March 2020 and is likely to have caused some of the decreases in vaccine coverage seen in 2021/22 compared to 2020/21.

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) in partnership with NHS England and the Department, undertakes a range of actions to improve vaccination coverage for all ages in England. This includes initiatives to improve access to the immunisation programme; communication with the public; data to better identify under-served individuals and populations; and training for healthcare professionals.

There are a range of information leaflets and promotional materials available online about the different vaccination programmes, co-branded with the National Health Service.

■ Vaccine Damage Payment Scheme

Sir Christopher Chope: [\[80580\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what guidance his Department has in place for medical assessors on how to assess the level of disablement in respect of claims under the vaccine damage payments scheme where the disabilities are not covered by Section 103 of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992.

Maria Caulfield:

The independent medical assessors consider the medical records of claimants and all available scientific evidence to form a clinical opinion on whether, on the balance of probabilities, the vaccine has caused disablement and if so, whether the level of disablement is 60% or greater.

Where disabilities are not covered by Section 103, the materials referenced for general guidance on the assessment of the level of disablement is schedule 2 of the Social Security (General Benefit) Regulations 1982, which is reproduced to the Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefits (IIDB): Technical Guidance.

Sir Christopher Chope: [\[82161\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, for what reason medical examinations are not carried out for claims under the vaccine damage payments scheme; and if he will change his Department's policy so that it is aligned with that which applies to claims for industrial injuries.

Maria Caulfield:

All claims to the Vaccine Damage Payment Scheme (VDPS) are assessed on a case-by-case basis by experienced independent medical assessors who have undertaken specialised training in vaccine damage and disability assessment. Once medical records are received, assessors consider these and all available scientific evidence to make a clinical assessment on whether it is more probable than not that the vaccine has caused disablement.

The introduction of a face-to-face medical assessment as required for Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit would delay claims and would require legislative change and re-negotiations of clinical contracts and would therefore significantly delay claims being processed. The Government's current focus is increasing the operations of the VDPS and ensuring timely outcomes are provided to claimants.

■ Visual Impairment: Research

Steve McCabe: [\[79257\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure research into eye conditions is adequately funded.

Will Quince:

The Department's National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) welcomes funding applications for research into any aspect of human health, including eye conditions. 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. In the last five years, the NIHR has invested more than £100 million in funding and support for research into eye conditions.

■ Weather: Death

Ben Lake: [\[80838\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions his Department has had with representatives from the Welsh Government on the potential implications of the joint report by UK Health Security Agency and the Office for National Statistics on the effect of the summer 2022 record temperatures on excess mortality, published 7 October 2022.

Neil O'Brien:

We continue to have regular discussions with colleagues from the devolved administrations on a range of issues, including the impact of heatwaves. We are currently assessing evidence and actions in response to this summer's temperatures, including the report of 7 October.

Ben Lake: [\[80839\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies of the joint report by the UK Health Security Agency and the Office for National Statistics showing the effect of the summer 2022 record temperatures on excess mortality, published 7 October 2022; and what discussions he had had with Cabinet colleagues on this matter.

Neil O'Brien:

We continue to have regular discussions with Cabinet colleagues on health issues, including the impact of heatwaves. We are currently assessing evidence and actions in response to this summer's temperatures, including the report of 7 October.

Ben Lake: [\[80840\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps the Government is taking to investigate the impact of rising temperatures on mortality.

Neil O'Brien:

The UK Health Security Agency has established the Centre for Climate and Health Security which will investigate the impact of rising temperatures and identify and promote interventions to protect public health. The Centre for Climate and Health Security is developing the Single Adverse Weather and Health Plan, which is expected to be published in 2023. The Plan aims to improve existing guidance on reducing health risks associated with adverse weather events, including extreme heat. It will also address the health risks identified in the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment and contribute to prevention and adaptation actions in the health sector and local communities. In addition, the Plan will update the evidence on the health impacts of climate change using the latest UK Climate Projections and include the projected number of heat-related deaths per year.

Wheelchairs: Children

Vicky Foxcroft: [80788]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to review the equipment offerings for young wheelchair users aged five and under in the NHS England wheelchair services equipment framework.

Vicky Foxcroft: [80789]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department has taken to help improve wait times for children requiring equipment from the NHS wheelchair service; and if his Department will make an estimate of the average waiting time for provision of mobility equipment for children as of 7 November 2022.

Maria Caulfield:

NHS England's model service specification for wheelchair and posture is currently under review to develop a framework for integrated care systems to commission effective, efficient and personalised wheelchair services, including for those under five years old.

Since July 2015, NHS England has collected quarterly data for the National Wheelchair Dataset, which supports improvements in wheelchair services. The data also examines waiting times at stages in the pathway to enable targeted action if improvement is required.

The National Wheelchair Dataset collates the percentage of children receiving equipment in less than 18 weeks of being referred to the wheelchair service within the quarterly reporting period. In July to September 2022, 80% of children had received the prescribed equipment within 18 weeks or less.

World Health Assembly

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [80847]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, for what reasons the UK did not submit proposals to amend the International Health Regulations as part of the process agreed at the World Health Assembly in 2022.

Neil O'Brien:

The United Kingdom wants to ensure that countries' obligations under the International Health Regulations 2005 remain fit for purpose and reflect lessons learned through the COVID-19 pandemic. We want to see stronger global commitment to effective disease surveillance, early reporting of potential health threats and transparency in sharing information. These issues form part of the multilateral discussions on amendments to the Regulations and the UK will participate in the Working Group on Amendments to the International Health Regulations.

HOME OFFICE**■ Afghanistan: Refugees****Dan Jarvis:****[82305]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Office, with reference to the Government of Canada policy Permanent residence for extended family of former Afghan interpreters, last updated in June 2022, if she will discuss with Cabinet colleagues the potential merits of creating a similar policy that provides a pathway to permanent residence for extended family members of former Afghan interpreters, including parents and siblings, in the UK.

Robert Jenrick:

Certain additional family members of eligible Afghan citizens can relocate under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP). Eligibility of additional family members of those who qualify to relocate is assessed by the sponsoring UK Government Department. Those who are deemed eligible will receive settled status in the United Kingdom.

[Eligibility of additional family members under the Afghan locally employed staff relocation schemes.docx \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

■ Asylum**Chi Onwurah:****[82295]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of trends in the number of people seeking asylum in the UK in the last five years; and what proportion of people seeking asylum in the UK in the last five years have done so through safe routes.

Robert Jenrick:

The Home Office publishes data on asylum applications in the '[Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release](#)'. Data on the number of asylum applications received are published in table Asy_D01 of the [asylum and resettlement detailed datasets](#). Information on how to use the dataset can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook. The latest data relates to the year ending June 2022. Additionally, the Home Office publishes a high-level overview of the data in the '[summary tables](#)'. The

'contents' sheet contains an overview of all available data on asylum and resettlement.

The publication does not include information on how asylum seekers travelled to the UK. Some, but not all, asylum seekers arrive via small boats. Information on small boat arrivals who claim asylum can be found in the '[How many people do we grant asylum or protection to?](#)' chapter of the Immigration Statistics quarterly release.

Asylum is separate to the following 'safe and legal entry routes':

- Resettlement, including via the Afghan Resettlement Programme
- Family reunion visas
- BN(O) Hong Kong visas

Ukraine Family, Sponsorship and Extension Scheme visas

■ Asylum: Applications

Chloe Smith:

[79281]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent steps her Department has taken to increase the rate of processing of asylum applications.

Robert Jenrick:

The Home Office is working at pace to reduce the number of outstanding asylum claims which has been caused by record levels of illegal migration.

We have already increased the number of caseworkers by 80% to more than 1,000. We are continuing to hire more caseworkers, streamline processes and make better use of technology to get the asylum backlog down

A successful pilot scheme has seen the average number of asylum claims processed by caseworkers double and we are now rolling this out across the country.

The asylum transformation programme aims to bring the system back into balance and modernise it, focussing on increasing productivity by streamlining, simplifying and digitalising processes, speeding up decision making and increasing efficiency and output.

■ Asylum: Equality

Olivia Blake:

[R] [82490]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department has taken to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Nationality and Borders Act to mitigate the risk of indirect discrimination for claims based on protected characteristics, in accordance with paragraph 21 of that Act's Equality Impact Assessment.

Robert Jenrick:

An Equality Impact Assessment was published on 16 September, as part of the then Nationality and Borders Bill (now Act).

All our policies under the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 will be subject to ongoing monitoring and evaluation, with the operation of our policies being kept under close review. The Home Office routinely publishes migration statistics, which forms the basis of our analysis.

We are also committed to engaging with our external stakeholders to explore any trends or issues that they are identifying and any other outputs.

■ Asylum: Greater London

Alex Sobel:

[\[80875\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will provide further details of the reasons behind the operational error which led to 11 asylum seekers being driven from Manston Asylum Processing Centre to central London, and left without accommodation overnight.

Robert Jenrick:

The welfare of those in our care is of the utmost importance and people are only released from Manston when we have assurances that they have accommodation to go to.

Once we were notified that these individuals did not have accommodation, they were transported to accommodation within a matter of hours.

■ Asylum: Hotels

Chloe Smith:

[\[79275\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has taken recent steps to help promote good community relations in areas where hotels have been block booked for an indeterminate period for the sole use of asylum seekers.

Chloe Smith:

[\[79276\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department undertakes assessments of the potential impact of block booking hotels for an indeterminate period for the sole use of asylum seekers on the local and regional economy before making those bookings.

Robert Jenrick:

Due to the continuing unprecedented high volume of small boats arrivals and the historical pressure from COVID-19 measures on the asylum system it has been necessary to continue to use hotels to accommodate some asylum seekers to meet our immediate statutory need.

When a new hotel has been identified, the Home Office will write to the Local Authority Chief Executive and the MP for the area to inform them of our plans to house asylum seekers within the hotel identified. This is normally done in advance of a hotel being used, but when a particularly urgent need for accommodation occurs, this may take place retrospectively. We also then offer the Local Authority a meeting

to discuss the hotel, where they are able to provide feedback on the proposed site and all related matters.

Community cohesion is an important aspect of using contingency sites successfully and we actively engage and collaborate with relevant stakeholders to understand and act on any concerns appropriately as the site operates.

The Full Dispersal model, announced on 13 April 2022, aims to reduce then end the use of hotels by allowing the Home Office to procure dispersal properties within the private rental sector in all Local Authority areas across England, Scotland and Wales, rather than the minority of Local Authorities which currently participate. This more equitable approach is supported by £21million of un-ringfenced grant funding to make sure eligible Local Authorities can provide wraparound support locally. Local authorities will also receive £3,500 for each new dispersal accommodation bed space in the 22/23 financial year.

Chloe Smith:

[79277]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to help ensure that asylum seekers who are unaccompanied minors are (a) supported and (b) kept safe during temporary placements in hotels.

Chloe Smith:

[79278]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to help ensure that asylum seekers who are (a) women and (b) unaccompanied minors are not falling victim to (i) modern slavery and (ii) human trafficking whilst residing in temporary hotel accommodation.

Robert Jenrick:

The UK is experiencing an unprecedented increase in the number of people making life-threatening journeys to cross the Channel. These boats are often carrying unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and this has placed unprecedented pressure on the National Transfer Scheme. Out of necessity and with the children's best interests in mind, we have arranged for them to be accommodated on an emergency and temporary basis in hotels whilst placements with local authorities are being vigorously pursued.

We have safeguarding procedures in place to ensure all unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in emergency interim hotels are as safe and supported as possible whilst we seek urgent placements with a local authority. Young people are supported by team leaders and support workers who are on site 24 hours a day. Further care is provided in hotels by teams of social workers and nurses.

The Home Office has no power to hold children or adults in contingency hotels if they wish to leave. To minimise the risk of a child going missing, records of children leaving and returning to the hotel are kept and monitored. Support workers accompany children off site on activities and social excursions, or where specific vulnerabilities are identified.

All asylum seekers, including children, have an interview on arrival in the UK which includes a series of questions specifically designed to understand whether there are any potential indicators of trafficking. A referral is made to the National Referral Mechanism if indicators are noted. In the case of children a safety plan is put in place by social services, whilst adults identified as potential victims of modern slavery are entitled to care and support provided by the Salvation Army.

The Home Office and its accommodation providers have robust processes in place to ensure that where someone is at risk they are referred to the appropriate statutory agencies of the police, NHS and social services, to promote appropriate safeguarding interventions. All contingency sites have security staff and providers liaise closely with local police to ensure the welfare and safety of vulnerable residents.

Chloe Smith:

[\[79279\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum seekers absconded from asylum hotels (a) nationally and (b) in Norwich North constituency in the latest period for which data is available; how many and what proportion of these people were unaccompanied minors; and what steps her Department is taking to locate them.

Robert Jenrick:

The Home Office has no power to hold asylum seekers, including children, in hotels or any temporary accommodation if they wish to leave.

The Home Office does not publish a breakdown of statistics which disaggregates the number of adult asylum seekers leaving hotels. These figures are not available in a reportable format and to provide the information could only be done at disproportionate cost. We do record the number of unaccompanied asylum children (UASC) leaving UASC hotels on an episodic, rather than on an individual, basis as some children have left their accommodation more than once. There have been 408 episodes of unaccompanied children leaving their UASC hotel accommodation since July 2021.

There are no hotels in Norwich North being used as temporary accommodation for unaccompanied asylum seeking children.

Grahame Morris:

[\[82234\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many hotel accommodation spaces were available to house asylum applicants on each day since 5 September 2022.

Grahame Morris:

[\[82235\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which Government agency is responsible for the (a) procurement and (b) provision of hotel accommodation for asylum applicants.

Grahame Morris:

[\[82236\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which private companies hold contracts for the procurement of hotel accommodation for asylum applicants.

Robert Jenrick:

Due to the continuing unprecedented high volume of small boats arrivals and the historical pressure from COVID-19 measures on the asylum system it has been necessary to continue to use hotels to accommodate some asylum seekers to meet our immediate statutory need.

The precise number of hotel spaces available will fluctuate through each day, therefore it is not possible to advise how many accommodation spaces were available to asylum seekers on each day since 5 September 2022.

Under the Asylum Accommodation and Support Services Contracts (AASC), three accommodation providers have been contracted to procure and provide hotel accommodation for asylum seekers; Clearsprings Ready Homes, Mears Group and Serco.

The contracts have been awarded on a regional basis as follows.

- Serco - Midlands and East of England, North West
- Mears Group - North East, Yorkshire and Humberside, Northern Ireland and Scotland
- Clearsprings Ready Homes – South of England and Wales

Accommodation costs are considered to be commercially confidential, therefore the Home Office does not publish this information. However, total expenditure on asylum is published in the Home Office Annual Report and Accounts, available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ho-annual-reports-and-accounts>

■ Asylum: Housing**Richard Thomson:****[80934]**

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.

Robert Jenrick:

I refer my Hon friend to my response given on 3 November 2022 under UIN 74944.

In the month to September 19 new hotel sites were brought into use providing additional bedspaces for over 2700 people

Rachael Maskell:**[83679]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of providing accommodation for asylum seekers, including conversions and modular builds, on public land due for disposal.

Robert Jenrick:

We have been working closely with our accommodation providers to increase the amount of Dispersed Accommodation (DA) available to us. The full asylum dispersal model, announced on 13 April 2022, will gradually end the use of hotels. This will be

achieved by allowing the Home Office to procure dispersal properties within the private rental sector in all Local Authority areas across England, Scotland and Wales, rather than the minority of Local Authorities which currently participate. This approach will also reduce pressures on those Local Authorities.

We explore new and alternative sites as part of our contingency planning to ensure we have enough capacity across the system to meet expected demand and meet our statutory obligations.

Regarding Local Authorities who support people through the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) or the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) will receive £20,520 per person, over 3 years, for resettlement and integration costs. They have the flexibility to use this funding to contribute towards renting accommodation, including deposit, letting fees and necessary furnishings.

Local authorities and health partners who resettle families will also receive up to £4,500 per child for education, £850 for English language provision for adults requiring this support and £2,600 for healthcare. This funding is available to local authorities who resettle families under the 3 year ACRS/ARAP with effect from 1 September 2021.

For other resettlement schemes the first 12 months of a refugee's resettlement costs are funded by central government using the overseas aid budget.

■ **Asylum: Norwich North**

Chloe Smith:

[79280]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the (a) average, (b) most frequent and (c) longest stay was for an asylum seeker placed in hotel accommodation in Norwich North constituency in the last three years.

Chloe Smith:

[79282]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average cost per day was of temporarily housing asylum seekers in hotel accommodation in Norwich North constituency in the latest period for which data is available.

Robert Jenrick:

We currently have one hotel in use in the Norwich local authority area to accommodate asylum seekers. On 1st November 2022 the average (mean) length of stay was 140 days, the longest stayer was 180 days. Calculations over time cannot be provided as pass through is not measured.

The latest published Immigration Statistics detail the number of asylum seekers accommodated in each local authority area. These statistics can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/asylum-and-resettlement-datasets#asylum-support> Data are published on a quarterly basis, with the latest information published 25 August 2022. The next quarterly figures are due to be released in November 2022. The Home Office does not publish a breakdown of these statistics which disaggregates the number of asylum seekers accommodated in a

specific type of accommodation. These figures are not available in a reportable format and to provide the information could only be done at disproportionate cost.

■ **Asylum: Rwanda**

Sir Stephen Timms:

[\[82154\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the estimated cost to the public purse will be of the Migration and Economic Development Partnership with Rwanda in the (a) 2022-23 financial year and (b) next five years of the partnership.

Robert Jenrick:

The costs of our broken asylum system are at a 20-year record high, currently costing the UK taxpayer over £2 billion a year. This cannot continue – and the partnership with Rwanda is a key part of our plans to reform the system and put an end to unsustainable costs which impact the taxpayer.

The UK has provided Rwanda with an initial investment of £120m as part of the Migration and Economic Development Partnership. The UK will also be funding the processing costs for each person relocated, such as caseworkers, legal advice, translators, accommodation, food, healthcare, and for those granted protection, a comprehensive integration package to help them put down roots and start a new life. The UK has also made a £20m upfront payment to the Government of Rwanda to support initial set up costs.

The timing and scale of future payments will depend on the numbers of people relocated, and the outcomes of individual cases. Actual spend will be reported as part of the annual Home Office Reports and Accounts in the usual way.

■ **Detention Centres: Manston**

Stuart C McDonald:

[\[80739\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people were detained for processing at Manston asylum processing centre on each Monday since Monday 6 June 2022 to date; and how many arrivals and departures there were in each of those weeks.

Robert Jenrick:

Home Office does not hold the requested data in a reportable format and there are currently no plans to publish this historic data.

Alex Sobel:

[\[80876\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many children are detained at Manston Asylum Processing Centre.

Robert Jenrick:

As at 4pm on 7 November there were 117 children resident with their families at Manston.

Luke Pollard:

[\[80885\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the cost was of the Home Secretary's flight by Chinook helicopter from Dover to the Manston immigration facility on 3 November 2022.

Robert Jenrick:

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer given by the Rt. Hon. Member James Heapey on 10th November to Question [79258](#).

■ Extradition

Kenny MacAskil:

[\[80899\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will take steps to ensure that the National Crime Agency notifies UK citizens of any red notice that has been attached to them by a Gulf state.

Kenny MacAskil:

[\[80900\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether UK citizens are entitled to ask the National Crime Agency whether any red notice has been attached to them by (a) a Gulf state and (b) another country.

Kenny MacAskil:

[\[80901\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the UK Border Agency monitors the number of Red Notices attached to UK citizens.

Chris Philp:

It is HMG's long-standing policy to neither confirm nor deny (NCND) the existence of an INTERPOL Red Notice or Diffusion against any named individual.

This is in order to support the functioning of our judicial processes. Working with the National Crime Agency, the UK Border Force ensures that relevant information is made available to front-line officers working at the border.

■ Financial Services: Fraud

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[\[83742\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps the Government is taking to protect (a) older and (b) more vulnerable people from financial fraud.

Tom Tugendhat:

The Government recognises the devastating impact of fraud on people's lives, particularly the elderly and most vulnerable people in society. To ensure their protection from financial fraud, the Government has taken various steps.

We have sanctioned the banning of cold calls from personal injury firms and pension providers, unless the consumer has explicitly agreed to be contacted and we have introduced director liability for companies who make nuisance calls. Through the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations (PECR), we have imposed strict obligations on organisations that make direct marketing calls, live or automated, to

individuals in the UK. We have worked with Ofcom, UK Finance and the telecoms providers to identify and block calls from fraudsters.

■ **Hate Crime: Disability**

Alex Norris:

[\[82417\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 8 November 2022 to Question 78638 on Hate Crime: Disability, what her planned timetable is for publication of her Department's response to the recommendations.

Miss Sarah Dines:

The Government will publish a response setting out its views on the Law Commission's recommendations.

■ **HM Passport Office: Documents**

Mohammad Yasin:

[\[79323\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an estimate of the number of supporting documents the Passport Office received by mail in 2022; how many and what proportion of those documents were (a) lost and (b) damaged; and what the average length of time was for the reimbursement of lost and damaged documents.

Robert Jenrick:

In 2022, His Majesty's Passport Office has received over 7 million items by post in 2022. 74 documents, or approximately 0.001% of the items received, have been reported as lost and not recovered. 1,114 documents, or approximately 0.016% of the items received, have been reported as damaged on route to, or within, an HM Passport Office site.

The length of time for reimbursement due to loss and damage of documents is not held in a reportable format.

■ **Home Office: Helicopters**

John Healey:

[\[79266\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her Department's policy is on the use of helicopters for domestic journeys.

Robert Jenrick:

The Departmental Travel Manual does not contain instructions on the use of helicopters.

■ **Home Office: Redundancy Pay**

Christine Jardine:

[\[82404\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the cost to the public purse has been of Ministerial severance pay in their Department in each year since 1 January 2016 to 8 November 2022.

Chris Philp:

The Provision of severance payments for Ministers is set out in legislation.

Details of the severance payments made to Ministers when leaving office are published in departments' annual reports and accounts.

Hospitality Industry: Visas**Rachael Maskell:**[\[80772\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has had recent discussions with the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport promoting (a) short- and (b) long-term visas for potential workers in the UK hospitality sectors.

Robert Jenrick:

Migration is a priority issue for this Government and officials across departments discuss such issues on a regular basis.

Many roles within the hospitality sector - including chefs and hotel, bar and restaurant managers - are eligible for Skilled Worker visas. In addition, the sector can recruit visa holders with general work rights, including students and those on our Youth Mobility Schemes, into any role as permitted by their visa.

The hospitality sector has full access to the UK labour market, which includes UK workers and migrants with general work rights – who can all work without any Home Office restrictions.

Jessica Laverack**Jess Phillips:**[\[80724\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the letter dated 27 June 2022 from Lorraine Harris, Area Coroner for Kingston Upon Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire, to the Secretary of State for the Home Department setting out the coroner's recommendations as a result of the inquest into the death of Jessica Louise Laverack and requesting a response by 23 August 2022, for what reason her Department has not responded to the letter.

Miss Sarah Dines:

The Home Office responded to the Prevention of Future Death report from Lorraine Harris, Area Coroner for Kingston Upon Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire on the 23 August 2022. We have since followed up with the Coroner's office to ensure that they received our letter.

It is devastating that some victims of domestic abuse are taking their own lives.

Developing the evidence base and interventions for suicides that follow domestic abuse is a key priority for the Home Office. In the Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan, we committed to continue to a package of measures to better understand and begin to tackle suicides which take place following domestic abuse.

■ Members: Correspondence

Sir Stephen Timms: [\[80571\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department will respond to correspondence of 19 June 2022 from the Rt Hon. Member for East Ham, case reference ST98097.

Robert Jenrick:

I apologise for the delay in the Department responding to the Rt. Hon. Member. The Home Office responded on 9 November 2022.

Alison Thewliss: [\[80753\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Office, whether the Minister for Refugees plans to respond to the correspondence of 26 November 2021 from the hon. Member for Glasgow Central to the Minister for Safeguarding on 26 November 2021, case reference ZA25937.

Robert Jenrick:

The Home Office responded to the correspondence on 9 December 2021, and resent the response on 9 November 2022.

Dan Carden: [\[80862\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department plans to respond to the correspondence of 3 October 2022 from the hon. Member for Liverpool, Walton on Anila Cota.

Dan Carden: [\[80863\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department plans to respond to the correspondence of 3 October 2022 from the hon. Member for Liverpool, Walton on Keng Kim.

Dan Carden: [\[80864\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department plans to respond to the correspondence of 3 October 2022 from the hon. Member for Liverpool, Walton on Hassan Qayyum.

Dan Carden: [\[80871\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department plans to respond to the correspondence of 3 October 2022 from the hon. Member for Liverpool Walton on the Darabaih brothers.

Dan Carden: [\[80872\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department plans to respond to the correspondence of 3 October 2022 from the hon. Member for Liverpool Walton on Alan Mahmud Hama-Saaed.

Dan Carden:

[\[80873\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department plans to respond to the correspondence of 3 October 2022 from the hon. Member for Liverpool Walton on Shahin Mahmoud Zade.

Dan Carden:

[\[80874\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department plans to respond to the correspondence of 4 October 2022 from the hon. Member for Liverpool Walton on Khalil Muslem.

Robert Jenrick:

PQN/22-23/2022/05181 - MPAM reference: MPAM/0444309/22 - The Home Office responded to the hon. Member's correspondence on 8 November 2022.

PQN/22-23/2022/05182 - MPAM reference: MPAM/0444335/22 - The Home Office responded to the hon. Member's correspondence on 8 November 2022.

PQN/22-23/2022/05183 - MPAM reference: MPAM/0444366/22 - The Home Office responded to the hon. Member's correspondence on 8 November 2022.

PQW/22-23/2022/05194 - MPAM reference: MPAM/0444616/22 - The Home Office responded to the hon. Member's correspondence on 8 November 2022.

PQW/22-23/2022/05195 - MPAM reference: MPAM/0444617/22 - The Home Office responded to the hon. Member's correspondence on 8 November 2022.

PQW/22-23/2022/05196 - MPAM reference: MPAM/0445200/22 - The Home Office responded to the hon. Member's correspondence on 8 November 2022.

PQW/22-23/2022/05197 - MPAM reference: MPAM/0445702/22 - The Home Office responded to the hon. Member's correspondence on 8 November 2022.

■ Migrant Workers: Scotland

Martin Docherty-Hughes:

[\[902170\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of the Government's immigration policies on (a) Scotland's population and (b) labour shortages in Scotland.

Robert Jenrick:

Our points-based system works for the whole of the UK by welcoming people to fill skills gaps, support our public services and boost our economy.

Furthermore, the Shortage Occupation List also includes occupations which are in shortage and are specific to Scotland, such as chemical scientists and Gaelic teachers.

Immigration policy cannot, however, be a complete solution to population movements within the UK or labour shortages. The Scottish Government has levers at its disposal to address these issues more effectively.

■ Peru: Undocumented Migrants

Fabian Hamilton: [\[80597\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with her Peruvian counterpart on undocumented migrants from that country who attempt to enter the UK.

Robert Jenrick:

The Home Secretary has not had any conversations with her Peruvian counterpart on the issue of undocumented migrants attempting to enter the UK.

■ Police: Children

Marsha De Cordova: [\[902173\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to help tackle the over-policing of children.

Miss Sarah Dines:

Children are a protected group with specific needs and vulnerabilities and it is essential that police recognise this during any interaction. Specific safeguards exist for children including a statutory requirement to consider their safety and welfare during a search or when making a decision to arrest. It is positive that the number of children arrested has declined significantly over the last 10 years.

■ Police: Workplace Pensions

Laura Farris: [\[79356\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many police officers have been subject to pension forfeiture over the last five years; and for what reasons.

Chris Philp:

The information is not held in the format requested.

■ Refugees: Afghanistan

Dan Jarvis: [\[80713\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy applications have been approved by the Ministry of Defence but are still waiting for (a) Home Office approval and (b) issuance of visas by UKVI.

Robert Jenrick:

Government departments continue to work collaboratively in order to make casework decisions and ensure visas are issued as soon as is practicable, following appropriate checks including security. There are a number of complex issues that can impact how swiftly individuals can relocate to the UK, and as such, individual timeframes for decisions can differ considerably.

More information on the number of grants of Indefinite Leave to Remain issued to Afghans resettling under the ARAP or ACRS can be viewed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghan-resettlement-programme-operational-data/afghan-resettlement-programme-operational-data>

Sir Stephen Timms:

[82153]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether Afghans who were settled under Pathway One of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme are eligible for family reunion rights.

Robert Jenrick:

As those resettled through Pathway One of the ACRS do not have refugee status, they will not be eligible to apply under the refugee family reunion route.

Those resettled through Pathway One of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) may be able to sponsor family members through the family visa routes under Appendix FM of the Immigration Rules, subject to meeting the eligibility requirements of the respective visa route. More information is set out in the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration>

Dr Alan Whitehead:

[902175]

What progress she has made on implementing the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme.

Robert Jenrick:

We are pleased to report all three referral pathways on the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) are now open to receive referrals, to provide a route for resettlement to the UK for at-risk individuals in Afghanistan and the region.

The ACRS was launched in January, with some of those evacuated under Op PITTING being granted a place.

We are now receiving referrals from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) of vulnerable refugees who have fled Afghanistan for resettlement to the UK, and are pleased to have welcomed the first families under this Pathway (2) of the ACRS.

The FCDO launched Pathway 3, which will see eligible British Council and GardaWorld contractors and Chevening alumni considered for resettlement to the UK. The FCDO has begun notifying eligible individuals with advice on the next steps.

■ Refugees: Employment

Rachael Maskell:

[80778]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to help refugees in temporary accommodation engage in employment in the period between checks being completed and their claims being processed.

Robert Jenrick:

Asylum seekers are not allowed to work in the UK unless their claim has been outstanding for 12 months or more through no fault of their own. Those permitted to

work are restricted to jobs on the Shortage Occupation List, which is based on expert advice from the independent Migration Advisory Committee. Our policy approach distinguishes between those coming to the UK seeking asylum who need protection and those seeking to work here who can apply for a work visa under the Immigration Rules. Our wider economic migration policy schemes could be seriously undermined if migrants were able to bypass work visa rules by lodging unfounded asylum claims in the UK, then shortly afterwards getting the right to work as a result.

■ Slavery

Jess Phillips:

[\[80727\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which National Referral Mechanism first responder agencies referred people who were found to be exploiting the modern slavery system in (a) 2020, (b) 2021 and (c) 2022 as of 7 November 2022; and how many of these cases were brought by each National Referral Mechanism first responder agency.

Robert Jenrick:

As you will be aware, the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is the UK's framework for identifying victims of modern slavery. A First Responder Organisation (FRO) is an authority that is authorised to refer a potential victim of modern slavery into the NRM. Members of staff at those FROs have a responsibility for discharging one or more of the functions of the FRO, including recognising the indicators of modern slavery and identifying potential victims of modern slavery, and subsequently referring those potential victims into the NRM.

Decisions about who is then recognised and confirmed as a victim of modern slavery are made by trained specialists in one of the Home Office competent authorities (Single Competent Authority (SCA) and the Immigration Enforcement Competent Authority (IECA)).

The competent authorities' assessment of whether an individual is a victim of modern slavery is two-stage process. A competent authority will first make a decision as to whether there is enough evidence available such that it 'suspects but cannot prove' that the individual is a victim of modern slavery. This is the reasonable grounds (RG) decision. Where a positive decision is issued the competent authority will then go on to gather further information about the case and then make a second decision on 'the balance of probabilities' whether that individual is a victim of modern slavery; this is the conclusive grounds (CG) decision.

■ Spiking

Caroline Lucas:

[\[82230\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department plans to report on the (a) prevalence and (b) nature of spiking; and if she will make it her policy to create a specific criminal offence for (i) drink and (ii) needle spiking.

Miss Sarah Dines:

The government's statutory report on the prevalence and nature of spiking is due to be published no later than 28 April 2023.

The government is committed to updating Parliament on the need for a specific criminal offence for spiking. We are aiming to provide this update before the Christmas Recess.

■ Theft: Ukraine**Drew Hendry:**[\[80759\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions her Department has had with the National Crime Agency on (a) the steps they are taking to ensure that (i) material goods, (ii) agricultural products and (iii) art, that is looted from Ukraine is clearly identified and (b) ensuring companies and individuals who are involved in the movement or purchase of items looted from Ukraine are prosecuted.

Drew Hendry:[\[80760\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the National Crime Agency have sought any prosecutions for looting from occupied areas of Ukraine.

Chris Philp:

The National Crime Agency's response to Russian's invasion of Ukraine is focused on investigating evasion to criminal sanctions and high-end money laundering, including by individuals in the UK who are linked to the Russian regime.

For reasons of operational security, the National Crime Agency is not able to provide further details publicly.

■ Undocumented Migrants: English Channel**Grahame Morris:**[\[82238\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people who arrived in the UK on small boats over the English Channel in 2022 (a) are in Immigration Removal Centres, (b) are in hotel accommodation, (c) are in the community under bail conditions, (d) have been removed from the country and (e) have returned to their country of origin voluntarily.

Robert Jenrick:

The Home Office publishes statistics on small boat arrivals to the UK in the '[Irregular Migration to the UK statistics](#)' report. Data on small boat arrivals by year are published in table Irr_01 of the '[Irregular migration to the UK data tables](#)' with the latest data up to the end of June 2022. Future irregular migration publication release dates can be found on the [research and statistics calendar](#).

The statistics presented in the Irregular Migration release relate to the number of people recorded being detected on, or shortly after, arrival to the UK on various routes (flow). They do not provide an indication of the total number of people currently in the UK who have entered the UK via irregular routes.

The Home Office also publishes statistics on the following topics, in the ‘ [Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release](#) ’:

- People entering, in, and leaving immigration detention.

The number of people entering detention each quarter are in table Det_D01 of the ‘ [Detention detailed datasets](#) ’, where the data can be broken down by first place of detention. The number of people in detention at the end of each quarter are in table Det_D02 of the ‘ [Detention detailed datasets](#) ’, where the data can be broken down by current place of detention. The number of people leaving detention each quarter are in table Det_D03 of the ‘ [Detention detailed datasets](#) ’, where the data can be broken down by reason for leaving detention, including being bailed. The latest data relate to the end of June 2022. Data up to the end of September will be published on 24 November 2022

Please note, the data are for all people entering, in and leaving detention, not just people who arrived in the UK via small boats.

- Returns from the UK.

The latest data on returns from the UK, broken down by type of return including enforced returns and voluntary returns, are published in table Ret_D01 of the ‘ [Returns detailed datasets](#) ’, where the data can be broken down by return destination group (including Home country) and nationality (which may differ from country of origin). The latest data go up to the end of March 2022. Data up to the end of June 2022 will be published on 24 November 2022.

Please note the data are for all people returned from the UK, not just people who arrived in the UK via small boats.

Data on voluntary returns are subject to upward revision, so comparisons over time should be made with caution. In some cases, individuals who have been told to leave the UK will not notify the Home Office of their departure from the UK. In such cases, it can take some time for the Home Office to become aware of such a departure and update the system. As a result, data for more recent periods will initially undercount the total number of returns. ‘Other verified returns’ are particularly affected by this.

- Asylum.

Data on asylum seekers in receipt of support can be found in table Asy_D09 of the ‘ [asylum and resettlement detailed datasets](#) ’. Information on how to use the datasets can be found in the ‘Notes’ page of the workbooks. Please note the data show a snapshot as at the last day of each quarter, rather than the number of asylum seekers in receipt of support over the entire quarter. The latest data relates to as at 31 March 2022. Data as at 30 June 2022 will be published on 24 November 2022.

Please note, ‘accommodation’ is not limited to hotel accommodation.

Please note, the data are for all asylum seekers in receipt of support, not just asylum seekers who arrived in the UK via small boats.

Information on how to use the datasets in the Immigration Statistics quarterly release can be found in the 'Notes' page of the dataset workbooks.

Information on future Home Office statistical release dates can be found in the '[Research and statistics calendar](#)'.

Henry Smith:

[902172]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to reduce the number of small boat crossings of the English Channel.

Suella Braverman:

As we approach the first anniversary of the tragic deaths in the Channel last November, we are more determined than ever to end the vile business model of people smugglers and are working with our international partners to stop people putting their lives at risk through dangerous and illegal journeys.

Those who travel to the UK by illegal, dangerous and unnecessary methods, including via small boat crossings across the Channel, will be considered for relocation to Rwanda, where they will have their asylum claim processed – they will not return to the UK.

■ **Visas: Overseas Students**

Matt Western:

[79326]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 3 November 2022 to Question 73114 on Visas: Overseas Students, whether her Department records the number of recipients of international student visas that are accompanied by five and six dependents.

Robert Jenrick:

The Home Office does not routinely publish data on the number of recipients of international student visas who are accompanied by dependants.

Information on our immigration routes is available as part of our transparency data and can be found at: [Visas and Citizenship data: Q2 2022](#).

■ **Visas: Skilled Workers**

Christine Jardine:

[82402]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of introducing temporary recovery visas to address industries experiencing labour and skills shortages; and if she will extend eligibility for those types of visas to bus drivers.

Robert Jenrick:

The Points based immigration system provides for occupations within a wide range of sectors, subject to the requirements of specific routes – including English language and salary – being met. However, roles such as bus drivers do not meet the skills

threshold for the Skilled Worker route. It is not the Government's intention to launch a recovery visa.

Beyond the points based system, employers can recruit those with general work rights including the millions of people who have been granted status under the EU Settlement Scheme, those who have arrived via our settlement route for British National (Overseas) normally resident in Hong Kong and their households, those who have arrived via a family visa and those in the UK under our Youth Mobility Schemes. They have full access to the UK labour market and are free to work in the UK and can undertake any role.

However, we must see long-term solutions to labour and skills shortages delivered by employers through improved training and hiring, with better pay and working conditions.

■ Wind Power: Migrant Workers

Emma Hardy:

[82426]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential impact of the Offshore wind workers concession on (a) training and (b) employment numbers of UK seafarers; and if she will undertake a review of the impact of the concession before the latest extension ends on 30 April 2023.

Robert Jenrick:

The Government regularly reviews the existence of concessions against the general principles of the immigration system to check whether they are necessary and regularly undertakes engagement with a wide range of stakeholders. This will continue to be the case in future.

Karl Turner:

[R] [902177]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the extension of the Offshore wind workers Immigration Rules concession.

Robert Jenrick:

The Government regularly reviews all Immigration Rules concessions to evaluate whether they are still needed for the good of the United Kingdom, its businesses and its people.

Prior to its extension on 1 November, it was agreed that it was in the UK's best interests to extend the Offshore wind workers concession.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Beef: Exports

Jim Shannon:

[\[80701\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what recent steps her Department has taken to promote the export of British beef.

Andrew Bowie:

The Department for International Trade (DIT) works closely with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to increase opportunities for UK beef, and in recent years unlocked barriers to enable exports to markets such as Japan, the Philippines, and the USA.

DIT works with industry partners to deliver trade promotion activity to promote British beef globally, through trade shows, meet the buyer missions and other marketing activities.

DIT has recently established a new trade and investment hub in Northern Ireland, that works closely with the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), the Northern Ireland Meat Exporters Association, Ulster Farmers Union and Livestock and Meat Commission for Northern Ireland, in support of export goals.

■ Cetaceans: Faroe Islands

Zarah Sultana:

[\[82455\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether her Department has taken steps to use Britain's trade relationship with the Faroe Islands to help stop the hunting of whales, dolphins and other cetaceans on the islands.

Greg Hands:

The Government is strongly opposed to the hunting of whales and dolphins. UK Officials have raised its concerns at many fora including at the International Whaling Commission and through Faroese representation in London. The Department for International Trade will continue to utilise the opportunities provided by our Trade Agreement to engage the Faroese authorities on this important matter, including through the Joint Committee of the agreement.

Strong diplomatic and economic relationships with partners, enables us to have frank discussions on such issues.

■ Energy Charter Treaty

Ruth Cadbury:

[\[80735\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether her Department has had recent discussions with (a) fossil fuel producers and (b) other business groups on potential claims for investor-state dispute settlements being brought against the UK under the revised terms of the Energy Charter Treaty.

Greg Hands:

The Department for International Trade has not had any recent engagement with fossil fuel producers or other business groups on potential claims for investor-state dispute settlement being brought against the UK under the modernised terms of the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT).

Exports: Government Assistance**Gareth Thomas:**[\[77260\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment she has made of the impact of her Department's export strategy entitled, *Made in the UK, sold to the World*, published on 17 November 2021; and if she will make a statement.

Andrew Bowie:

[Holding answer 7 November 2022]: UK exports were £728 billion in the 12 months to end of August 2022, up £116 billion in current prices, adjusted for inflation this shows an increase of £49bn.

The Export Strategy provides the foundation of our support for businesses, helping them capitalise on new trade deals. Since its launch, the Export Support Service has received over 11,500 enquiries. We have expanded the Export Academy, boosted our International Trade Advisor network, the '*Made in the UK, Sold to the World*' campaign continues to inspire businesses to export and last week's International Trade Week attracted over 10,000 business registrations and held 120 business-facing events.

Trade Agreements**Charlotte Nichols:**[\[77626\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how much her Department estimates the UK's GDP to increase by in the next 10 years as a result of current trade deals made since Brexit.

Andrew Bowie:

Our published impact assessments set out the potential marginal long-run impacts of new free trade agreements on the United Kingdom's GDP. Agreements with Japan, Australia and New Zealand are part of a set of deals with 71 countries plus the EU that the government has negotiated. These partners accounted for £814bn of UK bilateral trade in 2021.

Trade Agreements: Dispute Resolution**Ruth Cadbury:**[\[80736\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether her Department has processes in place to assess the likelihood of there being claims for investor-state dispute settlements being brought against the UK.

Greg Hands:

The Department for International Trade is responsible for policy on investment protection and Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS), but other government departments are responsible for ensuring that actions they take comply with the UK's international legal obligations, including with respect to assessing the risk of ISDS claims.

Trade Agreements: Human Rights**Kenny MacAskil:**[\[71284\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps the Government is taking to include respect for the human rights of (a) consumers, (b) residents, (c) workers and (d) people living in poverty within trade agreements.

Greg Hands:

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to either negotiating trade deals or supporting human rights. The UK assesses and considers appropriate action in response to egregious human rights violations and abuses globally, and this goes much wider than considering trade alone, drawing on the wider tools and levers at our disposal.

The UK is a leading advocate for human rights around the world and we remain committed to the promotion of universal human rights. This is undertaken separately to negotiations on free trade agreements. Free trade agreements are not generally the most effective or targeted tool to advance human rights issues.

Trade Agreements: Israel**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[\[80844\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment she has made of the potential impact of a free trade agreement between the UK and Israel.

Nigel Huddleston:

An enhanced agreement would expand a trading relationship already worth £5 billion per year. By reducing trade barriers, it could lead to gains in services trade and could benefit around 6,600 UK businesses that export goods to Israel and employed over 1.7 million people in 2020, including around 5,600 small and medium-sized enterprises. Israel's service sector has grown by 45% in 10 years and is an innovative and dynamic market for boosting UK service exports.

Our published scoping analysis, which contains potential impacts of a new free trade agreement is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-approach-to-negotiating-a-free-trade-agreement-with-israel>.

JUSTICE**■ Criminal Proceedings: Royal Commissions****Liz Saville Roberts:**[\[80822\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Answer of 29 March 2022 to Question 143691 on Criminal Proceedings: Royal Commissions, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of the establishment of a Royal Commission on the criminal justice system.

Mike Freer:

We continue to prioritise recovery in the criminal justice system and it is right to do so in light of the disruption caused by the Criminal Bar Association's recent action. Our focus is on delivering our priorities over the coming months including strengthening victims' rights through the Victims' Bill and overhauling the UK human rights framework through the Bill of Rights, which will safeguard the wider public interest, while restoring some common sense to our justice system.

We continue to keep issues in the wider criminal justice system under review.

■ Domestic Abuse: Legal Representation**Jess Phillips:**[\[80726\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many (a) accredited domestic abuse specialists and (b) other advocates his Department (i) has and (ii) plans to employ in the special advocates scheme provided for under section 65 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 to avoid perpetrator-victim cross examination in domestic abuse cases.

Edward Argar:

Sections 65 and 66 of the Act prohibit domestic abuse perpetrators from cross-examining their victims, and vice versa, and enables the court to appoint a 'qualified legal representative' (QLRs) to cross-examine on their behalf.

We have already had 385 QLRs register for the scheme and we will continue to register individuals on a rolling basis to ensure that a sufficient number of representatives are available as cases continue to come through.

We are also conducting a targeted communications campaign, working with representatives from the legal sector and senior judiciary to increase awareness of the scheme and encourage QLR applications.

■ Members: Correspondence**Jess Phillips:**[\[80725\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the letter dated 27 June 2022 from Lorraine Harris, Area Coroner for Kingston Upon Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire, to the Secretary of State for Justice setting out the coroner's recommendations as a result of the inquest into the death of Jessica Louise Laverack and requesting a

response by 23 August 2022, for what reason his Department has not responded to the letter.

Mike Freer:

I can confirm that we received the Area Coroner's Report to Prevent Future Deaths and the findings of fact on 29 June 2022. The Victims Minister has now written to apologise for the delay in acknowledging receipt and thanking her for the comprehensive report into this terrible and tragic case.

We are aware that the Home Office responded to the Coroner within the 56-day timescale and we are supportive of the work that they have referenced in the cross Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan (published in March 2022) that is looking to address a number of these issues including:

- developing the evidence base and interventions to prevent suicides linked to domestic abuse, as well as support a package of measures to tackle suicides which take place following domestic abuse;
- updating police guidance on suicide so that it explicitly includes references to domestic abuse and for the police to consider whether domestic abuse was a contributing factor in cases of unexplained deaths and suspected suicides; and
- promoting the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 Statutory Guidance (published in August 2022) which sets out what best practice in supporting victims looks like, including for multi-agency working and Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences.

■ **Probate: Administrative Delays**

Stephen Morgan:

[\[79337\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department is taking to tackle delays in the Probate Service.

Mike Freer:

Despite the unprecedented challenges faced by the probate service during the Covid 19 pandemic, and the increased volume of applications that have been seen since, the average length of time taken for a grant of probate following receipt of the documents required has been maintained at between five and seven weeks. This is almost two weeks quicker than a year ago.

Average waiting times for probate grants, from April 2022 to June 2022, are published on gov.uk via Family Court Statistics Quarterly (Table 25):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/family-court-statistics-quarterly-april-to-june-2022>.

Information covering up to September 2022 will be published on 15 December.

More recent management information published by HMCTS (which does not go through the same level of quality assurance and analysis as the Family Court Statistics Quarterly) provides waiting time information up to August 2022:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/hmcts-management-information-august-2022>.

HMCTS has increased resources to meet the higher demand and is further increasing resourcing to further bring down overall timeliness on digital and paper applications.

The improvement of the online probate system remains a priority for HMCTS, to ensure more applications can be issued first time and resources can be focused on reducing waiting times.

■ Rape: Prison Sentences

Steve Reed:

[82319]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what proportion of people who have been sentenced for rape have received sentences of seven years or more in each of the last five years.

Edward Argar:

The Ministry of Justice publishes information on the number of defendants prosecuted, convicted and sentenced, with their sentencing outcomes, for the years 2017-2021, in the [Outcomes by Offence data tool 2021](#).

Navigate to the 'Sentencing Outcomes' tab and use the Offence filter to select the applicable offences (19C, 19D, 19E, 19F, 19G, 19H). For a detailed breakdown of sentence lengths of those sentenced to immediate custody, drag in 'Custodial Sentence Length' to the rows section of the field list.

■ Rape: Sentencing

Steve Reed:

[82321]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many people were sentenced for rape in each year since 2018 inclusive.

Edward Argar:

The Ministry of Justice publishes information on the number of defendants prosecuted, convicted and sentenced, with their sentencing outcomes, for the years 2017-2021, in the [Outcomes by Offence data tool 2021](#).

Navigate to the 'Prosecutions and Convictions' tab and use the Offence filter to select the applicable offences (19C, 19D, 19E, 19F, 19G, 19H). The number of people sentenced will populate row 26.

■ Repossession Orders: Mortgages

Sarah Olney:

[82392]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make an estimate of the number of housing repossessions there have been which were due to mortgage defaults in each of the last five quarters.

Mike Freer:

HMCTS publishes statistics on volumes and timeliness of mortgage possession here - [Mortgage and landlord possession statistics - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

These statistics include the volumes of mortgage possession claims, orders, warrants and repossessions but we are not able to break these volumes down by the reason for possession so these will include all mortgage possession claims and not just those arising from a mortgage default.

LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

■ Begging and Vagrancy

Layla Moran:

[\[82438\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, pursuant to the Answer of 16 May 2022 to Question 437 on the Vagrancy Act 1824, what his timeline is for publishing his Department's response to the consultation on the Vagrancy Act 1824.

Felicity Buchan:

Analysis of the responses to the consultation are ongoing, and a Government response to the consultation on replacement legislation for the Vagrancy Act will be issued in due course.

■ Charities: Regional Planning and Development

Julian Knight:

[\[79316\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what discussions his Department has had with stakeholders in the charity sector on levelling up.

Dehenna Davison:

DLUHC ministers and policy officials regularly engage with leaders from across the charity sector including the NCVO, Citizen's Advice, UK Communities Foundation and Locality on issues relating to levelling up. Details of ministerial meetings that have taken place, including those with the third sector can be found [here](#).

■ Devolution: Cheshire

Mike Amesbury:

[\[80880\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what recent progress his Department has made on agreeing a Cheshire and Warrington devolution deal.

Dehenna Davison:

We are committed to the Levelling Up Mission that by 2030 every part of England that wants one will have a devolution deal. We will set out a process for new areas to come forward in due course.

■ Disabled Facilities Grants

Christopher Pincher: [77407]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the disabilities facilities grant and the speed of disbursement of the grants to their recipients.

Felicity Buchan:

The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 requires local authorities to make decisions on Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) applications within six months of receipt, and adaptations must be completed within 12 months of the DFG approval date.

On 28 March this year the Government published new guidance for local authorities in England on effective delivery of the grant. This includes information on how local authorities can speed up DFG delivery. A link to the guidance is available on GOV.UK [here](#).

Additionally, Government provides funding to Foundations, the national body for DFGs and home improvement agencies, to promote best practice in the delivery of home adaptations. Foundations analyse annual voluntary data returns from local authorities in England on their DFG delivery, including unaudited data on DFG approval and completion times. Their most recent report for 2020-21 can be found [here](#). This indicates an average DFG delivery time of 89 days from approval to completion.

■ Homelessness: Cost of Living

Paula Barker: [78892]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment his Department has made of the potential impact of the cost-of-living crisis on homelessness rates across England.

Paula Barker: [78893]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what estimate his department has made of the impact of the cost of living crisis on rough sleeping numbers.

Paula Barker: [78894]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether he has made an assessment of the potential impact of the cost of living crisis on housing waiting lists.

Paula Barker: [79357]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment his Department has made of potential changes in the rate of homelessness in the next six months.

Paula Barker:

[79363]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what estimate his Department has made of the number of women rough sleeping in England.

Felicity Buchan:

We understand that many people are worried about the impact of rising prices. That is why we are providing over £37 billion of support this year, targeted at those who need it most. This includes the extension to the Household Support Fund, running to March 2023, to help with the cost of essentials such as food, clothing, and utilities.

Officials are working closely with local authorities, charities and other government departments to monitor levels of homelessness and rough sleeping, and provide vital support at a time of uncertainty. We regularly monitor social housing waiting list numbers. The government has given local authorities the freedom to manage their own waiting lists in accordance with local needs and priorities.

The annual rough sleeping snapshot, published [here](#), provides an estimate of known rough sleepers by gender.

■ Homelessness: Domestic Abuse

Paula Barker:

[79361]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what estimate his Department has made of the rates of domestic violence victims presenting as homeless.

Paula Barker:

[79362]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether his Department has considered providing increased support for local authorities to help decrease the numbers of domestic violence victims presenting as homeless.

Felicity Buchan:

According to the most recent annual collection of H-CLIC data for 2021-2022, it was estimated 2,530 applicants approached as homeless due to fleeing domestic violence. This accounts for 6% of all homelessness applications made in that time period.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 gave those who are homeless as a result of being a victim of domestic abuse priority need for accommodation secured by the local authority. This year, we provided funding through the Homelessness Prevention Grant, including new burdens funding to cover the cost of extending priority need to domestic abuse victims.

Where a domestic abuse victim needs to flee their home the new duties on local authorities also ensure provision of tailored support within safe accommodation.

■ Homelessness: Veterans

Paula Barker: [\[79358\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what recent assessment his Department has made of the implications for his policies of the level of homelessness amongst veterans.

Paula Barker: [\[79359\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what recent discussions his Department has had with (a) veteran charities and (b) local authorities on improving the accuracy of data on homeless veterans.

Paula Barker: [\[79360\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps his Department is taking to ensure the accuracy of data on homeless veterans in England.

Felicity Buchan:

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer to Question UIN [HL2865](#) given by my Noble Friend, on the 8 November 2022.

■ Homes for Ukraine Scheme

Sarah Owen: [\[79346\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment his Department has made of ways to improve the Homes for Ukraine Scheme.

Felicity Buchan:

We continue to review and develop plans to support guests to access economic opportunities, informed by engagement with other government departments, local councils, VCS organisations, sponsors, and guests. The Homes for Ukraine scheme relies on cooperation between Government, local government, the voluntary sector, faith organisations, and Ukrainian representative organisations. We have engaged with local government and other partners through several different conversations and working groups to date. This has included Ministerial roundtables attended by local government representatives, official-led working group meetings, and ongoing bilateral engagement with local authority Chief Executives and senior representatives.

■ Housing: Construction

Mr Clive Betts: [\[82175\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how many and what proportion of UK homes were built by small and medium-sized house builders in each of the last five years

Lucy Frazer:

The requested information is not centrally collected.

■ Housing: Overcrowding

Paula Barker:

[79364]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what estimate his Department has made of the number of (a) children and (b) families in overcrowded accommodation in England.

Felicity Buchan:

Data on overcrowding by household type can be found in the [English Housing Surveys Private rented sector report, 2019-20](#).

■ Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: Impact Assessments

Alex Norris:

[82413]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the Answer of 7 November 2022 to Question 76093 on Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: Impact Assessments, if he will provide a timetable for the publication of those impact assessments.

Lucy Frazer:

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer given to Question UIN [76093](#) on 7 November 2022.

■ Mayors

Sarah Owen:

[79347]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, when he last met with each directly-elected Mayor or Metro-Mayor in England.

Dehenna Davison:

Since being reinstated to my post as Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Levelling Up, I have met with the Mayors of Greater Manchester and the West Midlands. The Secretary of State has also met with the Mayor of Greater Manchester, Tees Valley and the North of Tyne. We look forward to engaging with the rest of the English metro mayors and local authority mayors and leaders as we continue our mission to level up every part of the country

Ministerial meetings with external organisations are published on GOV.UK.

■ Planning Permission

Matthew Pennycook:

[82385]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, when he plans to publish the National Planning Policy Framework prospectus.

Lucy Frazer:

The Government will set out its plans to update national planning policy in due course.

■ Private Rented Housing**Paula Barker:**[\[78895\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment his Department has made on the affordability of private sector renting in England.

Felicity Buchan:

The most recent English Housing Survey found that on average households in the private rented sector spent 31% of their income on rent in 2020-21.

■ Private Rented Housing: Rents**Paula Barker:**[\[78896\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what processes his Department has in place to (a) monitor and (b) evaluate average levels of private rented sector rents in England; and what recent assessment his Department has made of the affordability of average private sector rents for low to middle income households.

Felicity Buchan:

The Department continues to monitor key sources of data including the Office for National Statistics' Index of Private Housing Rental Prices.

The most recent English Housing Survey found that over two thirds (71%) of private renters in the lower two income quintiles spent 30% or more of their income on rent in 2021-21.

■ Private Rented Housing: Unemployment**Christopher Pincher:**[\[77408\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the availability of private rented accommodation to the unwaged.

Christopher Pincher:[\[78714\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will make an assessment of the potential impact of repealing Section 21 of the Housing Act 1988 on the student housing market.

Christopher Pincher:[\[78717\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of local authority enforcement of (a) selective licensing designations and (b) other existing measures against landlords in the private rented sector for (i) HMOs and (ii) other private rented accommodation, since 2015.

Felicity Buchan:

The Department continues to monitor private rent levels using the Office for National Statistics' Index of Private Rents and biannual publications on absolute rent levels by local authority and number of bedrooms. The Department also tracks the stock of private rented properties using the English Housing Survey and other market data to assess the availability of private rented accommodation and financial resilience of unwaged renters. People who need help to make their rent payments may be eligible for a range of financial support through the welfare system. The government has maintained the Local Housing Allowance at its increased rate for 2021/22 and 2022/23, and for those most in need Discretionary Housing Payments are available to help meet a shortfall in housing costs and the Household Support Fund has been extended to help with the cost of essentials.

The Government's commitment to abolish Section 21 evictions will mean tenants enjoy greater security and feel empowered to challenge poor practice and unreasonable rent rises. We want as many tenants as possible to benefit from these reforms, including students living in the private rented sector. We expect most students will continue to move in-line with the academic year. We will continue to consider the impact of our reforms as we move towards legislation and will publish an impact assessment in due course. The Government's 'A Fairer Private Rented Sector' White Paper set out our intention to bolster national oversight of local councils' enforcement, including by exploring requirements for councils to report on their housing enforcement activity and sharing of best practice.

The 2021 National Audit Office report into regulation of the private rented sector (PRS), and the subsequent Public Accounts Committee report set out several recommendations to improve the PRS, including a number concerning landlords, to which the department has responded. We are also currently assessing the recommendations from the 2019 Independent Review into the effectiveness of selective licensing and will respond in due course. We will work with local authorities to gather more information about their selective licensing schemes to ensure they are continuing to deliver the intended outcomes and to help share best practice. There are additional regulatory standards for HMOs than other privately rented accommodation. Duties for the landlords of HMOs are set out in HMO management regulations. We reformed HMO licensing in 2018, requiring that HMOs with five or more tenants must be licensed.

■ Right to Buy Scheme**Sarah Olney:****[80826]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how many houses were bought using the Right to Buy scheme in each (a) Westminster constituency and (b) local authority area in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Lucy Frazer:

The Department publishes figures annually on homes that are sold by local authorities through the Right to Buy scheme. The figures for local authorities can be found [here](#). Data are not available on a constituency basis.

■ Sleeping Rough**Conor McGinn:****[80755]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what estimate his Department has made of the number of rough sleepers in (a) St Helens, (b) Liverpool City Region and (c) England.

Felicity Buchan:

The [annual rough sleeping snapshot](#) provides an estimate of known rough sleepers by region.

■ UK Shared Prosperity Fund**Rob Roberts:****[80942]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, pursuant to the Answer of 7 November 2022 to Question 76136 on UK Shared Prosperity Fund, when he plans to announce the date by which his Department will have finalised its assessments and notified local authorities of the outcomes.

Dehenna Davison:

Once the validation of investment plans is finalised, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities will promptly communicate to local authorities the date upon which they will be notified of the outcomes of their investment plans.

■ Veterans: Homelessness**Christopher Pincher:****[77402]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what recent assessment he has made of the number of homeless ex-service personnel in (a) England and (b) Staffordshire.

Felicity Buchan:

Data on households who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, for England show levels of veteran homelessness are low but there is no room for complacency and Government is committed to doing more. Annual Statutory Homelessness Data 2021-22, published in September 2022, shows that 1,850 households in England owed a homelessness duty had a member of the household with a support need due to service in the Armed Forces. This represents less than 1% of all households owed a homelessness duty.

Data for all local housing authorities within Staffordshire can be found within the annual data publication available [here](#) (Table A3). This shows 13 households across

5 local authorities included a member with a support need to service in the Armed Forces with 4 local authorities with zero households.

The Government is committed to reducing veteran homelessness. In September 2022, we published our 'Ending Rough Sleeping for Good' strategy. This ensures local areas can provide tailored support, including for veterans, where required.

NORTHERN IRELAND

■ Abortion: Northern Ireland

Carla Lockhart:

[\[80974\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, whether his Department has conducted recent polling into attitudes in Northern Ireland on his plan to commission abortion services.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The Northern Ireland Office has not conducted any recent polling into attitudes in Northern Ireland in relation to the UK Government plans to commission abortion services.

■ Crimes against Property

Carla Lockhart:

[\[80972\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, whether he has made a recent assessment of the potential impact of attacks on Orange Halls on community relations in Northern Ireland.

Mr Steve Baker:

These incidents are an operational matter for the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) who I understand treat them as sectarian hate crimes. As criminal investigations continue, we await their findings.

I utterly condemn these cowardly and pointless attacks on the halls. I would encourage everyone to work with PSNI to help track down the perpetrators. This type of activity undermines the efforts of Northern Ireland's people to establish a peaceful and prosperous society where all communities live together and thrive.

I welcome calls from the Orange Order for calm and echo their appeal for no retaliation as such a response would be wrong and entirely counterproductive.

■ Northern Ireland Assembly

Charlotte Nichols:

[\[82472\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what steps he has taken to help restore power sharing in the Northern Irish Assembly.

Mr Steve Baker:

The Government remains committed to the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement and will continue to work with the Northern Ireland parties to restore fully functioning devolved institutions as soon as possible.

To support this, as set out in his Statement to this House on 9 November, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland will introduce legislation to extend the Executive formation period by 6 weeks to 8 December, with the potential of a further 6 week extension to 19 January if necessary.

■ Northern Ireland Office: Recruitment**Florence Eshalomi:****[80983]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how much his Department spent on external recruitment consultants in 2021.

Mr Steve Baker:

The amount spent by the Department on external recruitment consultants in 2021 was £35,280.00.

■ Schools: Polling Stations**Carla Lockhart:****[80979]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, if his Department will take steps to inform school principals of whether their buildings will be required for use as polling stations on 15 December 2022.

Mr Steve Baker:

The use of schools as polling stations is an operational matter for the Chief Electoral Officer.

I am aware that following the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland's announcement on 4 November that no election would take place during December, the Electoral Office was in direct contact with all polling station premises managers as soon as possible to inform them that their premises would not be required for a 15 December poll.

■ Terrorism: Northern Ireland**Carla Lockhart:****[80975]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, with reference to the report entitled Paramilitary Groups in Northern Ireland, published on 19 October 2015, what recent assessment his Department has made of whether that report's assessment of links between the Provisional IRA and Sinn Féin is still accurate.

Mr Steve Baker:

The 'Paramilitary Groups in Northern Ireland' report was published in 2015 by the UK Government in order to provide a factual assessment from the UK security agencies

and the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) on the structure, role and purpose of paramilitary organisations in Northern Ireland.

The PSNI and security partners continue to work to keep people safe. The IRA, including the Provisional IRA, remains a proscribed organisation under the Terrorism Act 2000.

PRIME MINISTER

■ Egypt: Human Rights

Dan Carden:

[\[80860\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, if he will hold discussions with his Egyptian counterpart on (a) political prisoners and (b) other alleged human rights violations in Egypt during the COP27 conference.

Rishi Sunak:

I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave during my statement on 9 November 2022 on COP27, Official Report, Columns 259-277.

TRANSPORT

■ Avanti West Coast: Standards

Navendu Mishra:

[\[80950\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many services Avanti West Coast were scheduled to run in each month since July 2022 excluding periods affected by industrial action; and how many (a) full and (b) part cancellations there were on this route in the same period.

Huw Merriman:

Information relating to trains planned and cancellations by the operator is publicly available on the Office and Rail and Road website. Avanti West Coast's information is included in the attached table.

Following the withdrawal of rest day working, Avanti West Coast reduced the number of trains planned in the timetable in order to reduce the impact of short notice cancellations by giving passengers greater certainty as to what trains would run.

Avanti West Coast has sought force majeure relief under its contract for industrial action including for the impact of the withdrawal of rest day working. While the Department considers this claim it is unable to accurately exclude data relating to periods affected by industrial action.

Attachments:

1. Table - Avanti West Coast - Rail schedules [\[Table - Avanti West Coast - Rail schedules.docx\]](#)

■ Avanti West Coast: Stockport**Navendu Mishra:****[80947]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 3 November to Question 74957 on Avanti West Coast: Stockport, if he will make an assessment of the impact of the reduction in Avanti West Coast's service since summer 2022 on the economy of Stockport.

Huw Merriman:

The Department recognises the importance of a high performing railway in contributing to growth and local economies. Many communities have been impacted over the past few months by ongoing industrial relations challenges on the railway. The Department looks to the trade unions to work with train operators and Network Rail as the employers to resolve these issues for the benefit of communities such as Stockport.

■ Aviation: Carbon Emissions**Bill Esterson:****[79291]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Jet Zero Strategy: Delivering Net Zero Aviation by 2050, published in July 2022, what discussions has he had with the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on that strategy.

Jesse Norman:

The Transport and Business Secretaries and their Ministerial teams meet regularly to discuss the Government's approach to Jet Zero, including through the Jet Zero Council which they have Co-Chaired since it was established in July 2020.

■ Aviation: Climate Change**Dr Philippa Whitford:****[83816]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the report entitled the current state of scientific understanding of the non-CO₂ effects of aviation on climate published in December 2018, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies of that report's findings on the non-CO₂ effects of aviation on the climate.

Jesse Norman:

The Government's Jet Zero Strategy recognises that aviation creates both CO₂ emissions and non-CO₂ climate impacts and commits to addressing non-CO₂ by better developing our understanding of its impacts and potential mitigations.

All relevant evidence was considered in the development of the Jet Zero Strategy, and uncertainties remain over the magnitude of non-CO₂ impacts on the climate.

We will continue to engage closely with the science, working closely with academia and industry, including as to how to quantify and track the impacts of non-CO₂.

■ Bus Services

Andrea Leadsom:

[80695]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to help maintain local bus services; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Richard Holden:

The Government has provided nearly £2 billion in emergency and recovery funding since March 2020 to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic on bus services. On 19 August the Government announced a further £130 million, six-month extension to the Bus Recovery Grant to continue to support services until March 2023. Department for Transport Ministers made a written statement to Parliament on this issue on 5 September.

The Department is considering what additional support may be required from April 2023.

The Government also provides support to the sector through the Bus Service Operators Grant every year. Around £200 million is provided annually to bus operators to help them maintain an extensive network and keep fares down, and a further £42 million is provided to Local Transport Authorities every year to subsidise socially necessary bus services

Simon Lightwood:

[83813]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many times the Traffic Commissioners for Great Britain have fined bus operators in the last five years; and what the total value of those fines were by each nation and region.

Mr Richard Holden:

Statistics on the number of public inquiries conducted by Traffic Commissioners by traffic area, the general purpose for public inquiries being held, and any penalties imposed are published in the annual report of the Traffic Commissioners for Great Britain at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/traffic-commissioners-annual-reports>.

■ Bus Services: Disability

Alan Brown:

[80761]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to his Department's consultation on Bus Services Act 2017: accessible information, which closed on 16 September 2018, when he plans to publish (a) his Department's response to the consultation and (b) associated regulations.

Alan Brown:

[80762]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make an estimate of the number and proportion of buses that have (a) originally-fitted and (b) retrofitted onboard audio-visual next stop and final destination announcements outside of London as of 7 November 2022.

Alan Brown:

[80763]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the policy paper entitled Bus Back Better, published on 15 March 2021, if he will make an estimate of the increase in the number of buses with audio-visual next stop and final destination announcements since the announcement of that policy; and how his Department is monitoring progress on this.

Mr Richard Holden:

In the 2021 National Bus Strategy, the government committed to require local bus services in Great Britain to provide onboard audible and visible information, subject to final analysis.

The provision of accessible information is monitored through the Department's annual bus statistics survey ^[1]. In March 2021, 34% of buses across Great Britain met specific criteria on the provision of audible and visible information. The statistics for 2022 are yet to be published.

We do not routinely collect statistics on the split between equipment retrofitted to vehicles and installed at the point of manufacture. We will publish the consultation response and confirm our next steps in due course.

^[1][Annual bus statistics: year ending March 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/annual-bus-statistics-year-ending-march-2021)

■ Buses: Driving

Emma Hardy:

[82422]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to help increase the number of drivers in the bus and coach industries.

Emma Hardy:

[82424]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department is taking steps to help improve the speed of the bus and coach driver licence acquisition process.

Mr Richard Holden:

The Department for Transport regularly engages with bus and coach operators as well as the Confederation of Passenger Transport on many issues. We have increased the capacity of vocational driving tests available, including through the recruitment of additional driving examiners. These measures will make it easier for operators to recruit and train bus and coach drivers up and down the country.

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency is processing straightforward bus driving licence applications within five days and there are no delays. More complex cases may take longer.

■ Cycling and Walking

Dr Rupa Huq:

[80808]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the National Travel Survey: 2021, published August 2022, what assessment he has made of implications for his

policies of the decreasing level of active travel in 2021 relative to 2020; and what steps he is taking to encourage more (a) walking and (b) cycling trips in (i) London and (ii) the rest of the UK.

Jesse Norman:

We look carefully at long-term travel statistics when planning future transport needs. Whilst it is important to examine the period of the pandemic when doing so, it is also important to bear in mind that, for most people, travel then was very different to that in normal times.

The Government continues to support active travel and has invested unprecedented sums in walking and cycling since the start of the pandemic. In London, this is a matter for the Mayor, and the Department's recent funding settlement with Transport for London will enable it to continue to invest in improving London's streets by investing over £80 million per year in schemes to enable more walking and cycling.

Afzal Khan:

[80881]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department has taken to prioritise active travel since September 2022.

Jesse Norman:

The Department has continued to prioritise its work on active travel, and the last two months have seen significant amounts of recruitment into key Active Travel England (ATE) roles, as well as a process to select ATE's non-executive directors. ATE also announced in October that it had established a new advisory panel consisting of Chief Medical Officer Sir Christopher Whitty; Mayor of the West Midlands Andy Street; Chair of the Office for Rail and Road Declan Collier; and Arup's Global Transport Lead Isabel Dedring. ATE has also continued to work behind the scenes with local authorities to review their active travel plans and help maximise their chances of securing funding for active travel schemes.

■ Department for Transport: EU Law

Stella Creasy:

[82272]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will set out the process by which his Department is (a) identifying and (b) reviewing retained EU law which may be in scope of the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill.

Jesse Norman:

The catalogue of REUL is available on the Retained EU law dashboard which has been collected as part of a cross-government collaborative exercise. This can be accessed by visiting the relevant page on GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/retained-eu-law-dashboard>

■ Driving Licences: Canterbury

Rosie Duffield: [\[83717\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many people in Canterbury with a medical condition have been waiting more than a year for a new driving licence.

Mr Richard Holden:

While the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) holds this information, due to the very low number of cases, it is being withheld because it is considered to be personal information that could lead to the identification of an individual.

The DVLA has to consider whether releasing the information would breach any of the data protection principles. In this instance, it would not be fair to release information that could lead to the identification of individuals.

■ Driving Licences: Young People

Fabian Hamilton: [\[82187\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of introducing Graduated Driving Licences for young drivers.

Mr Richard Holden:

The Department's broad aim for young road users is to improve road safety through new technology and research, and by developing better learning opportunities and targeted educational messaging.

Our largest Young Driver research piece is the Driver 2020 project; an evaluation of interventions to improve the safety of young novice drivers, in partnership with the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL). This project commenced in January 2019 and so far over 28,000 learner and novice drivers have been recruited. This project, which includes a telematics trial, aims to make young drivers safer, more confident, and more skillful in their first year of driving through non legislative, technical or educational measures with potential to lower their risk of collisions.

We look forward to receiving the findings from the Driver 2020 project, which will feed into considerations on further measures we can take to improve road safety for young drivers.

■ Driving Tests

James Daly: [\[80964\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will ensure that the seven mile, 20 mile, and 30 mile rule is adhered to when making changes to driving test centre locations, ensuring that those in urban areas are no more than seven miles from a centre, those in small towns are never more than 20 miles from a driving test centre and those in the most rural areas are never more than 30 miles from a driving test centre.

Mr Richard Holden:

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency is in the process of reviewing the distance to travel criteria policy. Adhering to the seven miles, 20 miles, and 30 miles rule will form part of that review.

■ Driving: Safety**Gareth Bacon:****[82470]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make an assessment of the potential impact of (a) retaining and (b) expanding the (i) FORS and (ii) Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency earned recognition scheme.

Mr Richard Holden:

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency's (DVSA) Earned Recognition is a voluntary, and free to join, compliance scheme. It helps lorry and bus operators demonstrate that they consistently meet the driver and vehicle standards required as a condition of their Operator's licence. The Agency monitors performance data shared by operators making the scheme a market leader across businesses and local authorities.

The Earned Recognition scheme will continue to expand to support the growth of the most compliant operators across the industry. This strategy supports the DVSA to identify and deal with law breakers ensuring the cost of non-compliance is always greater than the cost of compliance.

The Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS) is a commercially available accreditation scheme administered through Sopra Steria Limited, and not managed or maintained by the Government.

■ Electric Vehicles: Charging Points**Zarah Sultana:****[82456]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking with Cabinet colleagues to promote research into electric vehicle charging road technology; and what assessment he has made of that technology's potential environmental benefits.

Jesse Norman:

Government has committed £40 million in projects to support innovation in wireless and on-street electric vehicle charging technology.

£10 million of this investment is supporting the trial of wireless charging technologies for taxis in Nottingham, enabling drivers to "top-up" charge while waiting for their next fare. This project considers whether wireless charging can deliver additional environmental benefits for heavily utilised electric vehicles, by reducing the need for large batteries or range extender engines.

Wireless charging has several other potential commercial and consumer benefits, including improved accessibility.

■ Emergency Recovery Measures Agreements

Navendu Mishra:

[80948]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, which independent evaluators were responsible for preparing scorecards for performance based fees under (a) emergency measures agreements and (b) emergency recovery measures agreements; and who (i) moderated and (ii) independently assured the results of these evaluations.

Huw Merriman:

The Performance Based Fee Scorecard process uses carefully selected and suitably experienced third-party rail industry professionals, who are contracted through external suppliers, to act as independent evaluators for scorecard evaluations.

The Performance Based Fee Scorecard process provides multiple stages of assurance for the results determined by independent evaluators, with moderation of those results from senior rail managers in the Department and process assurance from the Government Internal Audit Agency.

■ Ferries: Crew

Mike Kane:

[80719]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has received advice from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency on the safety of (a) roster patterns and (b) minimum crewing levels in the short sea ferry sector since 17 March 2022.

Mr Richard Holden:

The Department is currently developing a new Seafarers' Charter, which aims to boost long-term working conditions for seafarers. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency have been involved with the development of the Charter, along with the wider maritime industry. The Department for Transport and Maritime and Coastguard Agency are both of the view that roster patterns and crewing levels are important areas that require further research.

■ High Speed Trains: North of England

Louise Haigh:

[80784]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of a high-speed railway between Leeds and Manchester via Bradford.

Huw Merriman:

We are committed to delivering what is in the Integrated Rail Plan, which includes a near half-hour journey time between Manchester and Leeds building on the Transpennine Route Upgrade. We are also assessing the case for a new station at Bradford and how to connect Bradford up better.

■ Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Driving Licences

James Daly:

[\[80965\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent cost benefit analysis he has carried out on requiring HGV drivers to renew their licence at 45 and every five years thereafter until they hit 65 and then every year; and what assessment he has made of the effect of those requirements on levels of recruitment and retraining of HGV drivers.

Mr Richard Holden:

While age on its own is not a reliable indicator of health, it is widely accepted that the likelihood of developing conditions which may affect fitness to drive increases with age. The licence renewal process provides for the driver to make a declaration regarding their health and to submit a medical report that is completed by a doctor following an examination. This process is designed to be balanced and proportionate and reflect the greater road safety risks posed by the driving of larger vehicles.

■ Motorways: Litter

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[82246\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if she will make it her policy to introduce a Key Performance Indicator for Highways England on reducing litter on motorway verges.

Mr Richard Holden:

There is currently a litter metric performance indicator included in the performance specification for the current Road Investment Strategy 2. This measures the percentage of the Strategic Road Network where litter cleansing is managed by National Highways (including most motorway verges) which is either free of litter, refuse and detritus, or predominately free apart from some small items, in line with the code of practice on litter and refuse published by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

National Highways is required to report against this metric and is monitored on its performance and held to account by the Office for Rail and Road (ORR). In preparation for the third road period, which will start in April 2025, we are currently considering potential metrics for inclusion in RIS3 performance specification, as well as possible improvements to existing metrics.

■ Parking: Pedestrian Areas

Fabian Hamilton:

[\[82190\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made on the potential merits of a ban on pavement parking in order to improve vehicle access for individuals with mobility issues.

Mr Richard Holden:

The Department consulted on measures to address pavement parking in 2020 and the options included a nationwide pavement parking ban. Ministers are reviewing the outcome of the consultation and the options for tackling pavement parking

■ Railway Stations: Staff**Mohammad Yasin:****[82395]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make an assessment of the potential impact of levels of staffing required at railway stations on step-free access at those stations.

Huw Merriman:

Staff will continue to provide face-to-face service on our railways for passengers who need additional support. We are committed to transforming accessibility across the UK rail network and moving staff out of underused ticket offices and into the station will mean they can provide help where it is most needed. Furthermore, we are currently undertaking a full accessibility audit across 2,564 stations across Great Britain to help shape future investment in accessible rail travel.

■ Railways: Contracts**Navendu Mishra:****[80949]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 11 October 2022 to Question 53555 on Railways: Contracts, for what reason his Department does not publish decisions on the approval of dividend payments by train operating companies.

Huw Merriman:

As previously noted, the Department publishes details of payments to passenger rail operators, including fees paid, on the Government website:

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

Train operating companies may apply annually to the Department for permission to distribute the value of any fees they have earned (adjusted for tax) and the value of retained earnings pre-Emergency Measures Agreements period to their owning groups as dividends.

Dividend applications are a matter for the train operating companies and the owning groups. The Department considers requests for dividend payments to parent companies on a case-by-case basis, including assessment of the operator's compliance with contractual requirements. The Department does not publish a list of approved dividend payments or applications under consideration as it considers that publication of this information would prejudice commercial interests.

■ Railways: Timetables**Abena Oppong-Asare:****[80959]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether rail operators are required to consult the public prior to train timetable changes.

Huw Merriman:

Train operators contracted by the Department are normally required to consult on material timetable changes. However, where operators are unable to offer meaningful consultation, they may request a derogation from the requirement to consult.

Ian Mearns:[\[82239\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 3 November 2022 to Question 74777, how many weekly train services (a) will run in the December 2022 (b) are run in the current and (c) were run in the December 2019 rail timetable.

Huw Merriman:

The number of trains that are planned to operate varies slightly from day to day for a variety of reasons, including planned and unplanned engineering works. The Department does not record the total number of trains planned to run each day. Overall, the planned timetable change in December 2022 will maintain services at similar levels to today, while improving punctuality and reliability for passengers in many areas. Service levels remain around ten percent lower than in 2019.

Road Traffic Control: Police**Fabian Hamilton:**[\[82189\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service report entitled Roads Policing: Not optional - An inspection of roads policing in England and Wales, published 15 July 2020, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies of the findings of that report.

Mr Richard Holden:

The HMICFRS report Roads Policing: Not Optional was commissioned by the Roads Policing Review Governance Board which is jointly chaired by officials from the Department for Transport and the Home Office. It has informed the ongoing joint work between the two Departments.

The Home Office and Department for Transport will continue to work with the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, the National Police Chiefs' Council and the College of Policing to monitor the progress made in respect of the recommendations relevant to them. This will be done in a manner that respects the operational independence of Chief Officers and the College of Policing.

Roads: Accidents**Fabian Hamilton:**[\[82186\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to reduce the number of daily deaths on roads in England and Wales.

Mr Richard Holden:

The Department announced in the summer of 2021 that we would devise a new Road Safety Strategic Framework which will include a new implementation plan to improve road safety. This will be published in due course.

Following a public consultation, on 29 June 2022 the Department announced that the Government intended to create a Road Safety Investigation Branch, with legislation in an upcoming Transport Bill.

The Department has also funded £100million through the Safer Roads Fund for safety improvements to the top 50 most dangerous roads in England over the past few years.

Local authorities hold the statutory duty on road safety, and therefore further investment to improve road safety will be being made at that level.

Fabian Hamilton:[\[82188\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of the reintroduction of casualty reduction targets as a mechanism to reduce road deaths in England and Wales.

Mr Richard Holden:

The Department is considering road safety indicators as part of the Road Safety Strategic Framework.

In the meanwhile, local authorities, the police and other bodies are free to set their own road safety targets.

Justin Madders:[\[82348\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how STATS19 data on road accident statistics is shared with National Highways.

Mr Richard Holden:

The Department collects data from police forces on reported road collisions via the STATS19 collection system. This data then forms the basis for published road casualty statistics.

Following publication of the statistics, non-sensitive variables are made available as open data on data.gov.uk; this open dataset can be accessed by anyone, including National Highways. Variables considered sensitive, for example contributory factors, are made available on receipt of a completed application for, and agreement of, a suitable end user licence. Sensitive data are shared with National Highways on this basis.

■ Roads: Ellesmere Port**Justin Madders:**[\[82347\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with National Highways on safety requirements for the Welsh Road A550 and Ledsham Road B5643 junction.

Mr Richard Holden:

The Department has set national targets for the reduction of casualties across the strategic road network and has regular discussions with National Highways on how to achieve that.

In 2018, National Highways reduced the speed limit from the national speed limit (60mph) to 50mph through this location as part of a wider scheme to improve safety on the A550. It is in the process of installing average speed enforcement along the Welsh Road A550 from the A494 to the A41 which is likely to be completed in the next financial year.

Roads: Repairs and Maintenance**Sir Desmond Swayne:**[\[80563\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the impact of increases in the rate of inflation on the ability of highways authorities to deliver maintenance programmes.

Mr Richard Holden:

The Department is keenly aware of the impact of inflation, both on our own programme of works and on those of partners such as local authorities.

The Department is working closely with local highways authority representatives and stakeholders, along with other Government Departments, to understand and address wider inflationary pressures on local authorities.

Roads: Safety**Fabian Hamilton:**[\[82185\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress his Department has made on publishing a new strategy on road safety.

Mr Richard Holden:

The Road Safety Strategic Framework will be published in due course.

Shipping: Conditions of Employment**Mike Kane:**[\[80717\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent steps his Department has taken to implement the Nine-point plan for seafarers, published on 6 July 2022.

Mr Richard Holden:

Delivery of the nine-point plan continues at pace. A key aspect of this has been the development of the Seafarers' Wages Bill, which progressed to Third Reading in the House of Lords on 07 November 2022. The Bill will now progress into the House of Commons, marking a major step towards ensuring that seafarers with close ties to the UK are paid at a rate at least equivalent to the UK National Minimum Wage.

We are continuing with delivery of the wider nine-point plan, including engagement with our near European neighbours to explore the creation of minimum wage

equivalent corridors, as well as working through international organisations to create a step change in seafarer welfare.

■ **Shipping: Crew**

Mike Kane: [\[80718\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department has made changes to the Maritime 2050: People Route Map, published on 7 September 2019, following the (a) covid-19 pandemic and (b) the actions of P&O Ferries.

Mr Richard Holden:

The Department has worked with the sector to publish a Maritime Recovery Route Map in June 2022 to help boost the sector's recovery from the pandemic. The Route Map has a dedicated section on People and Skills and sets out progress on the Seafarer Protections Nine-Point Plan. Over £2.4m funding was announced alongside publication of the Route Map to support maritime skills, diversity, careers and seafarer wellbeing.

■ **Southeastern Trains: Timetables**

Abena Oppong-Asare: [\[80960\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department gave Southeastern Railway a formal written derogation to not consult on their December 2022 train timetable changes.

Huw Merriman:

On 5 August 2022, the Department issued Southeastern with a formal derogation against the requirement to undertake a consultation exercise in respect of its December 2022 timetable changes.

■ **Transpennine Express: Standards**

Mike Kane: [\[83642\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will meet with (a) Manchester Airport and (b) other business in Manchester affected by service performance of TransPennine Express to discuss potential improvements to that service.

Huw Merriman:

Ministers are always happy to discuss opportunities to work together with business partners to improve rail services for passengers across the North and the Northern economy. The Transport Secretary will shortly be meeting a number of Northern mayors to discuss these issues and we look forward to conversations with business and other stakeholders in the future.

■ Transport: Hydrogen

Bill Esterson:

[\[79292\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the policy paper entitled Hydrogen Strategy Update to the Market: July 2022, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the results of the Hydrogen for Transport Programme as of 28 October 2022.

Jesse Norman:

The Hydrogen for Transport Programme funded three new publicly available hydrogen refuelling stations and upgrades to a further two, as well as supporting the deployment of 182 hydrogen fuel cell vehicles onto UK roads. The programme ran for five years to March 2022 and its results are being evaluated.

■ UK Shipping Office for Reducing Emissions

Mike Kane:

[\[80720\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether seafarer (a) training and (b) employment policies are within the remit of the UK Shipping Office for Reducing Emissions.

Mr Richard Holden:

The first package of interventions announced by the UK Shipping Office for Reducing Emissions (UK SHORE) included a commitment to explore green skills initiatives, in partnership with the Department for Education and the National Shipbuilding Office.

UK SHORE will continue to work across government and industry on options to support the training and skills required for zero emission shipping.

Employment policy is not within the remit of UK SHORE.

TREASURY

■ Agricultural Products: Ukraine

Drew Hendry:

[\[80758\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department has taken to ensure financial service sector organisations knowingly involved in the facilitation or purchase of agricultural products illegally looted from Russian occupied areas of Ukraine cannot (a) obtain financing, (b) obtain services, (c) trade and operate within the UK and (b) what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the current enforcement system in preventing the looting of agricultural materials from Ukraine.

Andrew Griffith:

We stand united with our international partners in the face of Russian aggression. In lockstep with our allies, we have introduced the largest and most severe economic sanctions that Russia has ever faced to cripple Putin's war machine. This includes restricting access to finance with asset freezes on Russia's major banks, including

banks active in occupied Ukrainian territory. We have also prohibited the import of all goods that come from non-government controlled Ukrainian territory in Crimea, Luhansk and Donetsk.

It is a criminal offence to contravene sanctions, as well as to enable or facilitate a contravention of, or to circumvent them. The Office for Financial Sanctions Implementation (OFSI) is responsible for monitoring and compliance with financial sanctions and for assessing suspected breaches. It also has the power to impose monetary penalties for breaches of financial sanctions and to refer cases to law enforcement agencies for investigation and potential prosecution. HMRC is responsible for enforcement of UK Trade Sanctions and Strategic Export control working closely with Border Force. HMRC has implemented a number of measures which aim to prevent the exportation and importation of restricted goods from or to the UK and has a range of enforcement options.

■ Air Passenger Duty

Clive Lewis:

[80792]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the Air Passenger Duty revenues have been from flights where the plane was over 20 tonnes and equipped to carry fewer than 19 passengers in each of the last five years.

Clive Lewis:

[80793]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many and what proportion of tickets on higher rate flights incur the (a) reduced and (b) standard rate of Air Passenger Duty in each of the last five years.

James Cartlidge:

HMRC is unable to publish information on tickets and revenue received from higher rate flights where the plane was over 20 tonnes and equipped to carry fewer than 19 passengers. This is because the information is disclosive.

HMRC produces estimates of Air Passenger Duty passenger numbers and receipts, at the following link:

[Air Passenger Duty Bulletin - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/air-passenger-duty-bulletin)

If 'higher rate flights' in PQ80793 refers to travel to Band B destinations, reduced and standard rate Band B passenger numbers are published in the above link. The table below displays this information for each of the last five years.

		REDUCED			STANDARD		
		RATE BAND B			RATE BAND B		
APD	REDUCED	PASSENGERS	STANDARD	PASSENGERS	TOTAL BAND		
PASSENGERS	RATE BAND B	(% OF TOTAL	RATE BAND B	(% OF TOTAL	B	TOTAL	
BY FINANCIAL	PASSENGERS	BAND B	PASSENGERS	BAND B	PASSENGERS	PASSENGERS	
YEAR	(THOUSANDS)	PASSENGERS)	(THOUSANDS)	PASSENGERS)	(THOUSANDS)	(THOUSANDS)	
2017 to 2018	18.742	78.2%	5.235	21.8%	23.977	118.352	

APD PASSENGERS BY FINANCIAL YEAR	REDUCED RATE BAND B PASSENGERS (THOUSANDS)	REDUCED RATE BAND B	STANDARD RATE BAND B PASSENGERS (THOUSANDS)	STANDARD RATE BAND B	TOTAL BAND B PASSENGERS (THOUSANDS)	TOTAL PASSENGERS (THOUSANDS)
		(% OF TOTAL BAND B PASSENGERS)		(% OF TOTAL BAND B PASSENGERS)		
2018 to 2019	19,372	78.5%	5,312	21.5%	24,683	122,394
2019 to 2020	19,597	78.6%	5,338	21.4%	24,935	118,692
2020 to 2021	1,535	77.5%	446	22.5%	1,981	12,118
2021 to 2022 [provisional]	5,403	75.9%	1,711	24.1%	7,114	39,115

■ Assets: Domicil

James Murray:

[\[82466\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the amount of assets held in non-resident trusts for beneficiaries who (a) have always been UK-domiciled and (b) are UK-domiciled but in the past have been non-domiciled.

Victoria Atkins:

The Government has not undertaken such an assessment of the assets held in non-resident trusts. This information is therefore not available.

■ Bank Services: Disability

Emma Hardy:

[\[82425\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if his Department will make an assessment of the potential challenges people with disabilities experience when accessing online banking services.

Andrew Griffith:

In 2021, 86% of UK customers used a form of remote banking such as telephone banking, a banking app or online banking services. UK banking customers have never had more choice in how they fit their banking into their everyday lives.

It is important that those with a characteristic of vulnerability, such as people with disabilities, have appropriate access to banking services. The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) has guidance for firms on the fair treatment of vulnerable customers, setting out a number of best practices. The guidance explores, among other things, how firms can understand the needs of vulnerable customers and provide targeted services for this cohort. Examples range from staff having the skills and capability to recognise and respond to the needs of vulnerable customers, to product and service design, customer services and communication. In addition, like all service providers,

banks and building societies are bound under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments, where necessary, in the way they deliver their services.

Some people with disabilities may find online banking services preferable and easier to use, however the Government recognises that some people may continue to prefer to carry out their banking in-person. In light of closing bank branches, the Government cannot reverse the changes in the market and in customer behaviour; nor can it determine firms' commercial strategies in response to those changes.

Guidance from the FCA sets out its expectation of banks and building societies when they are deciding to close their branches or free-to-use ATMs. Firms are expected to carefully consider the impact of a planned closure on their customers' everyday banking and cash access needs and consider possible alternative access arrangements. This Guidance has recently been strengthened to ensure firms pay closer attention to the needs of their consumers, particularly those in vulnerable circumstances. Alternative forms of banking may include by telephone or via the Post Office, which allows 99% of personal banking and 95% of business customers to carry out their everyday banking at 11,500 Post Office branches across the UK.

■ Banks: Taxation

Sarah Olney:

[\[80827\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of how much banks will save on average next financial year as a result of Government changes to the surcharge on banking companies.

Andrew Griffith:

The Chancellor of the Exchequer will confirm the Government's position on the Bank Corporation Tax Surcharge at the Autumn Statement on 17th November.

The Office for Budget Responsibility will also set out its Economic and Fiscal Outlook alongside the statement.

■ Business Rates: Valuation

James Murray:

[\[82469\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he plans to publish the draft rating list for the 2023 business rates revaluation.

Victoria Atkins:

The Valuation Office Agency (VOA) will publish the 2023 draft Rating Lists before 31 December 2022.

■ Car Allowances

Dan Jarvis:

[\[82306\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will publish the formula used to calculate standard mileage and fuel rates.

Dan Jarvis:

[82307]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the feasibility of increasing the standard mileage and fuel rates in line with inflation.

James Cartlidge:

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

The government sets the AMAP rates to minimise administrative burdens. The AMAP rates aim to reflect running costs including fuel, servicing and depreciation.

Depreciation is estimated to constitute the most significant proportion of the AMAP rates.

Employers are not required to use the AMAPs rates. Instead, they can agree to reimburse a different amount that better reflects their employees' circumstances. If an employee is paid less than the AMAP rate, they can claim Mileage Allowance Relief (MAR) on the shortfall. However, where payments exceed the relevant AMAP rate, there will be a tax and National Insurance charge on the difference.

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

The Government also sets out Advisory Fuel Rates (AFR) for company car users.

These rates reflect average miles per gallon (MPG) for vehicle types from manufacturers' information, taking into account annual sales to businesses, combined with petrol and diesel prices.

AFRs are not mandatory, and employers and employees can agree to use different rates to reflect scenarios in which a car is more fuel efficient or where the fuel cost per mile of business travel is higher. Where an employer pays a rate higher than the published AFRs, no tax charge will arise if the employee is able to demonstrate there is no profit element.

The AFRs are reviewed by HMRC on a quarterly basis.

■ **Cash Dispensing: Rural Areas**

Dr Luke Evans:

[80917]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has made a recent assessment of (a) the effectiveness of his Department's policies for supporting access to cash in rural areas and (b) the potential impact of rurality on access to cash.

Andrew Griffith:

While the convenience, security, and speed of digital payments brings opportunities to the businesses and individuals that use them, the government recognises that cash continues to be used by millions of people across the UK.

The government is currently taking legislation through Parliament as part of the Financial Services and Markets Bill to protect access to cash across the UK. The Bill will establish the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) as the lead regulator for access

to cash and provide it with appropriate powers to seek to ensure reasonable provision of withdrawal and deposit facilities.

The Bill requires the Treasury to publish a policy statement that sets out the government's policy on cash access services. This may include policy with respect to urban and rural areas. The FCA will be required to have regard to the Treasury's policy statement when exercising its regulatory powers. In addition, the FCA will be able to exercise its powers in order to address local deficiencies specifically in the provision of access to cash facilities that it has identified and considers to be significant. The government's view is that this will allow for consideration of local circumstances in all parts of the UK, such as those in rural areas.

Further details about the Financial Services and Markets Bill can be found on the Parliament website: <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3326>

■ Corporation Tax: Tax Allowances

Stella Creasy:

[80692]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the value of tax relief granted under (a) Part 15 of the Corporation Tax 2009, (b) Part 15A of the Corporation Tax 2009 and (c) Part 15B of the Corporation Tax 2009 was in each of the last five financial years.

Victoria Atkins:

The information can be found in the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/creative-industries-statistics-august-2022>

■ Credit

Bill Esterson:

[80688]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what progress he has made on the reform of the Consumer Credit Act 1974 announced on 16 June 2022.

Andrew Griffith:

On 16th June, the government announced its intention to reform the Consumer Credit Act 1974 to ensure it remains fit for purpose and keeps pace with technological advancements and changing consumer needs.

Since this announcement, officials have engaged with a wide range of stakeholders across industry and consumer groups to seek initial views about the direction of reform. The government is currently working towards a public consultation on the approach to reform of the CCA, which it expects to be published soon.

This will be followed by a period of policy development and further consultation with stakeholders. Implementation of the final approach will likely require primary legislation. This will be brought forward when parliamentary time allows.

■ Energy: Government Assistance

Hywel Williams:

[\[80614\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when his Department plans to publish the criteria which will be used to review the energy support provided to businesses after April 2023.

James Cartlidge:

Through the Energy Bill Relief Scheme (EBRS), the government will provide a discount on wholesale gas and electricity prices for all non-domestic consumers (including UK businesses, the voluntary and public sectors).

This is a temporary measure that will protect them from soaring energy costs and provide them with the certainty they need to plan through the acute crisis this winter. It will apply to energy usage from 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023.

The current support to non-domestic consumers is time-limited and exceptional so they can manage through an acute winter and provides time for them to adjust their operating models. It is the Government's intention that after this winter support targets only the most vulnerable businesses. A Treasury-led review will consider how best to deliver these objectives.

As part of the review, we will ensure that all relevant considerations are taken into account.

■ Energy: Taxation

Sarah Olney:

[\[80828\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the 2022 Q3 profit announcements by Shell and BP, what recent estimate his Department has made of how much the Energy Profits Levy will raise in the 2022-2023 financial year.

James Cartlidge:

HM Treasury does not comment on individual taxpayers. The Government has calculated that it expects the levy to raise over £7 billion in 2022/23 based on forecast oil and gas prices.

Sarah Olney:

[\[80829\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much has been raised through the Energy Profits Levy since its introduction as of 7 November 2022.

James Cartlidge:

The Energy Profits Levy was introduced on 26 May 2022 and the first payments are expected later this year.

■ Gambling: Taxation

Carolyn Harris:

[\[80787\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has made a comparative assessment of taxation rates for (a) land-based and (b) remote gambling operators.

James Cartlidge:

A range of duty rates apply to different forms of gambling. Bingo duty is 10% of gross profit. Lottery Duty is 12% of ticket value. General Betting Duty is 15% of gross profit for general bets, 10% of gross profit for sports spread betting or 3% of gross profit for financial spread betting. Pool Betting Duty is 15% of gross profit. Remote Gaming Duty is 21% of gross profit. Gaming Duty is 15-50% of gross gaming yield. Machine Games Duty is 5% of gross profit at the lower rate, 20% of gross profit at the standard rate and 25% of gross profit at the higher rate.

As with all taxes, the Government keeps gambling taxation under constant review and welcomes representations from stakeholders to inform policy development.

■ Mortgages**Justin Madders:**[\[82350\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of introducing of a moratorium on interest rate rises for mortgage prisoners.

Andrew Griffith:

The Financial Conduct Authority's review into mortgage prisoners, published in November 2021, found that the population of mortgage prisoners is varied and complex. There is no single measure to address the circumstances of this population of mortgage holders.

The pricing of mortgages is a commercial decision for lenders in which the Government does not intervene. It is worth noting, however, that interest rates are rising across the world as countries manage rising prices largely driven by the COVID-19 pandemic and Putin's illegal invasion of Ukraine.

The Government understands that people across the UK are worried about the cost of living, and are seeing their disposable incomes decrease as they spend more on the essentials. That is why we have announced £37 billion of support for the cost of living this financial year. In addition to the Energy Price Guarantee, millions of the most vulnerable households will receive £1,200 of support this year, with additional support for pensioners and those claiming disability benefits.

If mortgage borrowers do fall into financial difficulty, Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) guidance requires firms to provide support through tailored forbearance options. The Government has also taken a number of measures aimed at helping people to avoid repossession, including Support for Mortgage Interest loans for those in receipt of an income-related benefit, and protection in the courts through the Pre-Action Protocol, which makes it clear that repossession must always be the last resort for lenders.

■ Revenue and Customs: Offices

Lilian Greenwood: [\[82250\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his Department has a policy on hours between which lights should be turned off at the HMRC offices at Unity Square, Nottingham.

Lilian Greenwood: [\[82251\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much his Department has spent on electricity each month for its offices at Unity Square, Nottingham since those offices opened.

Lilian Greenwood: [\[82253\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an estimate of the average number of staff who work at HMRC Unity Square in Nottingham between the hours of 9.00pm and 7.00am from Mondays to Fridays.

Victoria Atkins:

The lights in Unity Square are fitted with sensors which are motion activated and, under normal daytime operation, the lights are triggered by low light levels and people movement.

As part of the normal process of delivering a new building and ensuring it is operating effectively and efficiently, HMRC is working to address issues with the way the lighting system in Unity Square is currently programmed which are leading to lights being switched on for longer periods than expected. It has had contractors on site this week to fix this and has reported an improvement, with more work to take place shortly. HMRC will be carefully monitoring whether the changes implemented have been effective.

Once fully implemented, we expect the length of time the lights remain on after the last detected movement will be reduced from 30 minutes to 10 minutes. In addition, after 8:15pm, the lights will be switched off with activation after that time only if movement is detected and will remain on for 5 minutes. HMRC is also reviewing out of hours operating procedures to further reduce energy usage.

Since April 2022, when Unity Square opened, monthly electricity expenditure for the building, including lighting, is as follows.

Apr-2022	£87,488.78
May-2022	£79,107.16
Jun-2022	£86,343.35
Jul-2022	£106,209.28
Aug-2022	£113,345.46
Sep-2022	£85,311.17

HMRC's core hours are 7am until 8pm. Since 1st October 2022 the average number of HMRC staff in the building between 9pm and 6am is 4. Unity Square is a Government Hub and HMRC shares the building with 5 other Government departments. Additionally, there are varying numbers of contractors on site.

Lilian Greenwood:

[\[82252\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to improve energy efficiency in HMRC offices.

Victoria Atkins:

HMRC is committed to reducing its impact on the environment and sustainability is at the heart of its regional centre design. All its new build regional centres have been designed and built to a BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) Excellent standard. This involves a range of criteria including: energy and water use, waste, health and wellbeing, with a significant amount relying on modern technical solutions that are continually being refined for efficiency..

HMRC is working to enhance its Building Management System, including energy management, in all its new buildings, and it is reviewing temperature settings to ensure staff are able to work comfortably, whilst minimising energy usage. This work contributes to HMRC's net zero by 2040 ambition, and the net zero estates roadmaps are being developed to support this goal.

■ Taxation: Carbon Emissions

John Penrose:

[\[80673\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when the Government plans to hold consultation on carbon border adjustment mechanisms.

James Cartlidge:

The Government is exploring a range of policies that could potentially mitigate future risk of carbon leakage, and intends to consult in due course on options, including whether measures such as product standards and a potential carbon border adjustment mechanism (CBAM) could be appropriate tools in the UK's policy mix.

The ideal way to achieve progress in preventing carbon leakage would be for all countries to move together in pricing, regulating - and therefore reducing - carbon emissions. However, multilateral solutions take time to develop, so options for domestic action must be considered in parallel to efforts towards international solutions.

■ Taxation: Domicil

James Murray:

[\[82467\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an estimate of the amount of tax which was avoided through non-resident trust arrangements in the latest period for which data is available.

Victoria Atkins:

This information is not readily available to HMRC therefore an estimate cannot be made. The use of non-resident trusts is not itself tax avoidance and users may have legitimate reasons for doing so. The Government keeps all tax policy under review and is committed to tackling tax avoidance.

James Murray:[\[82468\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has made a recent assessment of the potential impact of people relinquishing non-domiciled status who set up excluded property trusts on inheritance tax revenues.

Victoria Atkins:

The Government has not undertaken such an assessment. This information is therefore not available.

■ Treasury: Redundancy Pay**Christine Jardine:**[\[82403\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the cost to the public purse has been of Ministerial severance pay in their Department in each year since 1 January 2016 to 8 November 2022.

James Cartlidge:

The Provision of severance payments for Ministers is set out in legislation.

Details of the severance payments made to ministers when leaving office are published in departments' annual reports and accounts.

■ Trusts: Taxation**James Murray:**[\[82465\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the HMRC report entitled The taxation of trusts: a review: summary of responses, published in March 2021, whether he is taking steps to make the taxation of trusts simpler, fairer and more transparent.

Victoria Atkins:

The summary of responses published in 2021 set out that the Government will keep the issues raised under review, considering specific areas of trust taxation on a case-by-case basis.

Between 25 April 2022 and 18 July 2022, HMRC consulted on simplification proposals to remove low-income trusts and estates from Income Tax. A copy of the consultation document can be found at:

www.gov.uk/government/consultations/income-tax-low-income-trusts-and-estates

The Government is currently considering the responses to this consultation.

Since 1 September 2022, most express trusts must now provide beneficial ownership information to HMRC increasing their transparency to both HMRC and, on request,

law enforcement and other relevant parties investigating money laundering or terrorist financing.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Bereavement Support Payment and Widowed Parents Allowance

Chris Elmore:

[\[82390\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people have claimed (a) Widowed Parent's Allowance and (b) the Bereavement Support Payment since the eligibility of those payments was extended to surviving cohabiting partners with dependent children who were not in a legal union with the deceased on the date of death.

Mims Davies:

We cannot currently accept claims for Widowed Parent's Allowance or Bereavement Support Payment from those who were not in a legal union with their deceased partner. This is because the draft Bereavement Benefits (Remedial) Order, which proposes to extend eligibility for these benefits to surviving cohabiting partners with dependent children, has not yet become law. We laid the draft Order in Parliament on 13 October 2022. It will lay in Parliament for a 60-day period, and will need to be debated and voted upon in both Houses of Parliament before it can become law.

■ Brain: Injuries

Justin Tomlinson:

[\[82274\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether he has made an assessment of the potential implications for his Department's policies of the US National Institutes of Health's decision to acknowledge a causal link between repeated blows to the head and chronic traumatic encephalopathy; and whether the Industrial Injuries Advisory Council has plans to look into this issue.

Tom Pursglove:

The Industrial Injuries Advisory Council (IIAC) is a scientific advisory body which provides advice and recommendations to DWP Ministers about the Industrial Injuries Scheme (IIS), of which Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (IIDB) is a part. IIAC has recently launched an investigation into the potential occupational link between neurodegenerative diseases and professional sportspeople. The DWP will consider any recommendations from IIAC when they are available.

■ Carers: Coventry

Colleen Fletcher:

[\[80730\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what support his Department is providing to unpaid carers in (a) Coventry North East constituency and (b) Coventry to help mitigate the effects of the rising cost of living.

Tom Pursglove:

This Government recognises and values the vital contribution made by carers in supporting some of the most vulnerable in our society, including pensioners and those with disabilities.

Unpaid carers have access to the full range of social security benefits depending upon their circumstances. As well as Carer's Allowance, carers in low-income households can apply for Universal Credit, Pension Credit and/or Housing Benefit. As of May 2022, around 433,000 carer households in Great Britain were in receipt of Universal Credit, which includes a Carer Element worth around £2,000 a year.

During 2020/21, expenditure on Carer's Allowance in Coventry North-East was £8.4 million. As of February 2022, 2,332 carers in Coventry North East were receiving Carer's Allowance. These figures do not include carers in receipt of benefits other than Carer's Allowance, such as Universal Credit or Pension Credit.

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 Government's Energy Price Guarantee will save a typical British household around £700 this winter, based on what the energy price would have been under the current price cap, reducing bills by roughly a third. This support will be in place from 1 October 2022 until 31 March 2023. A review will be launched to consider more targeted measures to support households with their energy bills after this period. This is in addition to the over £37 billion 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.

The £37 billion also includes Cost of Living Payments (paid in 2 lump sums of £326 and £324) to more than 8 million low-income households (including eligible carers) in receipt of an eligible, means-tested benefit. There are separate one-off payments of £300 to pensioner households alongside the Winter Fuel Payment, and £150 to individuals receiving disability benefits.

It also includes an additional £500 million to help households with the cost of household essentials. This is on top of what the Government has already provided since October 2021, bringing total funding for this support to £1.5 billion. In England, this includes an extension to the Household Support Fund backed by £421 million, running from 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023. Devolved administrations will receive £79 million through the Barnett Formula.

■ Cost of Living Payments: Disability**Chris Elmore:**[\[82387\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many £150 Disability Cost of Living Payments have been paid in Ogmores constituency as of 8 November 2022.

Tom Pursglove:

In line with the code of practice, the number of Cost of Living Payments made to recipients of a specific constituency is the subject of an upcoming statistical release,

and cannot be released before that publication is ready, subject to usual quality assurance.

The Department for Work and Pensions has published management information on the total number of Disability Cost of Living Payments made. As of 30 September 2022, 6,000,000 Disability Cost of Living Payments had been made.

The information which will be updated as new payments are made can be found here: [Cost of Living Payment management information - GOV.UK](#).

Chris Elmore:

[82388]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what proportion of the total Disability Cost of Living Payments due to people in Ogmores constituency have been paid as of 8 November 2022.

Tom Pursglove:

In line with the code of practice, the number of Cost of Living Payments made to recipients of a specific constituency is the subject of an upcoming statistical release, and cannot be released before that publication is ready, subject to usual quality assurance.

It is not possible to determine how many people are due a Cost of Living Payment, as entitlement may not have been established at the time the payments were made. We will periodically make payments to people who have later been found to be eligible and have not yet received a payment. The payments will continue to be made automatically in the same way the qualifying benefit or tax credit is paid.

The timetable for when Cost of Living Payments are made is published here: [Cost of Living Payment - GOV.UK](#).

The Department for Work and Pensions has published management information on the total number of Disability Cost of Living Payments made. As of 30 September 2022, 6,000,000 Disability Cost of Living payments had been made.

The information which will be updated as new payments are made can be found here: [Cost of Living Payment management information - GOV.UK](#).

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Complaints

Ian Blackford:

[78746]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department is taking to reduce the waiting time for processing complaints; and if he will make an assessment of the effectiveness of his Department's adherence to the Independent Case Examiner guidance on dealing with a backlog of complaints.

Mims Davies:

Our aim is to deal with complaints as quickly as we can and we will contact customers within 15 working days to resolve their complaint or agree on next steps if that is not possible. We always inform customers if there may be a delay in

answering their complaint and give priority to vulnerable customers who may be at risk, and those with benefit payment issues.

We value the service the Independent Case Examiner (ICE) provides for our customers, and whilst they are independent of the department and don't have specific guidance on dealing with backlogs, we do work collaboratively to improve the overall customer journey.

■ **Disability: Cost of Living**

Margaret Ferrier:

[\[82333\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether she will take steps to provide additional support for disabled people, in the context of increases in the cost of living.

Tom Pursglove:

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer I gave on 9 November 2022 to Question [UIN 80920](#).

■ **Disability: Pay**

Dan Carden:

[\[80869\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether the Government plans to introduce mandatory disability pay gap reporting.

Tom Pursglove:

There are no current plans to introduce mandatory disability pay gap reporting.

In November 2018, we published a Voluntary Reporting Framework, aimed at large employers (with over 250 employees) that recommends that they publicly report on disability employment and mental health and wellbeing. The framework can also be used to support smaller employers who are keen to drive greater transparency in their organisation or industry.

Whilst we recognise the merits of disability reporting, we would not propose to extend this to pay gap reporting due to the risk of dis-incentivising employers from recruiting more disabled people.

■ **Employment Schemes: Disability**

Chris Elmore:

[\[82389\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what proportion of the £6.4 million allocated to support disabled people at work will be apportioned to Wales.

Tom Pursglove:

The figure of £6.4m relates to a three-year programme of work to design, develop, and maintain the Support with Employee Health and Disability digital service which is a GB-wide service. This will provide online advice to help employers across GB to:

- Manage absences;

- Have inclusive conversations with employees about health and disability;
- Discuss and make changes at work to help disabled employees or employees with health conditions stay in work.

The Department for Work and Pensions are liaising with the devolved administrations in Wales and Scotland during the service development, which is on-going.

■ **Health and Safety Executive: Data Protection**

Stephen Farry:

[\[79365\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, for what reasons the Health and Safety executive does not record instances of data-sharing with external agencies, including Home Office Immigration Enforcement.

Mims Davies:

Decisions on the sharing of the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) data with other government agencies are generally taken on a case by case basis, with the outcome and justification being documented at a local level.

HSE does not hold a central register of its data sharing activities as there is no statutory requirement for the organisation to do so.

■ **Housing Benefit: Cost of Living Payment**

Sir Alan Campbell:

[\[79271\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, for what reason people in receipt of housing benefit are not eligible for the £650 cost of living payment.

Mims Davies:

The Government is rightly targeting the £650 Cost of Living Payment support at low-income households in receipt of qualifying means tested benefits.

Housing Benefit is not a qualifying means tested benefit. It is also administered by Local Authorities, often paid directly to a landlord. Payments to those receiving only Housing Benefit could not therefore be delivered in a quick, accurate and straightforward manner by DWP.

Housing Benefit claimants may also be receiving a qualifying means tested benefit and will therefore be eligible for the £650 Cost of Living Payment for that reason.

For those that are not eligible for the means-tested Cost of Living Payment, or for families that still need additional support; the Government is providing an additional £500 million to help households with the cost of essentials, bringing total funding for this support to £1.5 billion. In England, this will take the form of an extension to the Household Support Fund backed by £421m and is administered by Local Authorities. Additionally they may benefit from other parts of the package of support, including £400 for all domestic electricity customers and The Energy Price Guarantee.

In England those who pay Council Tax in Bands A-D should have also received a £150 rebate.

The guidance with the full list of support can be found at:

[Cost of living support factsheet: 26 May 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cost-of-living-support-factsheet-26-may-2022)

■ Means-tested Benefits

Marsha De Cordova:

[80882]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether he plans to means test the (a) Disability Living Allowance and (b) Personal Independence Payment.

Tom Pursglove:

We have no plans to means test Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

Both DLA and PIP are intended to act as a contribution towards the extra costs that arise as a result of a long-term health condition, or disability, and have been non-means tested since they were introduced.

■ Members: Correspondence

Mr Kevan Jones:

[82199]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when will he respond to the correspondence of 21 October 2022 from the hon. Member for North Durham.

Tom Pursglove:

The department issued a response to correspondence from the Hon. Member for North Durham on Wednesday 9th November 2022.

■ Occupational Health

Wendy Chamberlain:

[80893]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what progress she has made on implementing the proposals relating to occupational health in the Government response to the joint DWP and DHSC consultation Health is Everyone's Business.

Tom Pursglove:

Access to Occupational Health (OH) services can play an important role in supporting people with ill health conditions to remain in, and thrive in, work. Since publishing the joint DWP-DHSC consultation response, good progress has been made on the proposals. This includes developing the test for a financial incentive and market navigation support for SME and self-employed people; working with the OH sector to identify ways to support development of the OH workforce; identifying ways to stimulate innovation in the OH market; and piloting the collection of outcome-linked metrics with a small group of OH providers.

■ Pension Credit

Jonathan Ashworth:

[82310]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, for what reason eligible pensioners are not enrolled automatically for Pension Credit.

Laura Trott:

For Pension Credit, as with other means-tested benefits, eligibility and award amounts are determined by a claimant's specific financial and personal circumstances. These include their income and savings as well as their marital status or household composition. It would not be possible to accurately identify people who may be entitled to Pension Credit just from data the Department holds.

Jonathan Ashworth:[\[82311\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the average waiting time was for a new claim for Pension Credit to be (a) processed and (b) paid in (i) the latest period for which data is available and (ii) in the equivalent period 12 months prior.

Jonathan Ashworth:[\[82312\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the target time is to process a new Pension Credit claim.

Jonathan Ashworth:[\[82313\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will take steps to reduce processing times for Pension Credit applications.

Laura Trott:

We currently aim to process claims within 35 days from receipt, although following the successful launch of our campaign to increase take up of Pension Credit, we have received an unprecedented number of claims, which has resulted in average processing increasing.

We are processing claims as quickly as possible and streamlining our processes, as well as increasing our staffing resources, which has resulted in the outstanding claims reducing considerably.

All successful claims and arrears are paid accordingly to ensure no one misses out.

■ Pension Credit: Take-up**Jessica Morden:**[\[80663\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps he is taking to improve the uptake of Pension Credit among eligible people.

Laura Trott:

Pension Credit provides vital financial support to our most vulnerable pensioners and we want all those eligible to claim it.

To raise awareness of Pension Credit and increase take-up, we launched a £1.2m nationwide communications campaign in April. The campaign included:

- Promotion of Pension Credit on social media, via internet search engines and sponsored advertising on targeted websites that pensioners, their friends and family are likely to visit;
- Information screens in Post Offices and GP surgeries across GB;

- Advertising in regional and national newspapers and on national and local broadcast radio;
- Advertising on the sides of buses, interior bus panels and digital street displays;
- Leaflets and posters in Jobcentres, as well as digital versions which could be used by stakeholders and partners across local communities;
- Engagement with Local Authorities nationwide through the Government Communication Service local network and promotional materials to enable them to support the campaign; and
- An updated digital toolkit with information and resources that any stakeholder can use to help promote Pension Credit.

As part of the annual uprating of State Pension, we will once again be writing to over 11 million pensioners in the new year and promoting Pension Credit in the accompanying materials.

Jessica Morden:

[80664]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what proportion of eligible people were claiming Pension Credit in (a) 2018, (b) 2019, (c) 2020, (d) 2021 and (e) 2022.

Laura Trott:

Estimates for Pension Credit take-up in a financial year are only available at the Great Britain level and are available in the “Income-related benefits: estimates of take-up” publication which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/income-related-benefits-estimates-of-take-up-financial-year-2019-to-2020>

■ Pension Credit: Wales

Jessica Morden:

[80662]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many and what proportion of eligible people are claiming Pension Credit in (a) Newport East constituency and (b) Wales.

Laura Trott:

Estimates for Pension Credit take-up are only available at the Great Britain level. They are included in the publication:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/income-related-benefits-estimates-of-take-up-financial-year-2019-to-2020>

■ Personal Independence Payment

Margaret Ferrier:

[82334]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps her Department is taking to reduce (a) delays and (b) waiting times for those in the Personal Independence Payment application process.

Beth Winter:

[\[82475\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps her Department is taking to reduce (a) delays and (b) waiting times for Personal Independence Payment applications.

Tom Pursglove:

We are committed to ensuring people can access financial support through Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in a timely manner, taking into account the need to review all available evidence. Reducing customer journey times for PIP claimants is a priority for the department and we are working constantly to make improvements to our service.

We are seeing an improvement in average clearance times for new PIP claims and the latest statistics show that the end-to-end journey has steadily reduced from 26 weeks in August 2021 to 18 weeks at the end of July 2022. This is because we are:

- using a blend of phone, video and face-to-face assessments to support customers and deliver a more efficient and user-centred service;
- increasing case manager and assessment provider health professional resource;
- prioritising new claims, whilst safeguarding claimants awaiting award reviews, who have returned their information as required, to ensure their payments continue until their review can be completed.

■ **Personal Independence Payment: Disqualification**

Stephanie Peacock:

[\[83714\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment she has made of the fairness of her Department's policy to suspend Personal Independence Payments when claimants are hospitalised for more than 28 days.

Tom Pursglove:

Where an adult aged 18 or over is maintained free of charge while undergoing medical or other treatment as an in-patient in a hospital or similar institution funded by the NHS, payment of, but not entitlement to, Personal Independence Payment (PIP) ceases after 28 days. This is on the basis that the NHS is responsible for the entirety of the person's disability-related extra costs and to pay PIP in addition would be a duplication of public funds intended for the same purpose. Once someone is discharged from hospital, payment of PIP recommences from the date of discharge.

We have no plans to change these rules.

■ **Personal Independence Payment: St Helens**

Conor McGinn:

[\[80756\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will make an estimate of the average response time to Personal Independence Payment applications from people in

St Helens as of November 2022; and what assessment he has made of the potential impact of that period of time on applicants.

Tom Pursglove:

This information is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

The latest available data by region, including the North West region containing St Helens, published [here](#) (in Table 1A (v)), shows that in July 2022 the end to end (from registration to DWP decision) Personal Independence Payment (PIP) journey time in the North West was 18 weeks, down from 27 weeks in August 2021.

We are committed to ensuring people can access financial support through PIP in a timely manner, taking into account the need to review all available evidence.

Reducing customer journey times for PIP claimants is a priority for the department and we are working constantly to make improvements to our service, including using a blend of phone, video and face-to-face assessments, increasing case manager and assessment provider health professional resource, and prioritising new claims, whilst safeguarding the continuity of existing awards to ensure they do not go out of payment.

■ **Personal Independence Payment: West Berkshire**

Laura Farris:

[79355]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether he has made an estimate of the current waiting times for people applying for Personal Independence Payments in West Berkshire; and whether he has made an assessment of the potential impact of current wait times on people waiting to receive payments.

Tom Pursglove:

We are committed to ensuring people can access financial support through Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in a timely manner, taking into account the need to review all available evidence. Reducing customer journey times for PIP claimants is a priority for the department and we are working constantly to make improvements to our service, including using a blend of phone, video and face-to-face assessments, increasing case manager and assessment provider health professional resource, and prioritising new claims, whilst safeguarding the continuity of existing awards to ensure they do not go out of payment.

Average waiting times for PIP new claims made under normal rules (i.e. excluding those processed under special rules for end of life) are calculated as the median number of weeks from registration to DWP decision, and published as the "Average Actual Clearance Time". For claims cleared in July 2022, the latest data shows that the Average Actual Clearance Time for West Berkshire was 17 weeks.

Notes:

Source: PIP Atomic Data Store (ADS)

- Data for the West Berkshire Local Authority is unpublished. It should be used with caution as there is likely to be more variability in clearance times at small geographical levels. It may be subject to future revision.
- The status of claims as 'normal rules' and 'new claim' is shown as at the point of the DWP decision, in accordance with the measure. It is possible for claims to transition between normal and special rules, and between new claims and reassessments, during the course of the claimant journey.
- Clearance time measures do not include claims that were withdrawn by the claimant or claims that were disallowed by DWP prior to referral to the Assessment Providers (e.g. for failure to meet basic eligibility criteria).
- The median time is the middle value if you were to order all the times within the distribution from lowest value to highest value. The median is presented here instead of the mean because the mean can be unduly affected by outlying cases (e.g. cases where the person has been hard to reach due to being in prison, hospital, failed to attend the assessment on numerous occasions etc.).

■ Social Security Benefits: Appeals

Colleen Fletcher:

[80729]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent estimate he has made of the average waiting time for mandatory reconsideration of a benefit decision in (a) Coventry, (b) the West Midlands and (c) England; and what steps his Department is taking to ensure that mandatory reconsiderations are carried out (i) quickly and (ii) effectively.

Tom Pursglove:

We endeavor to complete Mandatory Reconsiderations without delay. Recently, we added over 400 staff to the Disputes Resolution Service to help ensure that applications are dealt with in a timely manner. Our overarching focus, however, is on taking the time necessary to thoroughly review all the available evidence, to help ensure we make the right decision.

Information on Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) Work Capability Assessment (WCA) Mandatory Reconsideration (MR) clearances are available on GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/personal-independence-payment-statistics>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/employment-and-support-allowance-outcomes-of-work-capability-assessment>.

Additional breakdowns of the figures, including by region, local authority and parliamentary constituency, are available on Stat-Xplore for PIP and ESA WCA MR clearance times:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/>.

Guidance for users is available at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Getting-Started.html>.

PIP MR clearance times for financial year 2021-22 are shown in the table below. Additional figures by region, local authority and parliamentary constituency, are available in the tables released with the PIP publication referenced above, specifically Tables 4B(ii) and 4B(iii).

Table 1: Median PIP MR clearance times (calendar days), Normal Rules, from April 2021 to March 2022

YEAR	COVENTRY	WEST MIDLANDS	ENGLAND
April 2021 to March 2022	61*	62**	62***

*Source: PIP statistics to July; table 4B_(ii)

**Source: PIP statistics to July; table 4B_(iii)

***Source: PIP ADS

Notes:

1. Each PIP claim can have more than one reconsideration registered against it. The above includes all MR decisions (excluding withdrawn and cancelled).
2. The PIP MR clearance times are based on the clearance times from the point of registration to the date the MR was cleared.
3. DWP offers particular support for those coming to the end of their life, known as Special Rules for End of Life (SREL). This was formerly called Special Rules for Terminal Illness (SRTI). Cases which are not processed under SREL are referred to as 'normal rules' claims. The status of claims as 'normal rules' or 'SREL' is shown as at the point of registration.
4. To provide information across all other DWP administered benefits would incur disproportionate cost.
5. Definition of MR: Claimants who wish to dispute a decision made on their PIP claim are required to ask the department to reconsider the decision before they can lodge an appeal with His Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service. MRs can arise for various reasons, such as omitting to tell DWP about relevant evidence during the initial decision-making process; this could include not returning forms required as part of the claim.
6. Definition of median: The median time is the middle value if you were to order all the times within the distribution from lowest value to highest value.

Kate Osamor:

[80815]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many presenting officers attended tribunals on behalf of her Department in each month from January 2013 to October 2022.

Tom Pursglove:

Analysis of unpublished data held by the Department for Work and Pensions provides data on the number of tribunals where Presenting Officers (PO) attended. This data only covers Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and Personal Independence Payment (PIP) tribunals. To provide information across all other DWP administered benefits or for PIP and ESA prior to April 2016 would incur disproportionate cost.

This data is unpublished. It should be used with caution, and it may be subject to future revision.

Tribunals attended by Presenting Officers, by month from April 2016 – June 2022

Hearing Date	NUMBER OF PO ATTENDANCES	
	PIP	ESA
Apr-16	530	130
May-16	510	160
Jun-16	550	150
Jul-16	620	130
Aug-16	770	150
Sep-16	670	140
Oct-16	690	110
Nov-16	830	150
Dec-16	570	140
Jan-17	620	150
Feb-17	600	180
Mar-17	990	290
Apr-17	1,140	410
May-17	1,900	1,280
Jun-17	2,100	1,820
Jul-17	2,060	2,160

NUMBER OF PO ATTENDANCES		
Aug-17	2,040	2,120
Sep-17	2,130	1,950
Oct-17	2,230	2,110
Nov-17	2,380	2,470
Dec-17	1,610	1,650
Jan-18	2,440	2,440
Feb-18	2,010	2,240
Mar-18	1,940	1,870
Apr-18	1,880	1,670
May-18	2,000	1,820
Jun-18	1,640	1,870
Jul-18	1,600	1,540
Aug-18	1,290	1,180
Sep-18	1,000	1,230
Oct-18	1,180	1,230
Nov-18	1,090	1,330
Dec-18	680	850
Jan-19	1,420	1,110
Feb-19	1,360	850
Mar-19	1,500	1,260
Apr-19	1,360	1,160
May-19	1,500	1,200
Jun-19	1,330	950
Jul-19	1,670	1,050
Aug-19	1,580	800
Sep-19	1,350	770

NUMBER OF PO ATTENDANCES		
Oct-19	1,540	830
Nov-19	1,610	820
Dec-19	1,290	510
Jan-20	1,970	560
Feb-20	1,690	500
Mar-20	1,150	260
Apr-20	10	10
May-20	20	10
Jun-20	30	20
Jul-20	40	30
Aug-20	50	50
Sep-20	80	50
Oct-20	370	50
Nov-20	490	80
Dec-20	550	90
Jan-21	760	130
Feb-21	750	80
Mar-21	1,380	100
Apr-21	1,440	90
May-21	1,240	110
Jun-21	1,290	80
Jul-21	1,360	160
Aug-21	1,470	130
Sep-21	1,080	110
Oct-21	1,010	130
Nov-21	1,210	150

	NUMBER OF PO ATTENDANCES	
Dec-21	940	130
Jan-22	980	110
Feb-22	1,130	130
Mar-22	890	100
Apr-22	750	140
May-22	810	110
Jun-22	700	70

Note:

Appeals data is taken from the DWP computer system's management information. Therefore, this appeal data may differ from that held by His Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service for various reasons, such as delays in data recording and other methodological differences in collating and preparing statistics.

We have provided data up to June 2022, in line with published statistics.

Kate Osamor:[\[80816\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what proportion of tribunals attended by presenting officers were allowed in each month from January 2013 to October 2022.

Tom Pursglove:

Analysis of unpublished data held by the Department for Work and Pensions provides data on the proportion of tribunals attended by Presenting Officers (PO) where the decision was overturned. This data only covers Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and Personal Independence Payment (PIP) tribunals. To provide information across all other DWP administered benefits or for PIP and ESA prior to April 2016 would incur disproportionate cost.

This data is unpublished. It should be used with caution, and it may be subject to future revision.

Proportion of tribunals attended by Presenting Officers where the decision was overturned, by month from April 2016 – June 2022

	PROPORTION OF APPEALS OVERTURNED WHERE PRESENTING OFFICER ATTENDED	
Hearing Date	PIP	ESA
Apr-16	64%	38%

**PROPORTION OF APPEALS OVERTURNED WHERE PRESENTING
OFFICER ATTENDED**

May-16	63%	51%
Jun-16	61%	49%
Jul-16	61%	42%
Aug-16	58%	52%
Sep-16	62%	33%
Oct-16	61%	52%
Nov-16	61%	56%
Dec-16	64%	62%
Jan-17	61%	61%
Feb-17	63%	60%
Mar-17	63%	62%
Apr-17	68%	58%
May-17	66%	66%
Jun-17	68%	71%
Jul-17	67%	69%
Aug-17	68%	71%
Sep-17	69%	67%
Oct-17	68%	67%
Nov-17	70%	67%
Dec-17	69%	70%
Jan-18	71%	69%
Feb-18	73%	70%
Mar-18	69%	71%
Apr-18	73%	68%
May-18	72%	71%
Jun-18	71%	69%

**PROPORTION OF APPEALS OVERTURNED WHERE PRESENTING
OFFICER ATTENDED**

Jul-18	72%	70%
Aug-18	74%	67%
Sep-18	74%	72%
Oct-18	71%	70%
Nov-18	73%	68%
Dec-18	73%	69%
Jan-19	71%	69%
Feb-19	73%	65%
Mar-19	73%	69%
Apr-19	72%	72%
May-19	73%	70%
Jun-19	75%	72%
Jul-19	72%	70%
Aug-19	72%	72%
Sep-19	73%	71%
Oct-19	73%	76%
Nov-19	74%	69%
Dec-19	76%	74%
Jan-20	72%	65%
Feb-20	74%	70%
Mar-20	76%	73%
Apr-20	100%	20%
May-20	83%	25%
Jun-20	73%	69%
Jul-20	78%	60%
Aug-20	63%	27%

PROPORTION OF APPEALS OVERTURNED WHERE PRESENTING OFFICER ATTENDED		
Sep-20	60%	53%
Oct-20	64%	26%
Nov-20	69%	69%
Dec-20	65%	40%
Jan-21	62%	57%
Feb-21	60%	60%
Mar-21	63%	56%
Apr-21	70%	50%
May-21	68%	52%
Jun-21	68%	50%
Jul-21	66%	47%
Aug-21	70%	55%
Sep-21	70%	65%
Oct-21	67%	59%
Nov-21	67%	63%
Dec-21	70%	60%
Jan-22	71%	66%
Feb-22	76%	71%
Mar-22	77%	62%
Apr-22	75%	58%
May-22	72%	58%
Jun-22	75%	64%

Note: Number of overturns where PO attended shown as a percentage of appeals where a decision was made, therefore excluding those not cleared or withdrawn/struck out.

Appeals data is taken from the DWP computer system's management information. Therefore, this appeal data may differ from that held by His Majesty's Courts and

Tribunals Service for various reasons, such as delays in data recording and other methodological differences in collating and preparing statistics.

We have provided data up to June 2022, in line with published statistics.

■ Social Security Benefits: Disability

Beth Winter:

[82474]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will commission an independent review of the adequacy of disability benefits rates at covering the costs and needs of disabled people, including for people with multiple sclerosis.

Tom Pursglove:

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer to Question [UIN 60904](#) given by my Hon. Friend, on 17 October 2022.

■ Social Security Benefits: Medical Examinations

Kate Osamor:

[80817]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to his Answer of 1 November to Question 72384, if she will publish her Department's audit procedures for assessment providers.

Tom Pursglove:

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) assessment provider audit procedures can be found in sections 3.4 and 3.5 of the [PIP assessment guide](#).

Details relating to the audit procedures for Centre for Health and Disability Assessments can be found in schedule 2.1 section 40 of the [Health and Disability Assessment Services contract](#).

Kate Osamor:

[80818]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to his Answer of 1 November to Question 72384, if he will publish the training material which is shared between assessment providers.

Tom Pursglove:

Although assessment providers share training material between themselves to encourage best practice, we have no plans to publish the training material.

The department introduced a Clinical Governance Quality Standards (CGQS) Framework to ensure that consistent quality standards are applied by all assessment providers. The CGQS Forum has the remit to facilitate embedding of the CGQS Framework across the department and its assessment providers. They share best practice including training and learning from leading national and international organisations, to continuously improve quality.

Kate Osamor:

[80819]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how often her Department visits health assessment centres in person to audit the performance of assessment providers.

Tom Pursglove:

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) does not have a contractual obligation to perform regular visits to assessment centres, but does retain the right to visit any assessment centre, at any time, subject to reasonable notice. The department exercises this right, with Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and Work Capability Assessment (WCA) performance managers visiting assessment centres on an informal basis.

The department has set standards for the quality of assessments for all its assessment providers and independent auditors. The department ensures a high standard is maintained by having an independent audit function that continually monitors performance and provides feedback to its providers. Audit refers to a comprehensive check of the elements of the assessment, including the evidence collection, further evidence provided, and the assessment report completed by the health professional.

Kate Osamor:[\[80820\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many health professionals employed by assessment providers have been dismissed as a result of poor performance in the last three years.

Tom Pursglove:

Health Professionals (HPs) are subject to a rigorous recruitment process, followed by a comprehensive training programme. Given the high standards expected of HPs, it is anticipated that a number may not meet the required standard during the training and probation period.

All HPs are subject to on-going monitoring of the standard of their assessments. If any issues are identified there is a process in place to support the HPs to improve the quality of their assessments. Where they fall below the required standards and do not improve, processes are in place to revoke their approval to undertake assessments.

The number of HPs employed by assessment providers who have been dismissed as a result of poor performance in the last three years is shown in the table below:

PROVIDER	2020	2021	2022
Capita (Personal Independence Payment - PIP)	17	30	39
Independent Assessment Services (IAS) (PIP)	76	61	69
Centre for Health and Disability Assessments (CHDA)	1	9	9

Please note

- Capita 2022 figures are for the period between 1 January 2022 and 4 November 2022;
- IAS 2022 figures are for the period between 1 January 2022 and 4 November 2022;
- CHDA 2022 figures are for the period between 1 January 2022 and 1 November 2022;
- PIP figures include HPs that were dismissed during their training and probation period;
- PIP figures do not include employees who resigned during the training process;
- CHDA figures include HPs that were dismissed during their probation period;
- CHDA figures do not include HPs that failed to successfully complete their training period, nor those who resigned during the training process.

■ **Social Security Benefits: Terminal Illnesses**

Alex Cunningham:

[82293]

"To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when the provisions of the Social Security (Special Rules for End of Life) Act 2022 enabling people who are thought to be in the final year of their life to receive fast-tracked access to disability benefits such as Personal Independent Payments will come into effect.

Tom Pursglove:

The Social Security (Special Rules for End of Life) Bill received Royal Assent on 25th October 2022 and the Government will implement it as soon as is practicable.

The Act will enable people who are thought to be in the final year of their life to get fast-tracked access to Disability Living Allowance (DLA), Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and Attendance Allowance (AA). Similar changes were made to the definition of end of life used in Universal Credit and Employment Support Allowance in April 2022.

■ **Universal Credit: Children**

Munira Wilson:

[80914]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 27 October 2022 to Question 69809 on Universal Credit: Children, how many children of compulsory school age lived in households in receipt of Universal Credit with a household income after tax and before benefits of less than (a) £7,400, (b) £8,350 and (c) £8,575 a year in each region of England in May 2022.

Guy Opperman:

The requested information is provided in the attached spreadsheet.

Attachments:

1. 80914 Attachment [\[School Age Children by Household Income by Region.xlsx\]](#)

■ Workplace Pensions: Private Sector

Chris Elmore:

[82391]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the participation rate is in Ogmores constituency for private sector employees in the Automatic Enrolment pension scheme over the last five tax years.

Laura Trott:

For private sector employees eligible for automatic enrolment in the Ogmores constituency over the last 5 years, the workplace pension participation rate is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Participation rate for eligible private sector employees in the Ogmores constituency

	PARTICIPATION RATE
2017	(73%)
2018	(85%)
2019	(91%)
2020	(93%)
2021	(84%)

Source:

DWP estimates derived from ONS ASHE.

Statistical notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest percentage point.
2. Figures in brackets are those with a relatively high degree of uncertainty owing to the low sample size (fewer than 500 respondents).
3. Figures that are different at the 0.05 level of significance are marked *. Results would be statistically significant if there is less than a 1 in 20 chance of any changes being by chance if there is no actual change in the population. The ONS have more guidance here
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/methodologytopicsandstatisticalconcepts/uncertaintyandhowwemeasureit#statistical-significance>

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Business Update

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Kevin Hollinrake):

[\[HCWS366\]](#)

I have today laid before parliament the draft Statutory Instrument “Product Safety and Metrology (Amendment and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2022” and an accompanying draft Explanatory Memorandum. The instrument will provide businesses with additional time to transition to the post-exit independent UKCA regime, providing businesses with flexibility and choice on how to comply with product regulations.

We are committed to doing all we can to provide flexibility for industry. These measures intend to reduce immediate burdens and costs for businesses, in light of current cost of living and global supply chain challenges, whilst maintaining high standards of product safety.

The main purposes of this instrument are to:

- Extend acceptance of certain products meeting EU requirements and markings on the market in Great Britain for a further 2 years, until 31 December 2024. This intends to provide businesses with flexibility and choice on how to comply with product regulations.

And, as previously [announced](#) on 20 June 2022, but with updated timelines:

- Provide that where manufacturers, or other relevant persons, have acted under EU conformity assessment procedures by 31 December 2024, that action will be treated as having been taken under the UK conformity assessment procedures until the expiry of the certificate, or until 31 December 2027, whichever is sooner. This is intended to reduce immediate costs associated with third-party retesting and recertification and make the transition to UKCA compliance easier for businesses.
- Extend existing labelling provisions for UKCA marking, importer information and responsible persons’ information until 31 December 2027. This is intended to reduce costs and burdens associated with fulfilling labelling requirements.

There are different rules for [medical devices](#), [construction products](#), [cableways](#), [transportable pressure equipment](#), unmanned aircraft systems, rail products, [cosmetics](#) and [marine equipment](#). There are also different rules for Northern Ireland.

The Statutory Instrument will be made using powers under section 8 of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018. Further details about the changes and their effects are contained in the section 7 of the accompanying draft Explanatory Memorandum. The draft of this instrument and the accompanying draft Explanatory Memorandum can be found on [gov.uk](#).

My officials will continue to engage with industry closely to provide businesses with support, and to understand how to take a pragmatic approach to improving regulation to the benefit of businesses and consumers. This will include continuing to review the UK regulatory framework to understand how we could reduce costs and burdens for businesses in the longer term.

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

■ The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

Minister for Development and Africa (Mr Andrew Mitchell):

[\[HCWS364\]](#)

I would like to update the House on the UK's contribution to the Seventh Replenishment of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (the Global Fund).

The government has no doubt of the huge value and importance of the work of the Global Fund. The Foreign Secretary, the Chancellor, and I, have therefore very carefully considered our pledge to the seventh replenishment, balancing the needs of the fight against the three diseases with the many other demands on the aid budget. I would like to reassure the House that we have maintained communication with the Global Fund throughout.

UK resilience, prosperity, and security depends on achieving our global health goals and supporting other countries, especially the least developed, to do the same. Countries with better health systems and healthier people are more likely to be stable and prosperous. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown how health emergencies can reverse countries' economic and social progress – and how global health is a field where international cooperation is vital.

The UK is a leader within this. We joined with others to create the Global Fund because we refused to accept the loss of millions of lives every year to diseases that were both preventable and treatable. It has proven its successful three-way partnership model between the private sector, civil society and governments and we are proud to have contributed over £4.4 billion to the Global Fund, and as third largest donor, to have been an important part of its success. Together we have cut the mortality rate of the three diseases by more than half, helping to save 50 million lives, while improving access to prevention and treatment, building the strong and inclusive health systems that underpin all health services, and helping countries respond to the COVID-19 pandemic which threatens all these hard-won health development gains.

However, a child still dies of malaria nearly every minute. Nine out of ten Commonwealth citizens still live in malaria endemic countries. AIDS is still the leading cause of death for young women across our Commonwealth and tuberculosis is a top leading infectious disease killer globally.

We remain committed to the mission of the Global Fund. The UK will therefore contribute £1 billion to the seventh replenishment of the Global Fund, helping to save over 1.2 million lives and partnering with others to support implementation of its new strategy. This pledge is drawn from our current ODA allocation and, as well as helping to save lives and

prevent over 28 million new cases and infections, this funding will also help to build strong and inclusive health systems and support countries to prepare for and prevent future pandemic threats, helping to build a better and safer world for everyone. It will make an important contribution to our priority of ending the preventable deaths of mothers, babies and children, helping to provide medicine for 170,000 mothers to prevent transmitting HIV to their babies.

The Global Fund is without question one of the most highly efficient and effective global health mechanisms in development. We owe it to both UK taxpayers and the communities it serves to demonstrate how and where the Fund performs with full openness and transparency. I will therefore be drawing up a UK-Global Fund performance agreement to help to reassure our taxpayers and professional interests that a strong and sustained focus on UK priorities such as strengthening health systems and putting health equity, gender and human rights are at the very core of the Global Fund's work.

We are proud of our record in global health. We have for decades worked at home and abroad to strengthen health systems, to improve nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene, champion sexual and reproductive health and rights, improve access to vaccines and fight infectious diseases. We are one of the largest donors to the international COVID-19 response. We are a long-term funder of innovation, developing new technologies, generating the evidence to enable delivery at scale and promoting access for those who need it most.

I would like to thank members across both Houses of Parliament for their invaluable advice, interest, and support on this investment.

HOME OFFICE

■ Update on Irregular Migration

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Suella Braverman):
[\[HCWS365\]](#)

Today I am updating Parliament on an innovative arrangement between the UK and France to strengthen our bilateral partnership to tackle illegal migration at the shared border, with a focus on small boats crossings.

Since the bilateral arrangement reached in July 2021, the UK and France have been working to reinforce our collaboration to address illegal migration. This new arrangement builds upon the successes we have had over the last year.

In 2021, our joint efforts saw more than 23,000 dangerous and unnecessary crossings being prevented. To date in 2022, over 30,000 crossing attempts have been prevented.

Joint working between UK and French officers has secured more than 140 convictions connected to people smuggling since the start of 2020 – and these criminals now face a combined 400 years behind bars.

The UK-France Joint Intelligence Cell has so far dismantled 55 organised crime groups and secured over 500 arrests since its inception in 2020.

However, the number of attempted and successful crossings continues to rise. To that end, the UK and France will intensify cooperation with a view to making the small boat route unviable, save lives, dismantle organised crime groups, and prevent and deter illegal migration in transit countries and further upstream.

The UK and France will adopt a more integrated and effective approach. Our new partnership with France is underpinned by a set of shared joint strategic objectives and a joint operational plan and builds on the shared commitments under the Sandhurst Treaty.

Our joint plan signifies a step-change in our joint ambition and cooperation to prevent dangerous crossings and further risk to life. Under the plan, for the first time, UK officers will join French law enforcement teams as embedded observers, sharing real-time information.

The UK has pledged a financial investment of up to €72.2 million (around £62.2 million) in 2022-23 to France to assist in the delivery of our joint plan. The objectives of our joint plan are part of a multi-year strategy that considers other innovative steps that can be taken to address illegal migration at a bilateral and multilateral level. This new partnership recognises the importance of cooperation with other neighbouring countries and European partners on a 'whole of route approach'. The UK and France have committed to work together to tackle the rise in illegal migration from Albania and will maintain regular dialogue to respond effectively to new and emerging migration challenges.

A copy of the Joint Statement which sets out further details on this partnership will be published on the GOV.UK website and will be placed in the libraries of both Houses.