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**Notes:**

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

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

## ANSWERS

### BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

#### ■ Alternative Fuel Payments

**Stephanie Peacock:**

[\[109672\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the £200 Alternative Fuel Payment, what method the Department is using to (a) identify eligible households and (b) ensure the payment is administered to all those who need it.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Government has confirmed that the Alternative Fuel Payment will be made to all households in Northern Ireland. In Great Britain, the Government is working to identify the best route to ensure the payment reaches households who use alternative fuels.

The vast majority of Alternative Fuel Payment eligible households throughout the UK will receive payment through their electricity supplier with no need to take any action. There will be a small number of customers who are unable to receive the funding automatically, for instance households without a direct relationship with an electricity supplier, and the Government will ensure there is a route for those households to apply for and receive the £200 support. This support will be delivered as soon as possible this year.

**Ben Lake:**

[\[113290\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether households that depend solely on (a) air source or (b) ground source heat pumps for their heating will be eligible for support under the Alternative Fuel Payment scheme.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Alternative Fuel Payment scheme is designed to help those households who do not use electricity or gas to heat their homes to meet energy costs this winter. Alternative fuels include heating oil, coal, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and biomass.

Heat pumps run on electricity. Therefore households with heat pumps will already receive support with their running costs through the Energy Price Guarantee, rather than the Alternative Fuel Payment.

#### ■ Buildings: Repairs and Maintenance

**Sarah Olney:**

[\[117779\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent estimate his Department has made of number of (a) businesses and (b) individuals that are qualified to implement retrofitting measures in (i) homes and (ii) other buildings in England.

**Graham Stuart:**

*[Holding answer 11 January 2023]:* For work carried out under Government schemes installers are required to be TrustMark registered. There are additional certifications required for energy efficiency measures (PAS - Publicly Available Specifications) and low carbon heating measures (MCS - Microgeneration Certification Scheme). In November 2022, there were 1782 TrustMark businesses across the UK which were certified to PAS or MCS standards.

The Mace market intelligence report commissioned by BEIS last year outlined that in 2021 there were 154,748 individuals installing energy efficiency measures in England. Research undertaken last year by Eunomia indicates there are between 36,000 and 87,000 non-domestic retrofit businesses in the UK.

**■ Business: Edmonton****Kate Osamor:**[\[114638\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with businesses in Edmonton constituency on the potential impact of the cost of living crisis on those businesses.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

The Government recognises the impact rising prices are having on businesses, including those in Edmonton and is engaging with businesses across the UK to understand these challenges and explore ways to mitigate them.

The Government has reversed the National Insurance rise, saving SMEs £4,200 on average; cut fuel duty for 12 months; raised the Employment Allowance to £5,000 and introduced the Energy Bill Relief Scheme which is shielding businesses across the country from soaring energy prices, saving some around half of their wholesale energy costs.

We have also announced £13.6 billion of support for businesses over the next five years, reducing the burden of business rates for SMEs.

**Kate Osamor:**[\[114643\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has had recent discussions with the Minister for Women and Equalities on taking steps to improve accessibility to entrepreneurship and business ownership for people with protected characteristics in Edmonton constituency.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

The Government is fully committed to supporting businesses and creating the best conditions for enterprise so that everyone, whatever their background, has the means and know-how to start and grow a business.

We are supporting early-stage entrepreneurs from all backgrounds through the Start-Up Loans Company which provides funding and intensive support to new entrepreneurs.



Since 2012, 40% of Start Up Loans have gone to women, worth over £344m and 20% of loans worth 187m have gone to Black, Asian, and Ethnic-minority businesses.

332 SMEs in Edmonton have received Start Up Loans to the value of £2,407,357 as of November 2022.

■ **Business: Energy**

**Dr Neil Hudson:**

[\[114891\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to support businesses that rely on off-grid energy with their energy costs.

**Graham Stuart:**

I refer my Hon. Friend to the answer I gave my Rt Hon Friend the Member for Vale of Glamorgan on 15th December 2022 to Question [105337](#).

■ **Business: Lewisham**

**Vicky Foxcroft:**

[\[113311\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with businesses in Lewisham, Deptford constituency on the potential impact of the cost of living crisis on those businesses.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

The Government recognises the impact rising prices are having on businesses, including those in Lewisham, Deptford.

The Government has reversed the National Insurance rise, saving SMEs £4,200 on average, cut fuel duty for 12 months and brought in the Energy Bill Relief Scheme, which is shielding businesses across the country from soaring energy prices, saving some around half of their wholesale energy costs. The Employment Allowance was increased to £5,000 from April and we have continued to provide business rate relief worth over £7bn, freezing the business rates multiplier for a further year.

We have also announced £13.6 billion of support for businesses over the next five years, reducing the burden of business rates for SMEs.

**Vicky Foxcroft:**

[\[113314\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has had recent discussions with the Minister for Women and Equalities on potential steps to help improve accessibility to (a) entrepreneurship and (b) business ownership for people with protected characteristics in Lewisham, Deptford constituency.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

The Government is fully committed to supporting businesses and creating the best conditions for enterprise so that everyone, whatever their background, has the means and know how to start and grow a business.

We are supporting early-stage entrepreneurs from all backgrounds through the Start-Up Loans Company which provides funding and intensive support to new entrepreneurs.

Since 2012, 40% of Start Up Loans have gone to women, worth over £344m and 20% of loans worth 187m have gone to Black, Asian, and Ethnic-minority businesses. 501 SMEs in Lewisham, Deptford have received Start Up Loans to the value of £3,595,932 as of November 2022.

■ **Business: Newport West**

**Ruth Jones:**

[\[114893\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has had recent discussions with the Welsh Government on the potential impact of the cost of living crisis on businesses in Newport West constituency.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

Ministers regularly engage with business leaders and networks, including those in Newport West, to better understand the challenges and explore ways to mitigate the impact rising prices are having on their businesses.

The Government has reversed the National Insurance rise, saving SMEs £4,200 on average, cut fuel duty for 12 months and raised the Employment Allowance to £5000. In addition, we have brought in the Energy Bill Relief Scheme, which is shielding businesses across the country from soaring energy prices, saving some around half of their wholesale energy costs.

We have also announced £13.6 billion of support for businesses over the next five years, reducing the burden of business rates for SMEs.

**Ruth Jones:**

[\[114894\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has had recent discussions with (a) businesses and (b) businesses representatives in Newport West constituency on the potential impact of the cost of living crisis on those businesses.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

The Government recognises the impact rising prices are having on businesses, including those in Newport West, and is engaging with businesses across the UK to understand these challenges and explore ways to mitigate them.

The Government has reversed the National Insurance rise, saving SMEs £4,200 on average; cut fuel duty for 12 months; raised the Employment Allowance to £5,000 and introduced the Energy Bill Relief Scheme which is shielding businesses across the country from soaring energy prices, saving some around half of their wholesale energy costs.

We have also announced £13.6 billion of support for businesses over the next five years, reducing the burden of business rates for SMEs.

**■ Business: Warrington North****Charlotte Nichols:**[\[114870\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has had recent discussions with businesses in Warrington North constituency on the potential impact of the cost of living crisis on those businesses.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

The Government recognises the impact rising prices are having on businesses, including those in Warrington North, and is engaging with businesses across the UK to understand these challenges and explore ways to mitigate them.

The Government has reversed the National Insurance rise, saving SMEs £4,200 on average; cut fuel duty for 12 months; raised the Employment Allowance to £5,000 and introduced the Energy Bill Relief Scheme which is shielding businesses across the country from soaring energy prices, saving some around half of their wholesale energy costs.

We have also announced £13.6 billion of support for businesses over the next five years, reducing the burden of business rates for SMEs.

**■ Business: Warwick and Leamington****Matt Western:**[\[113318\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with businesses in Warwick and Leamington constituency on the potential impact of the cost of living crisis on those businesses.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

The Government recognises the impact rising prices are having on businesses, including those in Warwick and Leamington.

The Government has reversed the National Insurance rise, saving SMEs £4,200 on average, cut fuel duty for 12 months and brought in the Energy Bill Relief Scheme, which is shielding businesses across the country from soaring energy prices, saving some around half of their wholesale energy costs. The Employment Allowance was increased to £5,000 from April and we have continued to provide business rate relief worth over £7bn, freezing the business rates multiplier for a further year.

We have also announced £13.6 billion of support for businesses over the next five years, reducing the burden of business rates for SMEs.

**Matt Western:**[\[113323\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has had recent discussions with the Minister for Women and Equalities on taking steps to improve accessibility to entrepreneurship and business ownership for people with protected characteristics in Warwick and Leamington constituency.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

The Government is fully committed to supporting businesses and creating the best conditions for enterprise so that everyone, whatever their background, has the means and know-how to start and grow a business.

We are supporting early-stage entrepreneurs from all backgrounds through the Start-Up Loans Company which provides funding and intensive support to new entrepreneurs.

Since 2012, 40% of Start Up Loans have gone to women, worth over £344m and 20% of loans worth 187m have gone to Black, Asian, and Ethnic-minority businesses. 142 SMEs in Warwick and Leamington have received Start Up Loans to the value of £1,487,362 as of November 2022.

**■ Carers: Medical Equipment****Helen Hayes:**[\[114727\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department is providing support to help pay the electricity costs of carers running medical equipment for those they care for.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Government is delivering the Energy Bills Support Scheme, a £400 non-repayable grant to support all families with their energy bills and the Energy Price Guarantee (EPG) which will save a typical household in Great Britain £900 this Winter. In addition, families with disabled children are also entitled to a one-off £150 Disability Cost of Living Payment.

The Government is reviewing the EPG. This consultation will explore the best ways to ensure that vulnerable high energy users, such as those with medical requirements, are not put at risk of having to pay more.

**■ Clothing: Manufacturing Industries****Dame Meg Hillier:**[\[114566\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department is taking steps to help tackle unethical supply chains in the fashion industry.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

The Government is clear that it expects all UK businesses to respect human rights throughout their operations, in line with the UNGPs. In 2015 we introduced the Modern Slavery Act which requires businesses with a turnover of £36m or more to publish an annual modern slavery statement stating the steps they have taken to prevent modern slavery in their operations and supply chains.

The Government expects companies to report transparently about how they are mitigating modern slavery risks and to use their modern slavery statements to demonstrate year on year progress. This enables consumers, shareholders and civil society to scrutinise the efforts being made.

Since October 2020, a wide group of stakeholders comprising retailers, manufacturers and non-profit organisations have been working with the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) under the Apparel and General Merchandise Public Private Protocol to address poor working, pay, and purchasing practices in the UK supply chain.

## ■ Companies Act 2006

**Daisy Cooper:**

[\[114763\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will take steps to bring forward legislative proposals to amend section 172 of the Companies Act 2006 to create a legal requirement for companies to align their social and environmental impact with their duty to shareholders.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

The Government is not persuaded that amending section 172 of the Companies Act in this way would be workable. Section 172 already requires directors to have regard in their decision-making to the environment, employees, customers and suppliers, among other matters. Since 2019, directors of large companies have been required to make a statement as part of the annual report describing how they have had regard to these matters.

## ■ Companies House: Disclosure of Information

**Dame Margaret Hodge:**

[\[114509\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many applications to restrict publication of personal data under section 790ZG of the Companies Act 2006 Companies House were (a) received and (b) granted, in each of the past three years.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

The table below sets out the number of applications received to restrict the publication of personal data under section 790ZG of the Companies Act 2006

YEAR	APPLICATIONS RECEIVED	APPLICATIONS GRANTED
2020	38	15
2021	42	10
2022	72	25

There are 4 applications currently pending. These figures have been manually collated. This is supplied as management information; it is unaudited and is subject to change. It should, therefore, be used for indicative purposes only.

**Dame Margaret Hodge:**

[\[114510\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many judicial reviews against Companies House for refusal to grant applications to restrict the publication of personal data under section 790ZG of the Companies Act 2006 were (a) successful and (b) unsuccessful in each of the last three years.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

There have been no judicial reviews against Companies House for refusal to grant applications to restrict personal data under section 790ZG of the Companies Act 2006 in the last three years.

■ **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Civil Servants**

**Stewart Hosie:**

[\[113184\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the cost to the public purse has been of civil servants working on the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill.

**Ms Nusrat Ghani:**

The Civil Servants working on the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill were drawn from existing resources within the government in the Brexit Opportunities Unit. The cost to the public purse was therefore absorbed within existing departmental resource limits.

■ **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: EU Law**

**Stewart Hosie:**

[\[113183\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many civil servants in his Department are working on the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill as of 19 December 2022.

**Ms Nusrat Ghani:**

As of 19 December 2022, the Brexit Opportunities Unit had 18 civil servants working on the Bill.

The total number of civil servants will expand or reduce to accommodate the requirements of the Retained EU Law Bill work programme.

■ **Directors: Equality**

**Seema Malhotra:**

[\[114676\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department has made an assessment of any potential barriers to increasing diversity on the boards of businesses.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

Since 2011 the Government has sponsored a series of business-led independent reviews supporting increased diversity on boards. This has led to a rise in women's representation from 9.5% FTSE-350 board members in 2011, to 37.6% to the end of

2021. In 2022 the UK was ranked second only to France, on public listed companies' boards gender balance. Representation of ethnic minorities on board has also increased with over 90% of FTSE 100 companies reporting at least one member of an ethnic minority on their boards to the end of 2021. The Parker Review next reports in March of this year.

## ■ ECO+

**Rosie Duffield:**

[\[117958\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of including homes in Council Tax Band E in the ECO+ scheme.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Government has consulted on the ECO+ scheme being open to households in the lower council tax bands (A-E in Scotland, A-D in England and A-C in Wales) with an EPC rating of D or below, as well as low-income households.

This Government is currently analysing feedback received through its consultation, which closed on 23 December 2022, and will publish a response in due course.

## ■ Electricity Generation

**John Spellar:**

[\[114518\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the (a) adequacy of the capacity margins for electricity generation and (b) potential impact of those margins on the (i) operation and (ii) stability of the National Grid.

**Graham Stuart:**

National Grid Electricity System Operator (NGESO) ensures there is adequate capacity available to meet peak demand in a range of scenarios, including by evaluating the amount of capacity needed to meet future demand. This assessment informs targets for annual Capacity Market auctions, which have already secured the majority of Great Britain's capacity needs out to 2025/26.

NGESO is responsible for balancing electricity supply and demand in real time, as well as for managing the operation and stability of the system. The Government is confident that NGESO has the tools needed to operate the electricity system reliably.

## ■ Electronic Cigarettes: Sales

**Daisy Cooper:**

[\[114762\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department is taking steps to control the sale of vapes supplied through online marketplaces.



**Kevin Hollinrake:**

Products, including those such as vapes, whether sold through on-line marketplaces or in shops, need to comply with existing product regulation. Such products must be both safe and compliant with any restrictions relating to their sale. However, eCommerce has brought new challenges to the product safety framework as was highlighted by respondents to the Government's Call for Evidence as part of the Product Safety Review. A consultation, including proposals to tackle the sale of unsafe products online, is being finalised for publication.

**Energy Bill Relief Scheme: District Heating****Munira Wilson:****[113430]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department is taking steps to provide advice to heat networks customers on the level of support available through the Energy Bill Relief Scheme.

**Graham Stuart:**

Information and advice on the Energy Bill Relief Scheme (EBRS), including in relation to requirements for intermediaries to pass through support to end users, can be found online. (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/energy-bill-relief-scheme-help-for-businesses-and-other-non-domestic-customers>)

For end consumers of heat networks, further advice can also be found online ( <https://www.ombudsman-services.org/sectors/heat-networks> ) on the EBRS from the Energy Ombudsman.

**Energy Bill Relief Scheme: Newport West****Ruth Jones:****[114895]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that small and medium-sized enterprises are receiving the correct level of support from the Energy Bill Relief Scheme in Newport West constituency.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Energy Bill Relief Scheme is set out in legislation and will be applied in a uniform way by all licensed suppliers. The regulations include a robust compliance and enforcement regime to ensure requirements are being met. Suppliers are also required to inform customers about the details of support, including the amount of the discount and discounted supply price.

**Energy Bill Relief Scheme: Warrington North****Charlotte Nichols:****[114873]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure that small and medium-sized enterprises are receiving the correct level of support from the Energy Bill Relief Scheme in Warrington North.



**Graham Stuart:**

The Energy Bill Relief Scheme is set out in legislation and will be applied in a uniform way by all licensed suppliers. The regulations include a robust compliance and enforcement regime to ensure requirements are being met. Suppliers are also required to inform customers about the details of support, including the amount of the discount and discounted supply price.

**Energy Bills Rebate****Hilary Benn:**[\[114540\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what his planned timetable is for the online application portal to be available for people without a direct relationship with their energy supplier to apply for a £400 payment through the Energy Bill Support Scheme.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Funding will provide support of £400 for energy bills for around 900,000 households without a domestic electricity supply. Those that are eligible will need to submit a short online form via the Government's GOV.UK pages, with the application portal due to open in January.

**Matthew Pennycook:**[\[117742\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when the eligibility, timescales and method of delivery for the Energy Bill Support Scheme Alternative Funding will be announced.

**Graham Stuart:**

*[Holding answer 11 January 2023]:* The Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Funding application portal will be available on GOV.UK this month. This will include an eligibility overview and information on what applicants need to do to apply for energy bills support under the scheme.

Initial information about eligibility, timescales and method of delivery is available in the Government's announcement on EBBS Alternative Funding on GOV.UK: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/vital-help-with-energy-bills-on-the-way-for-millions-more-homes-across-great-britain-and-northern-ireland>.

**Stephen Doughty:**[\[119153\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 5 December 2022 to Question 98830 on Energy Bills Rebate, when he plans to announce these measures; and whether back-payments will be made to affected residents.

**Graham Stuart:**

On 19 December, the Government publicly announced the Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Funding (EBSS AF) on GOV.UK: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/vital-help-with-energy-bills-on-the-way-for-millions-more-homes-across-great-britain-and-northern-ireland>. Once customers

have applied to receive support and their applications have been processed and verified, eligible customers' details will be shared with Local Authorities across England, Scotland and Wales. Local Authorities will deliver the one-off, non-repayable £400 of support this winter in a single instalment.

#### ■ Energy Bills Rebate: Hounslow

**Ruth Cadbury:**

**[117614]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the transparency data entitled Energy Bills Support Scheme GB: payments made by electricity suppliers to customers, published on 20 December 2022, what the total number of (a) payments delivered and (b) vouchers redeemed for people with prepayment meters was in the London Borough of Hounslow.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Energy Bills Support Scheme payment data is collected from suppliers and broken down by energy supplier and payment type for England, Wales and Scotland.

By 1st December 2022, 99% of vouchers had been issued to customers with traditional pre-payment meters, and of these 66% have been redeemed. This is an increase from 59% in the previous month. Vouchers are valid for 3 months and so the Government expects this figure to rise in the coming months. Monthly updates can be found at this address <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/energy-bills-support-scheme-payments-made-by-electricity-suppliers-to-customers>.

Delivery data by region, local authority and Westminster parliamentary constituency will be published in due course.

#### ■ Energy Bills Rebate: Northern Ireland

**Stephen Farry:**

**[113457]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that (a) people who pay rent inclusive of utility bills to landlords, (b) park home owners and (c) farmers with business electricity accounts receive the £600 energy support for Northern Ireland households.

**Graham Stuart:**

Landlords who charge rent that includes energy bills will be required to pass on the £600 to tenants in a just and reasonable way. Regulations will be introduced to mandate this and guidance will be made available.

Households with no domestic electricity contract such as park homes will be eligible for a £400 payment under the Energy Bill Support Scheme Alternative Funding as in Great Britain, plus the £200 Alternative Fuel Payment.

If farmers with business accounts do not have a domestic electricity contract, they can qualify for the EBSS Alternative Funding and Alternative Fuel payment.

■ **Energy Bills Rebate: Park Homes and Marinas**

**Cat Smith:**

[\[119178\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, on what date people who live in (a) park homes and (b) marinas will be able to apply online for the Energy Bills Support Scheme.

**Graham Stuart:**

The application portal for the Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Funding is due to open later this month.

■ **Energy Bills Rebate: Rented Housing**

**Dave Doogan:**

[\[110836\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether private tenants who pay for their electricity through their landlord in cases where their landlord operates as a business will be eligible to apply for the £400 Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Funding.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Funding will provide a £400 payment for the small percentage of households who will not receive the Energy Bills Support Scheme, including those who do not have a direct relationship with an electricity supplier. The application portal will include an eligibility overview and information on what applicants need to do to apply for energy bills support under the scheme.

■ **Energy Charter Treaty**

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[114590\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the press release by his Department entitled UK strengthens protections for taxpayers in energy treaty negotiations, published on 24 June 2022, whether it is his policy to leave the Energy Charter Treaty if the modernisation process is not concluded.

**Graham Stuart:**

The UK has been a strong advocate for ECT modernisation. At the Energy Charter Conference on 22 November, the decision to adopt the modernised Treaty was postponed. In light of this, the UK is monitoring developments, including the positions of other Contracting Parties.

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[114591\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the impact of his proposals for the modernisation of the Energy Charter Treaty on the transition to a fully decarbonised power sector over the next decade.

**Graham Stuart:**

The modernised Energy Charter Treaty reaffirms and strengthens Contracting Parties' right to introduce measures for legitimate policy objectives, including to

mitigate climate change. It extends the Treaty scope to protect investments in green technologies required for the global energy transition and allow Contracting Parties to phase-out their investment protection for fossil fuels, which the UK opted to do in line with our decarbonisation target.

At the Energy Charter Conference on 22 November, the decision to adopt the modernised Treaty was postponed. The UK will continue to monitor the situation surrounding the modernisation process, including positions taken by other Contracting Parties.

■ **Energy Company Obligation: Edmonton**

**Kate Osamor:** [114644]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many homes have had ECO scheme measures installed in Edmonton constituency as of 31 October 2022.

**Graham Stuart:**

BEIS publishes information on the number of households in receipt of ECO measures by Parliamentary Constituency in Table 4.5 accompanying the latest [Household Energy Efficiency Statistics release](#).

■ **Energy Company Obligation: Warrington North**

**Charlotte Nichols:** [114878]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many homes had ECO scheme measures installed in Warrington North constituency as of 31 October 2022.

**Graham Stuart:**

BEIS publishes information on the number of households in receipt of ECO measures by Parliamentary Constituency in Table 4.5 accompanying the latest [Household Energy Efficiency Statistics release](#).

■ **Energy Company Obligation: Warwick and Leamington**

**Matt Western:** [113324]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many homes had ECO scheme measures installed in Warwick and Leamington constituency as of 31 October 2022.

**Graham Stuart:**

BEIS publishes information on the number of households in receipt of ECO measures by Parliamentary Constituency in Table 4.5 accompanying the latest [Household Energy Efficiency Statistics release](#).

## ■ Energy Efficiency Taskforce

**Kerry McCarthy:**

[118843]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many meetings of the Energy Efficiency Taskforce have been held since its establishment; and what the full membership is of the taskforce.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Autumn Statement announced a new national ambition to reduce the UK's final energy consumption from buildings and industry by 15% by 2030 against 2021 levels. To support the delivery of this target, a new Energy Efficiency Taskforce will be established. More details on the scope and membership of the Taskforce will be announced in due course.

## ■ Energy Supply

**Richard Thomson:**

[114784]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will take steps with Ofgem to introduce minimum capital requirements on energy suppliers before 2025.

**Graham Stuart:**

This is a matter for Ofgem, which is currently consulting on proposals for setting a minimum capital requirement for all domestic suppliers.

The consultation can be found at: <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications/statutory-consultation-strengthening-financial-resilience>.

## ■ Energy: Billing

**Richard Thomson:**

[114783]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what his policy is on the use of energy customer credit balances as working capital by energy suppliers.

**Graham Stuart:**

On 25 November 2022, Ofgem set out a package of reforms to bolster consumer protection and ensure energy suppliers are more resilient to market shocks. Ringfencing customer credit balances would require suppliers to raise significant additional capital, increasing costs for consumers. However, Ofgem will be setting a monitoring threshold to avoid suppliers overly relying on customer credit balances.

The proposals also include the introduction of capital adequacy requirements for suppliers and require that suppliers ringfence Renewable Obligation receipts, to prevent these costs being socialised across the consumer base in cases of supplier failure.

Further details are available at: <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications/ofgem-launches-new-proposals-strengthen-energy-market-and-protect-consumers>.

## ■ Energy: Conservation

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[114597\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Education on the need to establish dedicated apprenticeship opportunities for energy efficiency.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IFATE) has convened a Green Apprenticeships Advisory Panel to work with employers to align apprenticeships to net zero objectives. A new Low Carbon Heating Technician apprenticeship has been developed and will be available shortly.

Developing a new dedicated apprenticeship for energy efficiency will require an industry Trailblazer Group to work with IFATE. Officials in the Department have had discussions with key bodies from within the insulation industry to understand the appetite to take this forward and will work with any Trailblazer group that is established.

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[114599\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to para 5.6 of the Autumn Statement 2022, published on 17 November 2022, CP 751, what energy efficiency schemes he plans to allocate the £6 billion of new funding to.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Government's Autumn Statement announced that £6 billion of new funding will be allocated to energy efficiency schemes to make sure homes are warmer and cheaper to heat. Further details on allocation of additional funding will follow in due course.

## ■ Energy: Government Assistance

**Dr Rupa Huq:**

[\[114687\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, in the context of the cost-of-living crisis, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of introducing a targeted energy assistance payment for families that run lifesaving medical care equipment at home.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Government is delivering the Energy Bills Support Scheme, a £400 non-repayable grant to support all families with their energy bills. The Energy Price Guarantee (EPG) will save a typical household in Great Britain £900 this Winter. In addition, families with disabled children are also entitled to a one-off £150 Disability Cost of Living Payment.

The Government is currently reviewing the EPG. This consultation will explore the best ways to ensure that vulnerable high energy users, such as those with medical requirements, are not put at risk of having to pay more.

## ■ Energy: Hornsey and Wood Green

**Catherine West:**

[\[114876\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to increase the rate of energy efficiency measure installations in homes in Hornsey and Wood Green constituency.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Government is committed to improving the energy performance of homes across the country, including in Hornsey and Wood Green.

The Government is investing £6.6 billion in decarbonising heat and energy efficiency measures. In addition, the Energy Company Obligation Scheme is in its fourth iteration which will run until 2026 with a value of £4 billion. ECO + has also been announced, worth £1 billion and will run from Spring 2023 to March 2026.

£6 billion of additional Government funding towards supporting energy efficiency improvements will be made available from 2025 to 2028.

## ■ Energy: Housing

**Vicky Foxcroft:**

[\[113312\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to help increase the rate of energy efficiency measure installations in homes in Lewisham, Deptford constituency.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Government is committed to improving the energy performance of homes across the country, including in Lewisham, Deptford.

The Government is already investing £6.6 billion over this parliament on decarbonising heat and energy efficiency measures.

An additional £6 billion of new Government funding, announced in the Autumn Statement, will be made available from 2025 to 2028. This provides long-term funding certainty, supporting the growth of supply chains and ensuring delivery can scale up over time.

**Matt Western:**

[\[113319\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to increase the rate of energy efficiency measure installations in homes in Warwick and Leamington constituency.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Government is committed to improving the energy performance of homes across the country, including in Warwick and Leamington.

The Government is already investing £6.6 billion over this parliament on decarbonising heat and energy efficiency measures.



An additional £6 billion of new Government funding, announced in the Autumn Statement, will be made available from 2025 to 2028. This provides long-term funding certainty, supporting the growth of supply chains and ensuring delivery can scale up over time.

**Kate Osamor:** [\[114639\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to increase the rate of energy efficiency measure installations in homes in Edmonton constituency.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Government is committed to improving the energy performance of homes across the country, including Edmonton.

The Government is investing £6.6 billion in decarbonising heat and energy efficiency measures. In addition, the Energy Company Obligation Scheme is in its fourth iteration which will run until 2026 with a value of £4 billion. ECO + has also been announced, worth £1 billion and will run from Spring 2023 to March 2026.

£6 billion of additional Government funding towards supporting energy efficiency improvements will be made available from 2025 to 2028

**Anne McLaughlin:** [\[117659\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether additional support payments for those living off gas grid will be available to those (a) on Economy 7 tariffs and (b) using electric only heating systems.

**Graham Stuart:**

*[Holding answer 11 January 2023]:* Households that are on economy 7 tariffs and use electric only heating systems are eligible for the electricity component of the Energy Price Guarantee.

**Anne McLaughlin:** [\[117660\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether specific financial support for people in off gas grid homes will be available in 2023/24.

**Graham Stuart:**

*[Holding answer 11 January 2023]:* The Government monitors prices and will consider further intervention if required to protect UK households from extraordinary fuel prices.

## ■ Energy: Marketing

**Richard Thomson:** [\[114782\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will take steps with Ofgem to introduce an obligation on energy suppliers to disclose to customers prominently in communications on (a) the sale of new tariffs and (b) other issues whether their credit balances are (a) ringfenced and protected or (b) being used as working capital.



**Graham Stuart:**

Ofgem licence conditions require energy suppliers to provide information, services or tools to enable customers to compare their tariffs easily.

Domestic customers' credit balances are protected in all instances. Customers can claim unused credit at any time and their energy supplier must refund them promptly unless they have reasonable grounds not to. Ofgem has also been taking steps to ensure that customer credit balances are kept at an appropriate level. Further, Ofgem is currently considering proposals which would allow them to direct suppliers in financial difficulties to ringfence domestic customer credit balances, reducing costs which are mutualised were a supplier to fail.

**Energy: Meters****Dan Carden:**[\[114849\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment has his Department made of the potential impact on forcible prepayment meter installations on access to Government energy support schemes.

**Graham Stuart:**

The energy regulator Ofgem has rules in place that restrict the force-fitting of a prepayment meter on customers who are in debt, except as a last resort. Forcible installations of prepayment meters (PPMs) for the most vulnerable customers have been banned by Ofgem since 2017.

Government support with energy bills is available to households, regardless of the type of meter they have.

**Rachael Maskell:**[\[119052\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the impact on low-income households of the prices charged by energy companies to customers with pre-payment meters; and if he will take steps to ensure that energy companies do not impose higher charges for energy on customers with pre-payment meters as a result of their payment method.

**Graham Stuart:**

The energy Supply Licence Conditions state that the difference in price between methods of supplying energy must reflect the actual cost to the supplier for that method. The costs of managing PPMs compared to standard meters are higher due to the different metering requirements and different payment systems. Ofgem is responsible for monitoring compliance with these terms.

**Energy: Prices****Richard Thomson:**[\[114785\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will take steps to extend the Market Stabilisation Charge beyond March 2024.

**Graham Stuart:**

This is a matter for Ofgem.

Ofgem published a statutory consultation on 25 November on the market stabilisation charge, which closed on the 23 December. Ofgem will publish their decision in early February 2023.

**Ian Byrne:**

[\[119190\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has made a comparative assessment of gas and electricity tariffs in Merseyside and the rest of the UK; and what steps his Department is taking to help people in areas of high deprivation with increases in the cost of gas and electricity.

**Graham Stuart:**

The setting of energy tariffs is a commercial matter for suppliers, within the confines of the energy price cap and the subsidy applied under the Energy Price Guarantee. The EPG is part of the significant package of support the Government has put in place to help all households, and in particular vulnerable households, with the cost of living.

#### ■ Energy: Students

**Hilary Benn:**

[\[114538\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to provide support to students in higher education who are living away from home for their energy bills.

**Graham Stuart:**

In private rented accommodation, landlords are required to reflect in the price they charge for energy, the actual costs and any Government support they receive through the Energy Bills Support Scheme and Energy Price Guarantee. This includes, where landlords charge based on usage, making a reasonable estimate of the appropriate unit rate to charge.

Where students live in commercially provided accommodation supplied by a non-domestic contract such as a hall of residence, they may benefit from the Energy Bill Relief Scheme depending on when the commercial provider signed their energy contract. If so, the commercial provider is required to pass on the savings to their student tenants.

#### ■ Energy: Warrington North

**Charlotte Nichols:**

[\[114871\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to increase the rate of energy efficiency measure installations in homes in Warrington North constituency.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Government is committed to improving the energy performance of homes across the country, including Warrington North.

The Government is investing £6.6 billion in decarbonising heat and energy efficiency measures. In addition, the Energy Company Obligation Scheme is in its fourth iteration which will run until 2026 with a value of £4 billion. ECO + has also been announced, worth £1 billion and will run from Spring 2023 to March 2026.

£6 billion of additional Government funding towards supporting energy efficiency improvements will be made available from 2025 to 2028.

**■ Green Deal Scheme: Edmonton****Kate Osamor:**[\[114645\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many projects have been completed in Edmonton constituency through the Green Deal as of 31 October 2022.

**Graham Stuart:**

BEIS estimates that in Edmonton constituency there have been no Green Deal projects either completed (all measures installed and paid off), or live (all measures installed but not yet paid off).

Data covers the period from May 2013 to October 2022.

**■ Green Deal Scheme: Hornsey and Wood Green****Catherine West:**[\[114883\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many projects have been completed through the Green Deal in Hornsey and Wood Green, as of 31 October 2022.

**Graham Stuart:**

BEIS estimates that in Hornsey and Wood Green constituency there have been between one and five Green Deal projects completed (all measures installed and paid off). To manage the risk of revealing personal or commercial data, the Government's approach is not to release non-zero counts of less than five for a small geographic area. There are no live projects (all measures installed but not yet paid off) in the constituency.

Data covers the period from May 2013 to October 2022.

**■ Green Deal Scheme: Llanelli****Dame Nia Griffith:**[\[117524\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many projects had been completed through the Green Deal in Llanelli Constituency as of 31 October 2022.

**Graham Stuart:**

BEIS estimates that in Llanelli constituency, 17 projects are live (all measures installed but not yet paid off) and seven projects have been completed (all measures installed and paid off).

Data covers the period from May 2013 to October 2022.

**■ Green Deal Scheme: Warrington North****Charlotte Nichols:**[\[114879\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many projects were completed through the Green Deal in Warrington North constituency as of 31 October 2022.

**Graham Stuart:**

BEIS estimates that in Warrington North constituency there have been no Green Deal projects completed (all measures installed and paid off). Between one and five projects are live (all measures installed but not yet paid off). To manage the risk of revealing personal or commercial data, the Government's approach is not to release non-zero counts of less than five for a small geographic area.

Data covers the period from May 2013 to October 2022.

**■ Green Deal Scheme: Warwick and Leamington****Matt Western:**[\[113325\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many projects had been completed in Warwick and Leamington constituency through the Green Deal on 31 October 2022.

**Graham Stuart:**

BEIS estimates that in Warwick and Leamington constituency, eleven Green Deal projects are live, meaning all measures have been installed, and between one and five projects have been completed, meaning all measures have been installed and paid off. To manage the risk of revealing personal or commercial data, our approach is not to release non-zero counts of less than five for a small geographic area.

Data covers the period from May 2013 to October 2022.

**■ Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme: Edmonton****Kate Osamor:**[\[114646\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many homes were retrofitted as a result of the Local Authority Delivery Scheme in Edmonton constituency as of 31 October 2022.

**Graham Stuart:**

There were 9 homes retrofitted in Edmonton through the [Local Authority Delivery Scheme](#). This data is available in Table 13 of the [December HULA Statistics release](#).

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

**Charlotte Nichols:** [\[114881\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many homes were retrofitted with funding through the Local Authority Delivery Scheme in Warrington North constituency as of 31 October 2022.

**Graham Stuart:**

There were 128 homes retrofitted in Warrington through the [Local Authority Delivery Scheme](#). This data is available in Table 13 of the [December HULA Statistics release](#).

■ **Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme: Warwick and Leamington**

**Matt Western:** [\[113326\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many homes had been retrofitted through the Local Authority Delivery Scheme in Warwick and Leamington constituency on 31 October 2022.

**Matt Western:** [\[113331\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many homes were retrofitted as a result of the Green Homes Grant in Warwick and Leamington constituency as of 31 October 2022.

**Graham Stuart:**

Information on the number of households upgraded by parliamentary constituency under the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery scheme can be found in table 11 accompanying the latest [release](#).

Information on the number of households with at least one measure installed by parliamentary constituency under the Green Homes Grant Voucher scheme can be found in table 4.4 accompanying the latest [release](#).

■ **Green Homes Grant Scheme: Edmonton**

**Kate Osamor:** [\[114648\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many jobs the Green Homes Grant supported in Edmonton constituency.

**Graham Stuart:**

An evaluation of the effectiveness of the voucher scheme, including analysis of scheme outcomes and evidence collected from scheme applicants and other stakeholders, is being undertaken by an independent research organisation. The evaluation includes an assessment of the effect of the Green Homes Grant Voucher Scheme on jobs, with findings available in Summer 2023.

**Kate Osamor:** [\[114649\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what was the average amount given to homeowners who had successful applications to the Green Homes Grant voucher scheme in Edmonton constituency.

**Kate Osamor:**

[114650]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many applications for the Green Homes Grant voucher scheme were successful in Edmonton constituency.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Department estimates that the average Government contribution per successful household application to the Green Homes Grant voucher scheme in Edmonton constituency was £6,110 for the main scheme and £7,050 for the low-income scheme.

Information on the number of applications by application stage for Green Homes Grant voucher (GHGV) scheme by parliamentary constituency can be found in table 4.4 accompanying the latest release (

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/green-homes-grant-voucher-release-october-2022> ).

**Kate Osamor:**

[114651]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many homes were retrofitted as a result of the Green Homes Grant in Edmonton constituency as of 31 October 2022.

**Graham Stuart:**

Information on the number of homes retrofitted by parliamentary constituency through the [Green Homes Grant Voucher Scheme](#) can be found in Table 4.4 accompanying the latest [release](#).

#### ■ Green Homes Grant Scheme: Hornsey and Wood Green

**Catherine West:**

[114889]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many homes were retrofitted as a result of the Green Homes Grant in Hornsey and Wood Green constituency as of 31 October 2022.

**Graham Stuart:**

Information on the number of homes retrofitted by parliamentary constituency through the [Green Homes Grant Voucher Scheme](#) can be found in Table 4.4 accompanying the latest [release](#).

#### ■ Green Homes Grant Scheme: Warrington North

**Charlotte Nichols:**

[114884]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many jobs the Green Homes Grant supported in Warrington North constituency.

**Graham Stuart:**

An evaluation of the effectiveness of the voucher scheme, including analysis of scheme outcomes and evidence collected from scheme applicants and other

stakeholders, is being undertaken by an independent research organisation. The evaluation includes an assessment of the effect of the Green Homes Grant Voucher Scheme on jobs, with findings available in Summer 2023.

**Charlotte Nichols:**

[114885]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the average level of funding was to people who made successful applications to the Green Homes Grant scheme in Warrington North constituency since the introduction of that scheme.

**Graham Stuart:**

The average government contribution per successful household application through the [Green Homes Grant Voucher Scheme](#) in Warrington North was £5,347 for the main scheme, and £6,853 for the low-income scheme. These figures use the same data as the latest [release](#).

**Charlotte Nichols:**

[114887]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many applications to the Green Homes Grant voucher scheme were successful in Warrington North constituency since the introduction of that scheme.

**Graham Stuart:**

Information on the number of applications by application stage for Green Homes Grant voucher (GHGV) scheme by parliamentary constituency can be found in table 4.4 accompanying the latest [release](#).

**Charlotte Nichols:**

[114888]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many homes were retrofitted as a result of the Green Homes Grant in Warrington North constituency as of 31 October 2022.

**Graham Stuart:**

Information on the number of homes retrofitted by parliamentary constituency through the [Green Homes Grant Voucher Scheme](#) can be found in Table 4.4 accompanying the latest [release](#).

## ■ Green Homes Grant Scheme: Warwick and Leamington

**Matt Western:**

[113328]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many jobs has the Green Homes Grant supported in Warwick and Leamington constituency.

**Graham Stuart:**

An evaluation of the effectiveness of the voucher scheme, including analysis of scheme outcomes and evidence collected from scheme applicants and other stakeholders, is being undertaken by an independent research organisation. The evaluation includes an assessment of the effect of the Green Homes Grant Voucher Scheme on jobs with findings available in Summer 2023.

**Matt Western:** [113329]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what was the average amount given to homeowners who had successful applications to the Green Homes Grant voucher scheme in Warwick and Leamington constituency.

**Matt Western:** [113330]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many applications for the Green Homes Grant voucher scheme were successful in Warwick and Leamington constituency.

**Graham Stuart:**

BEIS estimates that the average government contribution per successful household application to the Green Homes Grant voucher scheme in Warwick and Leamington constituency was £4,815 for the main scheme and £7,231 for the low-income scheme.

Information on the number of applications by application stage for Green Homes Grant voucher (GHGV) scheme by parliamentary constituency can be found in table 4.4 accompanying the latest [release](#).

## ■ Iron and Steel: Manufacturing Industries

**Bill Esterson:** [118971]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on Government funding for the UK steel industry.

**Bill Esterson:** [118972]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the potential impact of the steel industry on the production capabilities of the (a) rail and (b) automotive sectors.

**Bill Esterson:** [118973]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department plans to take steps to support steelworks jobs in (a) Scunthorpe and (b) Port Talbot.

**Bill Esterson:** [118974]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has had recent discussions with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the provision of financial assistance to British Steel.

**Bill Esterson:** [118975]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department plans to support the decarbonisation of the UK steel industry.



**Ms Nusrat Ghani:**

The Government has frequent discussions about how to secure the best outcomes for the UK economy, including sectors such as steel, rail and automotive, to ensure high-quality, well-paid jobs are available across the four nations.

The Government's Net Zero Strategy reaffirms our commitment to working with the steel industry on decarbonisation. Industrial sectors including steel can bid into Government competitive funds worth more than £1.5 billion to support them to go green, cut emissions and become more energy efficient.

**Local Net Zero Forum****Jim Shannon:**[\[114636\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when the first meeting of the Local Net Zero Forum will take place.

**Graham Stuart:**

The first meeting of the Local Net Zero Forum was held on 20 June 2022. The Forum has met twice and will meet again early this year.

**Manufacturing Industries: Sustainable Development****Abena Oppong-Asare:**[\[113443\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to help (a) sustainable and (b) ethical manufacturing businesses in the UK.

**Ms Nusrat Ghani:**

The Government is committed to decarbonising industry in line with our net zero goals, while simultaneously transforming our industrial heartlands by attracting inward investment, future-proofing businesses, and securing high wage, high skill jobs. We are providing around £2 billion of funding to help industry to reduce emissions, save on bills and connect to low carbon infrastructure such as carbon capture technology.

The Government continues to engage with enforcement bodies and industry partners to strengthen our understanding of how to improve ethical work practices across all sectors including manufacturing.

**Members: Correspondence****Afzal Khan:**[\[113429\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to reply to correspondence from the hon. member for Manchester Gorton dated 8 July 2022, reference AK52139.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

The Department has been unable to confirm receipt of the Hon. Member's correspondence of 8 July 2022. Please resubmit the correspondence to the Department and a response will be expedited for the Hon. Member.

**■ New Businesses: Warrington North****Charlotte Nichols:**[\[114877\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has had recent discussions with the Minister for Women and Equalities on taking steps to improve accessibility to entrepreneurship and business ownership for people with protected characteristics in Warrington North constituency.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

The Government is fully committed to supporting businesses and creating the best conditions for enterprise so that everyone, whatever their background, has the means and know-how to start and grow a business.

We are supporting early-stage entrepreneurs from all backgrounds through the Start-Up Loans Company which provides funding and intensive support to new entrepreneurs.

Since 2012, 40% of Start Up Loans have gone to women, worth over £344m and 20% of loans worth 187m have gone to Black, Asian, and Ethnic-minority businesses.

142 SMEs in Warrington North have received Start Up Loans to the value of £1,356,272 as of November 2022.

**■ Parental Leave****Tulip Siddiq:**[\[114733\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the BEIS consultation entitled Making Flexible Working the Default published in September 2021, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of mandating publishing of parental leave policies as part of gender pay gap reporting.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

The Government consulted on whether employers should be required to publish and report on their family-related leave and pay policies in 2019. Having reviewed consultation responses from a range of stakeholders and taken account of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Government decided that such a requirement should be considered as part of the process of considering how successful the Gender Pay Gap Reporting Regulations have been, and how Gender Pay Gap Reporting may be taken forward.

A fully considered review of Gender Pay Gap Reporting will be published in due course.

**■ Parental Leave and Parental Pay****Vicky Foxcroft:**[\[113315\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate his Department has made of the number of people who will qualify for neonatal (a) leave and (b) pay.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

An Impact Assessment (IA) was published alongside the Neonatal Care Leave and Pay Bill and is available at the following link:

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3190/publications>.

The IA estimates that 27,600 mothers and 32,200 fathers/partner will be eligible for leave per year. Of which, 26,600 mothers and 30,000 fathers/partners, respectively, will be eligible for pay.

**■ Postal Services: Universal Service Obligation****Mr Kevan Jones:****[113206]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the potential impact of a reduction of the Universal Service Obligation to five days with no Saturday deliveries on senders of non-USO mail.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

The Government has no current plans to change the statutory minimum requirements of the universal postal service, set out in the Postal Services Act 2011, which requires letter deliveries to every UK address, six days a week at standard price.

There is a clear and transparent process for how changes to the universal postal service should be considered and any change would need to be made through secondary legislation and agreed by Parliament.

**■ Power Stations: Urban Areas****Chris Elmore:****[114765]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the potential risks of locating hydrogen plants within built-up urban areas.

**Chris Elmore:****[114766]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the Health and Safety Executive will have a role in the consideration of applications for hydrogen plants.

**Chris Elmore:****[114767]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has made an assessment of the potential impact of locating hydrogen plans in urban areas on the health of the local population.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Department recognises that it is imperative that essential health and safety measures are in place to protect people and the environment. Officials are collaborating closely to ensure the planning system is optimised to support the development of a rapidly expanding UK hydrogen economy. This includes through the Department's Hydrogen Regulators Forum and bilateral engagement. The

Government works with industry and regulators to identify, prioritise and implement any changes to the existing framework, including addressing any gaps, to support the growth of the hydrogen economy.

■ **Private Sector: Telephone Services**

**Sarah Olney:** [113293]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he will make it his policy to regulate waiting times for telephone calls from the public to large private organisations.

**Sarah Olney:** [113294]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department has made an estimate of the average response time to telephone calls from the public to large private sector organisations; and what steps he is taking to improve these times.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

The telecoms regulator, Ofcom, published a report on service standards across the telecoms industry, including call waiting times in May 2022. A copy of the report can be found at: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/news-centre/2022/best-and-worst-telecoms-customer-service-revealed>.

The Government expects all firms to treat their customers fairly, but does not have plans to amend the consumer protection law in this area. How customer services are operated is a matter for firms, and there are many different channels of communication firms offer.

■ **Renewable Energy: Edmonton**

**Kate Osamor:** [114640]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he plans to increase funding for renewable energy sources in Edmonton constituency.

**Graham Stuart:**

Grant funding for renewable innovation or community-based renewable schemes is open for both local authorities and private investors to bid on. The Contract for Difference scheme, the Government's main mechanism for supporting low carbon generation, is awarded through a competitive process, ensuring that the most cost-effective projects are supported regardless of their location.

■ **Renewable Energy: Lewisham**

**Vicky Foxcroft:** [113313]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has plans to increase funding for renewable energy sources in Lewisham, Deptford constituency.

**Graham Stuart:**

Grant funding for renewable innovation or community-based renewable schemes is open for both local authorities and private investors to bid. The Contract for Difference scheme, the Government's main mechanism for supporting low carbon generation, is awarded through a competitive process, ensuring that the most cost-effective projects are supported regardless of their location.

**Renewable Energy: Warrington North****Charlotte Nichols:**[\[114872\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he plans to increase funding for renewable energy sources in Warrington North constituency.

**Graham Stuart:**

Grant funding for renewable innovation or community-based renewable schemes is open for both local authorities and private investors to bid on. The Contract for Difference scheme, the Government's main mechanism for supporting low carbon generation, is awarded through a competitive process, ensuring that the most cost-effective projects are supported regardless of their location.

**Renewable Energy: Warwick and Leamington****Matt Western:**[\[113320\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he plans to increase funding for renewable energy sources in Warwick and Leamington constituency.

**Graham Stuart:**

Grant funding for renewable innovation or community-based renewable schemes is open for both local authorities and private investors to bid on. The Contract for Difference scheme, the Government's main mechanism for supporting low carbon generation, is awarded through a competitive process, ensuring that the most cost-effective projects are supported regardless of their location.

**Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill****Stewart Hosie:**[\[113182\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the cost to the public purse was of preparing the impact assessment for the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill.

**Ms Nusrat Ghani:**

Proportionate analysis for the impact assessment for the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill was undertaken using existing analytical resources within government. This process was led by the Brexit Opportunities Unit, supported by analysts across Whitehall. The cost to the public purse was therefore absorbed within existing departmental resource limits.

## ■ Small Businesses: Carbon Emissions

**Seema Malhotra:**

[\[114673\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the role of SMEs in meeting the UK's net zero targets.

**Graham Stuart:**

Business and industry account for 25% of UK territorial emissions and SMEs alone account for around 50% of business energy use. This makes the Government's efforts to support SMEs to reduce their emissions crucial to meeting the UK's net zero target. The Government is continuing to support UK businesses to meet their net zero commitments via the UK Business Climate Hub. Small UK businesses are encouraged to join the UN's 'Race to Zero' initiative – a global effort to reduce the amount of greenhouse gases we all generate to zero by 2050. More than 3,782 UK small businesses have joined this initiative.

**Seema Malhotra:**

[\[114675\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department has made an assessment of any potential barriers discouraging SMEs from investing in net zero.

**Graham Stuart:**

The British Business Bank's recent representative survey of SMEs found that costs were the most significant barrier referenced by respondents (at 35%) with upfront costs (21%) being cited as the most challenging component. In March 2019, the Government published the outcome of a Call for Evidence entitled 'Helping Businesses to improve the way they use energy', which also highlighted the barriers faced by SMEs in terms of reducing their energy usage.

## ■ Small Businesses: Edmonton

**Kate Osamor:**

[\[114637\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many small and medium enterprises in Edmonton constituency have received financial support from the Government in 2022.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

Businesses in Edmonton will have benefitted from the Government's reversal of the National Insurance rise, which will save SMEs approximately £4,200 on average, cut to fuel duty for 12 months and the Energy Bill Relief Scheme, to protect small businesses from high energy costs over the winter. In addition, the Recovery Loan Scheme is available to SMEs across the UK.

Our Recovery Loan Scheme offers loans to help small businesses access the finance, in addition to existing support through our Help to Grow schemes all supporting businesses to grow, invest and thrive.

332 SMEs in Edmonton have received Start Up Loans to the value of £2,407,357 as of November 2022.

**Kate Osamor:**

[\[114641\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps is his Department taking to ensure that small and medium-sized enterprises in Edmonton constituency are receiving the correct level of support from the Energy Bill Relief Scheme.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Energy Bill Relief Scheme is set out in legislation and will be applied in a uniform way by all licensed suppliers. The regulations include a robust compliance and enforcement regime to ensure requirements are being met. Suppliers are also required to inform customers about the details of support, including the amount of the discount and discounted supply price.

■ **Small Businesses: Energy**

**Stephen Doughty:**

[\[119151\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department has taken recent steps to help support small businesses affected by high energy prices to switch easily between providers.

**Graham Stuart:**

Contractual terms offered to business customers are a commercial matter for energy suppliers. The Government remains committed to a fair and competitive energy market. Ofgem is undertaking a review of the non-domestic market following reports of challenges faced by business customers. My Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer has written to Ofgem to ask for a progress update before the Budget on whether further action is required to secure a well-functioning market.

■ **Small Businesses: Hornsey and Wood Green**

**Catherine West:**

[\[114874\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many SMEs have received public funding for support with the increase in the cost of living in Hornsey and Wood Green.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

The Government recognises the impact rising prices are having on businesses, including those in Hornsey and Wood Green.

Businesses in Hornsey and Wood Green will have benefitted from the Government's reversal of the National Insurance rise, saving SMEs on average £4,200, cut fuel duty for 12 months and the Energy Bill Relief Scheme, to protect SMEs from high energy costs over the winter. The Employment Allowance was increased to £5,000 from April and we have continued to provide business rate relief worth over £7bn, freezing the business rates multiplier for a further year.



The Government is providing financial support - 348 SMEs in Hornsey and Wood Green have received Start Up Loans to the value of £2,988,847 as of November 2022.

■ **Small Businesses: Lewisham**

**Vicky Foxcroft:**

[\[113310\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many SMEs in Lewisham, Deptford constituency have received Government funding to support them during the cost of living crisis.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

The Government recognises the impact rising prices are having on businesses, including those in Lewisham, Deptford.

Businesses in Lewisham, Deptford will have benefitted from the Government's reversal of the National Insurance rise, saving SMEs on average £4,200, cut fuel duty for 12 months and the Energy Bill Relief Scheme, to protect SMEs from high energy costs over the winter. The Employment Allowance was increased to £5,000 from April and we have continued to provide business rate relief worth over £7bn, freezing the business rates multiplier for a further year.

The Government is providing financial support - 501 SMEs in Lewisham, Deptford have received Start Up Loans to the value of £3,595,932 as of November 2022.

■ **Small Businesses: Newport West**

**Ruth Jones:**

[\[114892\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many small and medium sized businesses have received Government funding for support in Newport West constituency during the cost of living crisis in the last 12 months.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

The Government recognises the impact rising prices are having on businesses, including those in Newport West.

Businesses in Newport West will have benefitted from the Government's reversal of the National Insurance rise, saving SMEs on average £4,200, cut fuel duty for 12 months and the Energy Bill Relief Scheme, to protect SMEs from high energy costs over the winter. The Employment Allowance was increased to £5,000 from April and we have continued to provide business rate relief worth over £7bn, freezing the business rates multiplier for a further year.

The Government is providing financial support - 161 SMEs in Newport West have received Start Up Loans to the value of £1,612,340 as of November 2022.



## ■ Small Businesses: Warrington North

**Charlotte Nichols:**

[\[114869\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many SMEs have received public funding to support increases in the cost of living in Warrington North.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

The Government recognises the impact rising prices are having on businesses, including those in Warrington North.

Businesses in Warrington North will have benefitted from the Government's reversal of the National Insurance rise, saving SMEs on average £4,200, cut fuel duty for 12 months and the Energy Bill Relief Scheme, to protect SMEs from high energy costs over the winter. The Employment Allowance was increased to £5,000 from April and we have continued to provide business rate relief worth over £7bn, freezing the business rates multiplier for a further year.

The Government is providing financial support - 142 SMEs in Warrington North have received Start Up Loans to the value of £1,356,272 as of November 2022.

## ■ Small Businesses: Warwick and Leamington

**Matt Western:**

[\[113317\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many SMEs in Warwick and Leamington constituency have received Government funding for support during the cost of living crisis.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

The Government recognises the impact rising prices are having on businesses, including those in Warwick and Leamington.

Businesses in Warwick and Leamington will have benefitted from the Government's reversal of the National Insurance rise, saving SMEs on average £4,200, cut fuel duty for 12 months and the Energy Bill Relief Scheme, to protect SMEs from high energy costs over the winter. The Employment Allowance was increased to £5,000 from April and we have continued to provide business rate relief worth over £7bn, freezing the business rates multiplier for a further year.

The Government is providing financial support – 142 SMEs in Warwick and Leamington have received Start Up Loans to the value of £1,487,362 as of November 2022.

**Matt Western:**

[\[113321\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that small and medium-sized enterprises are receiving the correct level of support from the Energy Bill Relief Scheme in Warwick and Leamington constituency.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Energy Bill Relief Scheme is set out in legislation and will be applied in a uniform way by all licensed suppliers. The regulations include a robust compliance and enforcement regime to ensure requirements are being met. Suppliers are also required to inform customers about the details of support, including the amount of the discount and discounted supply price.

**■ Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund: Edmonton****Kate Osamor:**[\[114642\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an estimate of the number of homes that have been retrofitted through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund in Edmonton constituency since the introduction of that fund.

**Graham Stuart:**

The 2019 Conservative Manifesto committed to a £3.8bn Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) over a 10-year period. The SHDF Demonstrator and Wave 1 awarded a combined total of around £240m of grant funding to Local Authorities, with data held on local authority-led projects rather than at a constituency level. The SHDF Wave 2.1 competition, which closed on 18th November 2022, will allocate up to £800m of grant funding, with successful projects likely to be notified in March 2023.

**Kate Osamor:**[\[114647\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many homes were retrofitted as a result of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Demonstrator in Edmonton constituency as of 31 October 2022.

**Graham Stuart:**

The 2019 Conservative Manifesto committed to a £3.8bn Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) over a 10-year period. The SHDF Demonstrator and Wave 1 awarded a combined total of around £240m of grant funding to Local Authorities, with data held on local authority-led projects rather than at a constituency level. The SHDF Wave 2.1 competition, which closed on 18th November 2022, will allocate up to £800m of grant funding, with successful projects likely to be notified in March 2023.

**■ Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund: Hornsey and Wood Green****Catherine West:**[\[114880\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an estimate of the number of homes that have been retrofitted through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund in Hornsey and Wood Green constituency since the introduction of that fund.

**Graham Stuart:**

The 2019 Conservative Manifesto committed to a £3.8bn Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) over a 10-year period. The SHDF Demonstrator and Wave 1 awarded a combined total of around £240m of grant funding to Local Authorities, with data held on local authority-led projects rather than at a constituency level. The SHDF Wave 2.1 competition, which closed on 18th November 2022, will allocate up to £800m of grant funding, with successful projects likely to be notified in March 2023.

**Catherine West:**[\[114886\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many homes were retrofitted with funding through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Demonstrator in Hornsey and Wood Green constituency as of 31 October 2022.

**Graham Stuart:**

The 2019 Conservative Manifesto committed to a £3.8bn Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) over a 10-year period. The SHDF Demonstrator and Wave 1 awarded a combined total of around £240m of grant funding to Local Authorities, with data held on local authority-led projects rather than at a constituency level. The SHDF Wave 2.1 competition, which closed on 18th November 2022, will allocate up to £800m of grant funding, with successful projects likely to be notified in March 2023.

**■ Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund: Warrington North****Charlotte Nichols:**[\[114875\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an estimate of the number of homes that have been retrofitted through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund in Warrington North constituency since the introduction of that fund.

**Graham Stuart:**

The 2019 Conservative Manifesto committed to a £3.8bn Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) over a 10-year period. The SHDF Demonstrator and Wave 1 awarded a combined total of around £240m of grant funding to Local Authorities, with data held on local authority-led projects rather than at a constituency level. The SHDF Wave 2.1 competition, which closed on 18th November 2022, will allocate up to £800m of grant funding, with successful projects likely to be notified in March 2023.

**Charlotte Nichols:**[\[114882\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many homes were retrofitted with funding through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Demonstrator in Warrington North constituency as of 31 October 2022.

**Graham Stuart:**

The 2019 Conservative Manifesto committed to a £3.8bn Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) over a 10-year period. The SHDF Demonstrator and Wave 1 awarded a combined total of around £240m of grant funding to Local Authorities, with data held on local authority-led projects rather than at a constituency level. The SHDF Wave 2.1 competition, which closed on 18th November 2022, will allocate up to £800m of grant funding, with successful projects likely to be notified in March 2023.

**■ Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund: Warwick and Leamington****Matt Western:**[\[113322\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an estimate of the number of homes that have been retrofitted through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund in Warwick and Leamington constituency since the introduction of that fund.

**Graham Stuart:**

The 2019 Conservative Manifesto committed to a £3.8bn Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) over a 10-year period. The SHDF Demonstrator and Wave 1 awarded a combined total of around £240m of grant funding to Local Authorities, with data held on local authority-led projects rather than at a constituency level. The SHDF Wave 2.1 competition, which closed on 18th November 2022, will allocate up to £800m of grant funding, with successful projects likely to be notified in March 2023.

**Matt Western:**[\[113327\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many homes had been retrofitted as a result of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Demonstrator in Warwick and Leamington constituency on 31 October 2022.

**Graham Stuart:**

The 2019 Conservative Manifesto committed to a £3.8bn Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) over a 10-year period. The SHDF Demonstrator and Wave 1 awarded a combined total of around £240m of grant funding to Local Authorities, with data held on local authority-led projects rather than at a constituency level. The SHDF Wave 2.1 competition, which closed on 18th November 2022, will allocate up to £800m of grant funding, with successful projects likely to be notified in March 2023.

**■ Tesco: Clothing****Catherine West:**[\[114818\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has had recent discussions with Tesco on the pay and conditions of workers in Burma who produce clothing for its F&F brand.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

No discussions have taken place on this matter.

The UK has consistently supported the UN Guiding Principles (UNGPs) on business and human rights, which are widely regarded as the authoritative international framework to steer practical action by Governments and businesses worldwide on this important agenda. Implementation of the UNGPs supports access to justice and remedy for victims of business-related human rights abuses, wherever these occur, and encourages businesses to voluntarily adopt due diligence approaches to respecting human rights.

The Government is clear that it expects all UK businesses to respect human rights throughout their operations, in line with the UNGPs. In 2015 we introduced the Modern Slavery Act which requires businesses with a turnover of £36m or more to publish an annual modern slavery statement stating the steps they have taken to prevent modern slavery in their operations and supply chains.

The Government expects companies to report transparently about how they are mitigating modern slavery risks and to use their modern slavery statements to demonstrate year on year progress. This enables consumers, shareholders and civil society to scrutinise the efforts being made .

**■ UK Emissions Trading Scheme****John Redwood:**[\[113153\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the potential impact of emissions trading on the UK steel and ceramics industries; and what steps he is taking to help these industries with rising energy costs.

**Ms Nusrat Ghani:**

UK ETS industrial participants, such as those in the steel and ceramics sector receive free allocations mitigating the risk of carbon leakage. Free allocations are guaranteed at current levels until 2026, and we are currently reviewing how to best target support to most at risk sectors thereafter.

The UK also has two Energy Intensive Industry (EII) Schemes offering support to eligible companies with particularly high energy costs, in addition to the six-month Energy Bill Relief Scheme, which will be extended for a further 12 months as announced 9 January. Companies in the ceramics sector have received around £17m from the EII Exemption Scheme (2016-2021) and the steel sector have received over £800m to support with energy costs since 2013.

**■ UK Infrastructure Bank****Caroline Lucas:**[\[114600\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to help the UK Infrastructure Bank support the development of a market for retrofits.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Department has engaged with UK Infrastructure Bank officials over the past 18 months to ensure they are fully appraised of current policy on energy efficiency, and to explore options for how the Bank can play a role in supporting retrofit activity at scale. This includes in the SME, domestic, social housing, and public sectors. Further engagement is scheduled for 2023 to support the Bank's planning.

**CABINET OFFICE**■ **Cabinet Office: Electronic Purchasing Card Solution****Emily Thornberry:**[\[118891\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to his Department's publication of spending over £500 with a Government procurement card for the month of September 2021, last updated on 24 November 2022, whether he intends to publish information for the posting date of transactions in that month in the normal date format.

**Jeremy Quin:**

**I am grateful that you have brought this administrative error to my attention. I have asked my officials to correct the published data at the earliest opportunity.**

■ **Emergency Services: Death****Jessica Morden:**[\[117526\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on the potential merits of taking steps to mark the contribution of (a) police officers and (b) other emergency workers killed in the line of duty.

**Jeremy Quin:**

All lives lost in the line of duty are a tragedy and lives lost in public service should be commemorated. Work is continuing on an appropriate way to do so for those police, emergency workers and other public servants who lose their lives while serving the people of the United Kingdom.

■ **Government Departments: Communication****Lilian Greenwood:**[\[119005\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to paragraph 124 of the Fourth Report of Session 2019-21 of the Women and Equalities Committee entitled Unequal impact: Coronavirus, disability and access to services, published on 22 December 2020, HC 1050, whether his Department is taking steps to implement the recommendation that Government communications be subject to an accessibility checklist.

**Jeremy Quin:**

I refer the hon. Member to [PQ 59318](#).

As outlined in our response to the Fourth Report, the Government Communication Service (GCS) is leading efforts to support departments in enhancing the accessibility of their communications so key messages are available to all audiences.

This forms part of the Government's commitment to ensure all communications are in an accessible format.

## ■ Prime Minister: Sign Language

**Lilian Greenwood:**

**[119003]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps he has taken to make the Prime Minister's (a) press conferences and (b) speeches outside Parliament accessible to British Sign Language users.

**Jeremy Quin:**

I refer the hon. Member to [PQ 59318](#).

The Government is committed to ensuring government communications are available in an accessible format. British Sign Language interpretation is provided for the vast majority of No.10 press conferences through the BBC. In addition, speeches by the Prime Minister outside of Parliament are published on GOV.UK.

Training is provided to members of the Government Communication Service on accessible communications, including digital comms.

## ■ Sikhs

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

**[114792]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to the Sikh Names Research Report published by the Office for National Statistics as part of its December 2018 update on research and testing of 2021 Census questions and topics, whether he plans to hold discussions with the National Statistician on the potential merits of conducting a further research exercise using names to produce an estimate of the number of people identifying as Sikh who may not have been recorded as Sikhs in the 2021 census because they (a) did not answer the optional religion question or (b) stated in answer to that question that they had no religion.

**Jeremy Quin:**

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

A response to the Hon. Member's Parliamentary Question of 20 December is attached.

### **Attachments:**

1. UKSA Response to 114792 [[UKSA\\_Response\\_to\\_PQ114792\(1\).pdf](#)]



**DEFENCE**■ **Ajax Lessons Learned Review**

**John Healey:** [\[118816\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the Ajax Lessons Learned Review led by Clive Sheldon has been completed..

**Alex Chalk:**

The report of the Ajax Lessons Learnt Review led by Clive Sheldon KC is in its final stages of drafting.

■ **Antitank Missiles: Procurement**

**John Spellar:** [\[117437\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to help ensure that NLAW anti-tank missile stocks will be replenished in early 2023.

**Alex Chalk:**

To replenish the Next Generation Light Anti-Tank Weapon (NLAW) systems granted to Ukraine, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) secured around 500 units which will be delivered to the UK in 2023. The MOD has subsequently placed a separate contract for several thousand units to be delivered to the UK between 2024-2026.

■ **Armed Forces: British National (Overseas)**

**Alex Norris:** [\[119243\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether he has made an assessment of the impact of residency requirements for newly arrived British National Overseas visa holders who wish to join the armed forces.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

There are no UK residency requirements for immigration purposes including for British National (Overseas) citizens when applying to join the UK Armed Forces. However, the Armed Forces are subject to National Security Vetting rules for which there are UK residency requirements. These vary depending on the Service and role applied for. Any applicants who have lived outside the UK prior to their application may be limited as to which roles they can apply for, but every application is considered on a case-by-case basis and the required UK residency periods can be reduced.

Those British National (Overseas) citizens who join the UK Armed Forces are granted exempt from immigration control status by the Home Office for the duration of their Service. This allows them to come and go from the UK without restriction or the need for a visa. They can choose to apply for British Citizenship whilst serving or to apply for settled status in the UK on discharge (Indefinite Leave to Remain in the UK or Indefinite Leave to Enter the UK). Those who meet the criteria which came into effect on 6 April 2022 are eligible for a fee waiver when applying for settled status.



British National (Overseas) citizens are also eligible to apply to join the Reserves if they meet all the necessary criteria and have settled status in the UK.

■ **Armed Forces: Housing**

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

[\[117842\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to ensure that all accommodation for armed forces personnel is heated during winter.

**Alex Chalk:**

Since 16 December 2022, families with heating issues are contacted by a qualified engineer to support the swift diagnosis of faults and enable remote fixes if possible, and the number of heating engineers has been increased across all regions.

In the event of any heating failure, temporary heaters should be made available as soon as possible, and within 24 hours.

In addition, approximately 2,500 boilers are replaced annually within Service Family Accommodation either through Response Maintenance or Project upgrades.

In financial year 2022-23, the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) is investing £73 million of the £176 million Service Family Accommodation improvement budget to improve thermal efficiency by providing 600 properties with new boilers, 1,200 with new roofs, 1,740 with new doors and windows, and 900 with full External Wall Insulation.

All Single Living Accommodation (SLA) is supported by response services to react to heating and hot water failures as they occur. Any failure of heating is prioritised for repair in the shortest possible time.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

[\[117844\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment has he made of the adequacy of the standard of accommodation for armed forces personnel.

**Alex Chalk:**

All Service Family Accommodation (SFA) houses allocated to Service families in the UK meet the Government's Decent Homes standard as a minimum.

As of January 2023, 95.93% of SFA has been assessed as meeting or exceeding the Decent Homes standard.

Any homes below this standard are not allocated to Service personnel and their families.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

[\[117845\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to modernise accommodation for armed forces personnel.

**Alex Chalk:**

Improvement works in the last financial year (FY) resulted in approximately 13,000 homes receiving upgrades. This included new kitchens, bathrooms, roofs, doors,

windows, and boilers. Additionally, around 1,400 properties received external wall insulation to improve their energy efficiency and reduce incidences of damp.

£176 million of improvement works are planned for FY 2022-23, which will modernise around 9,800 Service Family Accommodation properties, which is around 20% of total housing stock.

Additionally, around £88 million has been allocated in FY 2022-23 to replace some of the poorest quality properties with modern homes.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

**[117846]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many accommodation properties for armed forces personnel (a) owned or (b) maintained by his Department are in a state of disrepair.

**Alex Chalk:**

The Department currently owns or maintains 47,929 Service Family Accommodation (SFA) properties. As of 1 January 2023, 2,895 of these properties are categorised as void and unavailable for allocation, due to their condition.

This does not necessarily mean that the home is in a state of disrepair, but they may require specific works or improvements that cannot be carried out while the property is occupied.

**John Healey:**

**[118817]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 5 December 2022 to Question 97447 on Armed Forces: Housing, what the level of occupant satisfaction with Planned Maintenance was in each quarter since the contract began.

**Alex Chalk:**

The level of occupant satisfaction with response maintenance is measured as a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) of the Future Defence Infrastructure Service (FDIS) accommodation contract.

Pinnacle is responsible for administering surveys to capture levels of satisfaction with Pinnacle, VIVO and Amey. Partial KPI data from Pinnacle will be available for Quarter 3 (November - December 2022) from 15 January 2023.

I will write to the right hon. Member in due course and place a copy of my response in the Library of the House.

**John Healey:**

**[118819]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the oral contribution by the Minister for Defence Procurement on 20 December 2022, Official Report, column 150, what financial consequences his Department could place on Pinnacle Group in the event that the standard of maintenance of service family accommodation does not improve.

**Alex Chalk:**

Pinnacle Group are not responsible for the maintenance of Service Family Accommodation. They are responsible for providing the National Service Centre,

which families use to access services; prioritising response maintenance requests and passing them to Amey and VIVO; providing occupancy services (allocating SFA to families and supervising moves into and out of SFA); and for the management of complaints.

The initial six-month contract bedding-in period has now ended with Pinnacle Group. The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) will now be able to use the financial incentives and consequences in the contract.

Where appropriate, this will allow DIO to withhold Core Profit where average performance over the period has fallen below the agreed Acceptable Level of Performance without adequate mitigation.

**John Healey:**

[\[118821\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department has placed contractual obligations on Pinnacle Group for the National Service Centre to be staffed by a specified number of individuals.

**Alex Chalk:**

The contract does not specify the number of individuals required to support the National Service Centre; however, the contract does state that Pinnacle must provide adequate resources to deliver their services.

**John Healey:**

[\[118858\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 21 December 2022 to Question 111525 on Armed Forces: Housing, how many calls were received by the National Service Centre relating to burst (a) pipes and (b) tanks since 1 April 2022.

**Alex Chalk:**

The Department does not hold the information in the format requested and it can only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Call data held by Pinnacle is not categorised by either burst pipes or burst tanks.

## ■ **Army: Weapons**

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

[\[117843\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to modernise personal weaponry in the British Army.

**Alex Chalk:**

The UK's current personal weapons, including the SA80 A3 Assault Rifle and Glock General Service Pistol, remain world leading.

The Army is conducting activities to modernise Small Arms and Light Weapons, including investigating replacement of individual weapons and new ammunition natures.

## ■ Challenger Tanks

**John Healey:** [\[118813\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the training time is for personnel to operate a Challenger 2 main battle tank.

**Alex Chalk:**

The training times for Service personnel to operate a Challenger 2 main battle tank are:

- Troop Leader, 107 days
- Crew Commander, 85 days
- Crew Gunner, 33 days
- Crew Driver, 46 days

**John Healey:** [\[118814\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Challenger 2 main battle tanks are available for operational deployment.

**Alex Chalk:**

The British Army holds and maintains an appropriate amount of all vehicles to meet operational requirements. I am withholding further information on the number of Challenger 2 main battle tanks available for operational deployment as its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the capability, effectiveness, or security of the Armed Forces.

**John Healey:** [\[118815\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Challenger 2 main battle tanks have been upgraded to Challenger 3 as of 9 January 2023..

**Alex Chalk:**

Production of the first Challenger 3 prototypes is underway and the programme is progressing towards its planned service entry in 2027.

## ■ EU Defence Policy

**Mr David Jones:** [\[117507\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, on what terms the UK will join the EU Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) arrangements on military mobility.

**James Heappey:**

Joining the Dutch-led PESCO Military Mobility project would enable the UK to better shape the rules and requirements that impact the movement of forces across the EU at pace, and to reinforce NATO's flanks if required. Joining the project would not in any way effect the UK's sovereign control over defence, obligate us to adopt EU defence policy, or participate in other projects. It does not involve financial commitments beyond sending representatives to meetings. We are currently

negotiating administrative arrangements with participating states in line with those already agreed with the US, Canada and Norway.

**Mr David Jones:**

[\[117508\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to EU Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) arrangements on military mobility, whether his Department plans to participate in any other PESCO arrangements.

**James Heappey:**

The UK continues to monitor Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) projects as they develop, but has no intention to apply for any other PESCO projects at this time.

**Mr David Jones:**

[\[117509\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent discussions his Department has had with its US counterparts on the participation by the UK and US in the EU Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) arrangements.

**James Heappey:**

The UK Government regularly discusses defence and security issues with our NATO Allies and European partners. We have discussed the UK's application to join the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) Military Mobility project with the US as an existing third country participant. We have also kept NATO informed throughout the application process.

## ■ F-35 Aircraft

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

[\[118849\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the Block 4 upgrade for the F-35 will require an improved F135 powerplant.

**Alex Chalk:**

I refer the right hon. Member to the Answer given by my predecessor (Alec Shelbrooke) to Question 45734 on 13 September 2022.

**Attachments:**

1. F-35 Aircraft [\[45734 - F35 Aircraft.docx\]](#)

## ■ Military Aid

**John Healey:**

[\[113172\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Military Aid to Civil Authorities requests were not approved by his Department in (a) 2019, (b) 2020, (c) 2021 and (d) 2022.

**James Heappey:**

Defence does not routinely record the number of Military Aid to Civil Authorities requests (MACAs) which are not approved. MACA requests may not progress for

approval for a number of reasons, such as being retracted, amended or superseded by an alternate contingency becoming available.

■ **RAF Northolt: Temporary Accommodation**

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[118828\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether any transit accommodation at RAF Northolt has been condemned since 2012.

**Alex Chalk:**

No transit accommodation at RAF Northolt has been condemned since 2012.

■ **Somalia: Army**

**Alyn Smith:** [\[119186\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many of the Somalia National Army personnel trained in Somalia by the UK military received training in (a) human rights and (b) gender equality since 2017.

**James Heappey:**

Since 2017 gender and human rights training has been delivered to over 2,700 Somali National Army personnel as part of UK Company Collective Training (through Op TANGHAM). Op TANGHAM has also supported training on gender/human rights with the African Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS).

■ **Team Resolute: Contracts**

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[118854\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 19 December 2022 to Question 109465 on Team Resolute: Contracts and with reference to the evidence from Vice Admiral Paul Marshall CBE to the Scottish Affairs Committee of 6 December 2022, HC 81, whether Harland and Wolff were notified that they were part of the preferred bidder consortium on (a) 15 November or (b) 12 or 13 November 2022.

**Alex Chalk:**

Team Resolute, including Harland & Wolff, was formally notified of its appointment as preferred bidder on 15 November 2022.

■ **Ukraine: Military Aid**

**Jim Shannon:** [\[113225\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent discussions his Department has had with counterparts in the United States on the provision of additional assistance to Ukraine.

**James Heappey:**

Following Russia's illegal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, officials in the Ministry of Defence have maintained close dialogue with US counterparts on the provision of

additional security assistance to Ukraine. The Defence Secretary speaks with his US counterpart regularly on the issue, most recently on 9 January 2023.

The Department also plays a leading role in Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin's monthly Ukraine Defense Contact Group, which seeks to maximise the impact of essential military equipment to Ukraine's armed forces by international partners.

#### ■ Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

**John Healey:**

[\[113173\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 13 September to Question 47352 on Undocumented Migrants: English Channel, how many Armed Forces personnel have been involved in Operation Isotrope each month since its inception.

**James Heappey:**

The number of Service personnel (SP) involved in Op ISOTROPE per month is provided in the table below, with the average number of personnel across the ten month period being 187. The number of personnel peaked at 256 personnel in summer and followed a gradual reduction in personnel numbers in line with levels of activity, and has been maintained at 164 since September.

No OF SP

Apr	212
May	214
Jun	256
Jul	186
Aug	177
Sep	164
Oct	164
Nov	164
Dec	164
Jan	164

**John Healey:**

[\[113174\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much the Home Office has paid to his Department for the use of Armed Forces personnel as part of Operation Isotrope.

**James Heappey:**

As announced upon commencement of military primacy on 14 April 2022, a funding package of £50 million was agreed from HM Treasury to fund military primacy. As

such, no money has or will be transferred from the Home Office to the Ministry of Defence as part of Operation Isotrope.

**John Healey:**

[\[113175\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he plans to conclude Operation Isotrope.

**James Heappey:**

I refer the right hon. Member to the answer I gave on 1 November 2022 to Question 73133.

**Attachments:**

1. Undocumented Migrants: English Channel [\[UIN 73133.docx\]](#)

## DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

### ■ Cybersecurity and Internet: Emergency Services

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[\[114772\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will make an assessment of the adequacy of resilience plans for emergency services during a (a) widespread internet outage and (b) cyber attack.

**Julia Lopez:**

The Government and Ofcom, the telecommunications regulator, work closely with the telecoms sector to assess and promote the resilience of the sector and to identify and prevent the risk of a wide range of compromises. The Telecommunications (Security) Act 2021 established a new telecoms security framework to improve the security and resilience of public telecoms networks and services. The framework includes New Electronic Communications (Security Measures) Regulations 2022 and an accompanying Telecommunications Security Code of Practice. These are intended to address risks to the security of the UK's public telecoms networks and services, including cyber attacks and outages.

DCMS does not have responsibility for the provision of emergency services themselves. It is for the relevant Emergency Authority (EA) to make an assessment of their resilience plans and ensure they have comprehensive business continuity plans and for the relevant inspectorate and lead government department to review the efficacy of these plans.

### ■ Digital Technology: Disadvantaged

**Ruth Jones:**

[\[114896\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether she has had recent discussions with the Welsh Government on taking steps to tackle digital poverty amongst pensioners in Newport West constituency.



**Ruth Jones:**

**[114897]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether her Department has taken recent steps to help encourage older people to (a) get an email address and (b) start using the internet in (i) Newport West constituency and (ii) Wales.

**Paul Scully:**

Digital inclusion is a devolved policy area, and as such most relevant initiatives are undertaken by the Welsh Government. However the government is focused on building a world-leading digital economy that works for everyone.

DCMS liaises with the Welsh Government on matters relating to digital inclusion as a part of the British-Irish Council format. This includes regular sharing of best practice, evidence and updates on progress on digital inclusion, as well as working together to organise regular digital inclusion ministerial summits.

We understand that access to broadband, mobile and landline services can be a challenge for low income households, particularly at the current time. DCMS has negotiated a range of high-quality, low-cost social tariffs for households in receipt of Universal Credit and other means tested benefits, including Pension Credit. These are available in 99% of the UK.

We also recognise that some older people are hesitant to access online services because they fear that they may become victims of fraud, or that it is an unsafe environment for their personal data. For this reason, we are taking a number of steps to improve the safety and trustworthiness of the online space, including:

- Increasing online safety by introducing the Online Safety Bill to Parliament, which sets new rules for firms which host user-generated content, and focuses on protecting people from online scams.
- Enabling the widespread use of secure and accessible digital identity solutions that meet the needs of all those who wish to use them, by setting standards, establishing governance, removing legislative blockers, and engaging with industry and civil society groups.

Charities such as AgeUK and AbilityNet also play an important role in providing support with technology and the internet through guides, training courses and volunteers to help people make the most of the internet.

## ■ Hillsborough Stadium: Safety

**Chi Onwurah:**

**[118990]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to events at the Leppings Lane End at Hillsborough Stadium involving Newcastle United supporters on 7 January 2023, if her Department will take immediate steps with relevant stakeholders to improve fan safety at that stadium.

**Stuart Andrew:**

The Football Association are investigating reports of overcrowding at the Leppings Lane End at Hillsborough Stadium on 7 January 2023.

The SGSA has a statutory responsibility for the issuing of licences to sports grounds for designated football matches in England and Wales, under the Football Spectators Act 1989. Grounds that are issued a licence, including Hillsborough Stadium, are all required to meet the same standards in order to safely admit spectators. The SGSA monitors this closely for all grounds that they licence.

The SGSA will remain in contact with the club, Sheffield City Council and the Safety Advisory Group as the facts are established and any implications for safety management arrangements at Hillsborough are considered. We are in contact with the SGSA on this matter.

The safety of spectators at sporting events is of the highest importance to His Majesty's Government and we will continue to work closely with all relevant authorities to ensure that football fans can continue to enjoy the sport whilst attending matches safely.

## EDUCATION

### ■ Academies: Reviews

**Bridget Phillipson:**

[\[113228\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 15 December 2022 to Question 108184 on Academies: Reviews, in which quarter of 2023 the review will be published; whether her Department will publish an interim report; and what her planned timetable is for the remaining work of the review.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department is continuing the work of the regulation and commissioning review, working closely with sector organisations and taking an evidence led approach. The final report of the review will be published in the first quarter of 2023.

### ■ Carers and Foster Care

**Tulip Siddiq:**

[\[114840\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether she plans to take steps to equalise (a) allowances given to foster and kinship families, (b) leave entitlements for foster and kinship families, (c) support available for children in kinship care and children in care and (d) access to training and support for kinship carers and foster carers.

**Claire Coutinho:**

Where a child cannot live with their birth family, local authorities have a legal duty to first consider family and friend carers. This may not always be the best placement for the child, and the child may therefore be placed in the care of the local authority.

Statutory guidance on family and friends care, issued to local authorities in England, makes clear that children and young people should receive the support that they and their carers need to safeguard and promote their welfare. There is no limit on the level of support, including financial support, that local authorities can provide. All local

authorities should have in place clear eligibility criteria in relation to the provision of support services for family and friend carers.

Foster carers, whether connected persons or unrelated, are entitled to an allowance to cover the costs of caring for a child. The 'Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards,' set out the expectations that are placed on foster carers and their agencies in England. The national minimum standards set out that all foster carers should receive at least the national minimum allowance plus any agreed expenses to cover the full cost of caring for each child placed with them. These standards can be accessed here:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/192705/NMS\\_Fostering\\_Services.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/192705/NMS_Fostering_Services.pdf).

The Independent Review of Children's Social Care made a set of bold and ambitious recommendations which seek to improve the financial and practical support kinship carers receive. These include recommendations on a financial allowance, a leave entitlement, and support and training for kinship carers.

The department is due to respond to these recommendations in early 2023.

## ■ Childcare

**Nadia Whittome:**

**[113412]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will take steps to increase the number of hours of free childcare to which three and four-year-olds are entitled.

**Claire Coutinho:**

The department is not currently planning to extend the existing entitlement hours. Improving the cost, choice, and availability of childcare for working families is important for the department, and we are committed to encouraging families to use the government-funded support that they are entitled to.

The department recognises that childcare can be a significant portion of a family budget, and so we are promoting the financial support that is available to help parents with childcare costs through the Childcare Choices campaign. Childcare Choices aims to raise parents' awareness of the schemes that exist to support them and encourage providers to become eligible to offer them. The Childcare Choices website brings together all the government support available to offset the costs of childcare, and can be found here: <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>.

In addition to the universal 15 hours of free early education entitlement available to all three and four-year-olds, the department also offers working parents of three and four-year-olds an additional 15 hours of free childcare (also known as 30 hours free childcare) if they earn the equivalent of 16 hours a week at national minimum/living wage, and under £100,000 per year.

The department also offers support outside of the entitlements. Tax-Free Childcare is available for working parents of children aged 0-11, or up to 17 for eligible disabled

children. This can save parents up to £2,000 per year, or up to £4,000 for eligible children with disabilities, and has the same income criteria as 30 hours free childcare.

Additionally, working parents on Universal Credit may also be eligible for help with up to 85% of their childcare costs through Universal Credit Childcare. This is subject to a monthly limit of £646 for one child or £1,108 for two or more children aged 0-16.

## ■ Department for Education: Public Expenditure

**Bridget Phillipson:**

**[113237]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 6 September 2022 to Question 42008 on Department for Education: Public Expenditure, what the expenditure has been to the nearest ten million pounds of each programme in the 2022-23 financial year as of 19 December 2022; and if she will make a statement.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021 settlement provided Programme budget for the Department of £76.5 billion in the 2022/23 financial year.

At the start of each financial year, departments publish their Main Estimates, setting out planned expenditure for that year. The Department's 2022/23 Main Estimates are available at:

<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/22269/documents/164868/default/>.

HM Treasury are due to publish the 2022/23 Supplementary Estimates in February 2023, which will provide an update to all departments' budgets this year.

After the end of the financial year, the Department's Annual Report and Accounts (ARA) are published, including the Statement of Parliamentary Supply. This shows the outturn for the financial year against each estimate line. The 2022/23 financial year ARA will be produced and audited ahead of publication after the end of this financial year. The 2021/22 ARA is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-for-education-consolidated-annual-report-and-accounts-2021-to-2022>.

The Department does not hold year to date spending information in the format requested. The majority of this funding is covered through the schools, high needs, and early years blocks of the Dedicated Schools Grant. The Department sets out payment schedules in the public conditions of grant documents. The payment schedule for the schools, high needs, and early years blocks of the Dedicated Schools Grant for 2022/23 is available in Annex A at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dedicated-schools-grant-dsg-2022-to-2023/dsg-conditions-of-grant-2022-to-2023>.

## ■ Holiday Activities and Food Programme

**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:**

**[117610]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 20 December 2022 to Question 111600 on Holiday Activities and Food Programme, how much and

what proportion of the funding allocated to each local authority was spent on (a) administration, (b) publicity and marketing, (c) activities, (d) transport, (e) staffing, (f) food (g) club provisions and (h) other expenses in the financial year 2021-22.

**Claire Coutinho:**

The department does not hold data for the breakdowns requested. The closest available information is published in the 2021 evaluation of the programme, published in March 2022, which provides analysis of local authority expenditure on the programme for the Easter and Summer holidays. The evaluation report indicates that 92% of the funding was spent on direct delivery of the programme including face-to-face holiday club provision, food costs, activity costs, staffing costs, and transport costs. The remaining 8% was spent on the administration of the programme by local authorities. This report can be accessed here:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1065868/Evaluation\\_of\\_the\\_2021\\_holiday\\_activities\\_and\\_food\\_programme.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1065868/Evaluation_of_the_2021_holiday_activities_and_food_programme.pdf).

Our Holiday Activities and Food programme grant letter sets requirements for local authorities in relation to programme expenditure. It specifies that up to 10% of an authority's funding allocation may be spent on programme administration, with the remaining 90% being spent on the direct delivery of free places for eligible children. Local authorities must confirm through an annual Certificate of Expenditure that the funding has been properly expended. The department does not specify how much local authorities should spend on food, activities, staff and transport as local circumstances will vary.

■ **Members: Correspondence**

**Afzal Khan:**

[\[119211\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when her Department plans to reply to correspondence from the hon. member for Manchester, Gorton of 22 September 2022, reference AK56008.

**Nick Gibb:**

I can confirm that a response to correspondence dated 22 November 2022, reference AK56008 from the hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton has been sent.

**ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**

■ **Agriculture: Subsidies**

**Cat Smith:**

[\[902965\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent estimate she has made of the number of payments made to farmers by the Rural Payments Agency.

**Mark Spencer:**

By 31 December, the Rural Payments Agency had made over 107,000 payments worth more than £1.6 billion across the Basic Payments, Countryside Stewardship and Environmental Stewardship schemes. This means that 97.9% of farmers had received at least one payment during the first month of the opening of the payment window.

■ **Water Companies: Regulation****Dan Jarvis:**[\[902963\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of effectiveness of the regulation of water companies.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The Government and regulators continue to work together to hold water companies to account and we plan to strengthen regulations further, including consulting on making it easier for the Environment Agency to issue fines.

Since 2015, the Environment Agency has brought 56 prosecutions against water companies, securing fines of almost £141 million.

In November Defra and HM Treasury announced that future fines handed out to water companies will be channelled into work to improve water quality.

The Government believes in effective economic and environmental regulation of water companies. Privatisation has unlocked around £170 billion of investment to improve water services and the environment.

But where companies fail to meet their obligations, regulators have not hesitated to take action, including criminal prosecutions.

**FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE**■ **Afghanistan: Females****Catherine West:**[\[119177\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has had discussions with (a) aid agencies and (b) regional and international partners on the implications of the Taliban's ban on female workers in the Afghan aid sector.

**Leo Docherty:**

The Government is working with the UN, international and UK-based non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other donor governments to ensure a coordinated and robust international response to the ban and that life-saving humanitarian assistance continues where possible. On 9 January, the Minister for Development met the UN Secretary General and, on 6 January, the Minister for South Asia spoke to the UN Deputy Secretary General to discuss the issue and the

international response. Our Permanent Representative in New York is engaging with the UN system and NGOs based in New York.

## ■ **Armed Conflict: Sexual Offences**

**Sarah Champion:**

[\[113343\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what funding outcomes were agreed at the International Ministerial Conference on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative 2022 by (a) the UK and (b) all other donors.

**Mr Andrew Mitchell:**

At the PSVI Conference the UK launched a new Political Declaration to strengthen the global response to conflict-related sexual violence. This has received 54 endorsements so far. 40 countries submitted national commitments to action which include an array of programmatic and diplomatic initiatives as well as funding commitments. The Political Declaration and national commitments have been published on gov.uk. The UK also launched its new PSVI Strategy, supported by up to £12.5 million of new funding over the next three years.

**Sarah Champion:**

[\[113354\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what background checks his Department conducted on (a) speakers and (b) participants at the International Ministerial Conference on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative 2022 in London on 28 and 29 November 2022.

**Mr Andrew Mitchell:**

The PSVI Conference was attended by around 1000 key stakeholders, including from the United Nations, civil society and at least 57 countries, as well as a wide range of survivors. Background checks were undertaken by FCDO's Safeguarding Investigation Team on attendees, including speakers, to identify if there were any safeguarding concerns. These checks included searches of open-source material and the FCDO's internal case management system.

## ■ **Bangladesh: Rohingya**

**Tom Hunt:**

[\[114779\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to support Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

The UK is committed to supporting the Government of Bangladesh with the Rohingya response. We have been a leading donor in Bangladesh, having contributed £345 million to the crisis since 2017. Our support continues to provide food, water, sanitation, shelter, healthcare and protection services to Rohingya refugees and vulnerable host communities.

We work closely with UN agencies and the Government of Bangladesh to provide basic services to Rohingya who have sought refuge in Bangladesh. We have led



efforts in international fora to keep the spotlight on the protracted Rohingya crisis, including through our role as penholder on Myanmar in the UN Security Council.

## ■ China: Technology

**Catherine West:**

[\[119154\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has had discussions with Cabinet colleagues on the potential risks of the use of technology manufactured by Chinese state-owned enterprises in (a) Government and (b) local government properties.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

The UK Government recognises China as a systemic competitor and has taken robust action to build our domestic resilience and safeguard our national security. We have put in place a range of measures to protect our infrastructure and supply chains, including the National Security and Investment Act. On 24 November, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster laid a Written Ministerial Statement setting out the steps we are taking to cease the deployment of Chinese visual surveillance systems onto sensitive government sites. We will not hesitate to take further action if necessary.

## ■ Climate Change: International Assistance

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[114602\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether his Department is taking steps to ensure that (a) the fund for loss and damage agreed at COP27 (i) is operationalised in a timely way and (ii) follows the principle of responsibility for carbon emissions and (b) that funding is (A) new and (B) additional to existing climate finance and Official Development Assistance commitments.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

The UK recognises that the current impacts of climate change are leading to losses and damages, and these are likely to increase in frequency and severity. As such, more needs to be done at global, regional and local levels to help countries and communities avert, minimise and address those losses and damages.

At COP26 in November 2021, the UK strongly supported the establishment of a 'Glasgow Dialogue on Loss and Damage' to discuss the arrangements for the funding of activities to avert, minimise and address loss and damage. Building on this at COP27 all parties agreed to establish new funding arrangements to assist developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to adverse effects of climate change, including a fund for responding to loss and damage.

The UK is constructively engaging with the establishment of the Loss and Damage fund's Transitional Committee. We will continue to work with this Committee, with parties to the UNFCCC and with civil society, to ensure that the fund and wider funding arrangements deliver effectively for countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. Funding arrangements are yet to be



developed so it is not possible to say at this stage if or what amount, the UK might contribute.

#### ■ **Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research: Finance**

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

**[114791]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 13 December 2022 to Question 102950 on Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research: Development Aid, what the amount disbursed to the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research was by (a) Official Development Assistance (ODA) and (b) non-ODA spend in each year since 2018.

**Mr Andrew Mitchell:**

I refer the honourable member to the figures in my [Minister Mitchell] reply to their PQ 102950.

We track the full amount of funding going from the UK to the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). However the data on the CGIAR Dashboards <https://www.cgiar.org/dashboards/> is not broken down by Official Development Assistance (ODA) and non-ODA.

#### ■ **Coronavirus: Vaccination**

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

**[119207]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 9 December 2022 to Question 95901 on Development Aid: Vaccination, for what reason the estimate of £3.36 per dose was the best available at the time the statistics on vaccine donations were compiled; and for what reason the price AstraZeneca vaccine doses were purchased at was not used.

**Mr Andrew Mitchell:**

The estimate of £3.36 per dose was the best available at the time the statistics on vaccine donations were compiled, as the overall cost to AstraZeneca of developing the vaccinations had not been finalised. Only when all AstraZeneca's expenditures have been taken into account can the final price per dose be reconciled to ensure, as per the contract, that there is no profit and no loss. This reconciliation has now started with the aim to finalise the cost per dose by the end of the 2022/2023 financial year. We will update the final price per dose in line with the revisions policy ([https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1021440/FCDO-Revisions-Policy.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1021440/FCDO-Revisions-Policy.pdf)).

#### ■ **Developing Countries: Renewable Energy**

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

**[114626]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he is taking steps to ensure that his Department's work to obtain private finance for green technology and energy projects in developing countries does not create unsustainable levels of sovereign debt in those countries.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

FCDO works with developing countries to raise affordable private and sovereign finance to help close the \$2.4 trillion per year by 2030 country climate finance gap for developing countries. This includes working with countries to raise private capital through green, local currency bonds.

Through the Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG) developing countries receive technical assistance, local guarantees and concessional finance to help develop green infrastructure.

At COP27 UK Export Finance launched climate resilient debt clauses which suspend debt repayments when countries face climate shocks. FCDO works with countries at risk of sovereign debt distress to improve debt reporting and management.

**East Africa: International Assistance****Preet Kaur Gill:**[\[113334\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much (a) humanitarian funding and (b) development funding the Government has provided to (i) Somalia, (ii) South Sudan, (iii) Ethiopia, and (iv) Kenya in (A) financial year 2022-23 and (B) 1 January 2022 to date.

**Mr Andrew Mitchell:**

The UK Government will meet its £156 million humanitarian commitment in East Africa in FY22/23. We will publish details of the overall development funding to each of these countries for FY22/23 in due course. In the period January 1 to March 31, 2022, the FCDO spent the following in Official Development Assistance: £6 million in Somalia, £14.8 million in South Sudan, £11.7 million in Ethiopia, and £0.4 million in Kenya.

**Guantanamo Bay: Closures****Dr Rupa Huq:**[\[119101\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has had recent discussions with the US government on closing the detention facilities at Guantanamo Bay.

**David Rutley:**

The Foreign Secretary has not had recent discussions with the government of the United States of America on closing the detention facilities at Guantanamo Bay.

The UK Government's long-standing position is that the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay should close.

## ■ Hong Kong: British National (Overseas)

**Alex Norris:**

[\[119242\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will take steps to support BNO visa holders to secure early withdrawal of their assets from the Hong Kong Mandatory Provident Fund.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

We are aware that individuals who have chosen to take up the British Nationals(Overseas) Visa (BN(O)) route are having difficulties in drawing down early their pensions held in the Hong Kong Mandatory Provident Funds (MPF). My officials have spoken to the relevant Hong Kong authorities to urge them to facilitate early drawdown of funds as is the case for other passport holders who move overseas.

## ■ Hong Kong: Migrants

**Catherine West:**

[\[119176\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has had recent discussions with (a) the Home Secretary and (b) the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on (a) security and (b) other support for Hong Kongers in the UK.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

The safety of all UK communities, including Hong Kong BN(O)s, is paramount. This government is committed in its unwavering support for Hong Kongers that have chosen to start a new life in the UK.

FCDO officials are working closely with the Home Office, DLUHC and other government departments to help deliver the next phase in the BN(O) Welcome Programme, ensuring that the UK is a safe and welcoming place for Hong Kongers settling in the UK.

## ■ Lesotho: Armed Forces

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

[\[114606\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if his Department will take steps to help support the authorities in Lesotho to bring about accountability for reported incidents of torture, unlawful killings and excessive use of force by members of the security forces.

**Mr Andrew Mitchell:**

The British High Commission in Maseru has strongly supported the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) facilitated National Reform Process (NRP) that includes security sector reform. The former Minister of Africa also pressed the importance of the NRP during her September 2021 visit. The High Commission has provided direct support to the NRP, including the funding of a Constitutional Law Expert to advise the Justice Ministry and National Reform Authority. Our High

Commission has also raised specific allegations of excessive use of force by the security forces and the need for accountability and expedited investigations.

■ **Mohammed Adam and Ahmed al-Nanna**

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

[\[114605\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if his Department will make representations to their counterparts in Sudan about the cases and reports of ill-treatment of Mohamed Adam and Ahmed al-Nanna.

**Mr Andrew Mitchell:**

The UK welcomed the progress on political reforms made in Sudan under Prime Minister Hamdok's government, including the ratification of the UN Convention against Torture. Since the military coup on 25 October 2021, these gains have been put at risk. Reports of individuals being subjected to ill-treatment, including as part of judicial proceedings, is extremely troubling. The UK has condemned the human rights violations that have taken place since the coup and have raised these issues in international fora such as the UN Human Rights Council and directly with the Sudanese authorities. We continue to call for those responsible for human rights violations to be held to account.

■ **Russia: Republika Srpska**

**Alicia Kearns:**

[\[119140\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether his Department has received evidence of the Republika Srpska region of Bosnia and Herzegovina providing (a) financial support (b) arms (c) manpower and (d) other equipment for the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

**Leo Docherty:**

We have not seen evidence of Republika Srpska (RS) entity offering practical support to Russia in Ukraine. Nonetheless, Milorad Dodik and other politicians in the RS have blocked BiH from implementing sanctions against Russia for its aggression in Ukraine. Dodik has met Putin on multiple occasions since February 2022 in search of Russian support. The UK has condemned the RS authorities' decision to award Vladimir Putin the RS medal of honour. We have made clear that the award is unjustifiable and risks further isolating those RS politicians involved.

■ **Sahel: Climate Change and Migration**

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

[\[114629\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the report entitled Advancing a rights-based approach to climate change resilience and migration in the Sahel, published on 16 November 2022 by the United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the recommendations of that report.

**Mr Andrew Mitchell:**

The UK welcomes the publication by the United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner and recognises the connection between climate change and migration in the Sahel; a region where the temperature is rising 1.5 times faster than the global average. There are more than 5 million internally displaced people in the region, with many seeking refuge in neighbouring countries due to the deteriorating humanitarian and security situation which is being exacerbated by climate change and environmental degradation. At COP27 in November 2022, the Foreign Secretary confirmed the UK will provide £200 million to the African Development Bank's Climate Action Window to help vulnerable countries, including those in the Sahel, adapt to the impacts of climate change. This funding comes in addition to the £19.5 million pledged by the UK at COP26 which is supporting communities in the region to cope with climate shocks.

**School Meals Coalition****Preet Kaur Gill:**[\[113335\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of joining the School Meals Coalition.

**Mr Andrew Mitchell:**

Following a review in early December, the UK reconfirmed its decision not to join the School Meals Coalition as it does not align with our domestic and international priorities for nutrition or education.

FCDO continues to prioritise nutrition interventions for pregnant and breastfeeding women and children under five to address and avert malnutrition.

**Serbia: Wagner Group****Alicia Kearns:**[\[119063\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has had formal discussions with representatives of the Serbian Government on the opening of a Wagner Group branch in Belgrade, Serbia in December 2022.

**Leo Docherty:**

We regularly discuss the implications and impact of Russia's activity in the Western Balkans region and beyond with Serbian Ministers and officials, including during my [Minister for Europe] recent visit to Serbia, and when the Foreign Secretary met his Serbian counterpart last month. We will always oppose Russian attempts to destabilise the region. We are aware of unconfirmed reports that the Wagner Group has opened a branch in Belgrade and that some Serbian nationals have connections with that organisation.

## ■ Sri Lanka: Debts

**Catherine West:**

[\[119147\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with (a) private sector creditors and (b) international partners on private sector debt relief for Sri Lanka.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

The UK welcomes the ongoing in-depth discussions between the Government of Sri Lanka and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on the reforms needed to bring the economy back to a sustainable path. HMT, as the lead department on debt policy with negotiating mandates from the Chancellor and UK Export Finance, are working with other Paris Club members on solutions to Sri Lanka's unsustainable debt levels. Once an IMF programme is agreed, we will work closely with other IMF members and help support economic reforms in Sri Lanka.

## HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

## ■ Accident and Emergency Departments

**Wes Streeting:**

[\[117709\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, which NHS (a) Trusts and (b) Integrated Care Boards have declared a Critical Incident or Operational Pressures Escalation Level 4 status since 21 December.

**Will Quince:**

*[Holding answer 11 January 2023]:* The information requested is not held by the Department. Decisions on operational pressures escalation levels and critical incidents are taken locally in response to demand and capacity pressures. Ministers have met regularly with National Health Service (NHS) leadership to discuss pressure across NHS organisations during the winter period and will continue to do so.

On the 9th of January the Government announced £250 million of funding for the NHS to support capacity and patient flow this winter.

## ■ Accident and Emergency Departments: Death

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

[\[117936\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people died following delays in emergency care in each week of 2022.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

[\[117937\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people died while waiting over (a) six, (b) 12, (c) 18 and (d) 24 hours for an ambulance in 2022.

**Will Quince:**

This information is not held in the format requested. Information on patient safety incidents is published by NHS England as part of the National Reporting and Learning System and is available at the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/patient-safety/national-patient-safety-incident-reports/>

**Ambulance Services: Mental Illness****Daisy Cooper:****[117881]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of call outs for ambulances are primarily for mental health emergencies.

**Will Quince:**

This information requested is not collected centrally.

**Ambulance Services: Stockport****Navendu Mishra:****[119191]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of ambulance wait times in Stockport constituency.

**Will Quince:**

Ambulance response times are reported at an NHS Ambulance Trust level. Stockport is within the North West Ambulance Service area. The following table shows North West Ambulance Service response times in November 2022.

AMBULANCE CATEGORY	STANDARD	NORTH WEST AMBULANCE SERVICE
C1 average	7 min	8:53
C1 90 <sup>th</sup> centile	15 min	15:08
C2 average	18 min	44:16
C2 90 <sup>th</sup> centile	40 min	1:35:33
C3 90 <sup>th</sup> centile	2 hours	8:17:37
C4 90 <sup>th</sup> centile	3 hours	8:56:30

**Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates: Regulation****Jessica Morden:****[117525]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 8 November 2022 to Question 77355 on Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates: Regulation, for what reason his Department did not publish the public

consultation on the draft legislation aimed at enabling the General Medical Council to regulate physician associates and anaesthesia associates by the end of 2022.

**Will Quince:**

The Department's focus remains on addressing National Health Service winter pressures and ensuring that patients have access to the services that they need. The work to regulate Anaesthesia Associates and physician associates continues to be progressed and we plan to publish the public consultation on the draft legislation in early 2023.

■ **Cancer: Meat**

**Dan Carden:**

[\[117957\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the evaluation of the carcinogenicity of the consumption of red and processed meat by the International Agency for Research on Cancer; and if he will make a statement.

**Neil O'Brien:**

Current Government advice on red and processed meat consumption is based on the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) report on iron and health published in 2010. This report concluded that red and processed meat intake is potentially associated with increased risk of colorectal cancer. Based on SACN's conclusions, Government advises that adults who regularly consume more than 90 grams per day reduce their consumption of red and processed meat to no more than the population average of 70 grams per day. This recommendation is also consistent with advice from the European Food Safety Authority in relation to safe levels for nitrites and nitrates added to meat.

When consumed in moderate amounts, red and processed meat can still form part of a healthy balanced diet. It is a good source of protein and provides vitamins and minerals such as iron and zinc.

■ **Care Homes: Staff**

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[\[117500\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to increase the level of recruitment of care home workers.

**Helen Whately:**

In February 2022, we made care workers eligible for the Health and Care Visa and added them to the Shortage Occupation list. We are also investing £15 million to further boost overseas recruitment opportunities.

We are running a national recruitment campaign, with continuous activity across jobs boards, video on demand, digital audio, radio and social media until 31 March. We are also making available £500 million to support safe and timely discharges from hospital. Where appropriate local areas can use this funding for measures related specifically to the recruitment and retention of care workers.



## ■ Care Homes: Visits

**Marsha De Cordova:**

[\[113432\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department (a) is taking to ensure that care home providers follow his Department's visiting guidance and (b) may take where family visits for care home residents are not allowed.

**Helen Whately:**

The Government's guidance states that every resident should be able to have at least one visitor in all circumstances. If individuals experience any issues regarding visiting, they should follow the care home providers complaints procedure. If needed, the complaint can be escalated to the local authority, Social Care Ombudsman or the Care Quality Commission. We are reviewing a range of options to avoid instances where residents are unable to receive visitors.

**Marsha De Cordova:**

[\[114800\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will hold a roundtable with families and relevant stakeholders on the adequacy of visiting arrangements in care homes.

**Helen Whately:**

We are exploring a range of options to support people with care and support needs recipients and their loved ones with access to visits.

**Alex Norris:**

[\[117871\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has a timetable for the introduction of legislative proposals to give care home residents a legal right to receive visitors.

**Helen Whately:**

The Government's guidance states that every resident should be able to have at least one visitor in all circumstances. We are working to review a range of options to strengthen the guidance around visiting and avoid instances where residents are unable to receive visitors.

## ■ Care Quality Commission

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[117675\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to enable CQC investigations to report on issues outside their statutory scope.

**Neil O'Brien:**

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) was established under the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as the independent regulator of health and adult social care in England. Its remit is to monitor, inspect, assess and regulate services and publish inspection reports on what it finds. Under the 2008 Act, section 48 enables the CQC to carry out special reviews and investigations into the provision of National Health Service care and adult social care, as well as NHS England and integrated care

board commissioning of NHS care and local authority commissioning of adult social services.

While CQC cannot use special reviews to focus on issues outside of its scope, it may comment on areas outside of its scope as part of its findings, should this provide further context or impact on the quality of care. There are currently no plans to enable the CQC to report on issues outside its current statutory scope. Any changes to widen the CQC's scope will require legislation.

#### ■ **Care Workers: North West**

**Ian Byrne:**

**[119239]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to increase the social care workforce in (a) Liverpool, West Derby constituency, (b) the Liverpool City Region and (c) the North West.

**Helen Whately:**

Local authorities should work with care providers to meet care needs in their area. We have announced a £500 million discharge fund for this winter that can be used flexibly by local areas to speed up safe discharge and support workforce capacity. The grant allocations for local authorities are available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adult-social-care-discharge-fund/annex-c-grant-allocations-to-local-authorities>

#### ■ **Care Workers: Pay**

**Ian Byrne:**

**[119237]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department is taking steps to increase the level pay of social care workers in line with (a) comparable NHS staff and (b) the rate of inflation.

**Helen Whately:**

Most care workers are employed by private sector providers who set their pay and terms and conditions, independent of central government.

#### ■ **China: Coronavirus**

**Julian Sturdy:**

**[117574]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps the Government is taking to (a) monitor and (b) mitigate against the potential effect of rises in the number of covid-19 cases in China.

**Maria Caulfield:**

As the Government announced on 30 December, we are introducing a number of measures in England in response to the increase in COVID-19 cases in China, and in particular the risk of new variants emerging. To monitor the impact, the UK Health Security Agency began non-mandatory PCR testing with genomic sequencing at Heathrow airport, to detect new variants among passengers arriving on direct flights

from China. Also, NHS England is now prioritising sequencing of symptomatic patients admitted to hospital who have been to China in the previous fortnight. To mitigate the impact, passengers arriving from China to England now need to show a negative COVID-19 pre-departure test taken no more than two days prior to departure. This will reduce the risk of people with COVID-19 boarding a flight to the United Kingdom. The situation and the need for these temporary measures will be kept under review.

### ■ **Chronic Fatigue Syndrome: Children**

**Alexander Stafford:**

[\[119225\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has commissioned research into the (a) causation and (b) treatment of children with chronic fatigue syndrome.

**Will Quince:**

The Department funds research through the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR). The NIHR is funding four research projects with a specific focus on myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS) in children, with a combined funding value of approximately £1.5 million. Between them, these projects are focussed on characterising ME/CFS in children and developing and identifying potential treatments, rather than elucidating an underlying cause. More broadly, the NIHR has provided approximately £4.4 million for research on ME/CFS since 2011. The NIHR welcomes applications for research into ME/CFS causation and treatment in children.

### ■ **Contaminants in Food (England) Regulations 2013**

**Stella Creasy:**

[\[119050\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Retained EU Law Bill, whether he plans to (a) retain, (b) revoke or (c) replace the Contaminants in Food (England) Regulations 2013.

**Neil O'Brien:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 8 December 2022 to Question 102910.

### ■ **Coronavirus: Vaccination**

**Bob Seely:**

[\[114868\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many Covid-19 vaccinations in total have been delivered in community pharmacies in England up to 20 December 2022.

**Maria Caulfield:**

As of 20 December 2022, approximately 33 million COVID-19 vaccinations have been delivered by community pharmacies in England.

**Daisy Cooper:****[117879]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans his Department has to develop and diversify its covid-19 vaccine portfolio.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The United Kingdom has access to multiple vaccines across different platforms, including mRNA vaccines (Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna) and protein adjuvant vaccines (Novavax and Sanofi/GSK).

Most of our contracts contain flexibilities to ensure we can receive updated vaccines, including variant-specific and bivalent vaccines that give breadth of protection against variants. However, we continue to assess our existing vaccine portfolio against current variants, working closely with vaccine manufacturers and the UK Health Security Agency to understand the efficacy of our current vaccine portfolio against new or emerging variants.

In December 2022, the Government and Moderna entered a strategic partnership to set up mRNA research and development and manufacturing facilities in the UK, which will have the potential to develop new vaccines and the capacity to produce up to 250 million vaccines per year in the event of a pandemic. This will give the UK priority access to these vaccines where they are demonstrated to be safe and effective, and authorised by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency. These include both Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine and others in its pipeline, including against flu and RSV, providing health resilience.

The Government will continue to follow the guidance of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation on which vaccines should be deployed in the UK's vaccination programmes.

**Daisy Cooper:****[117880]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many covid-19 vaccines the Government has in storage broken down by manufacturer.

**Maria Caulfield:**

As of 9 January 2023, the following table shows the number of COVID-19 vaccine doses the Department has in storage within the United Kingdom, including Northern Ireland by manufacturer is listed below:

MANUFACTURER	NUMBER OF DOSES IN STORAGE WITHIN THE UK, INCLUDING NORTHERN IRELAND
Pfizer	35,766,010
Moderna	14,012,350
Novavax	943,000

## ■ Death: Wansbeck

**Ian Lavery:**

[\[118964\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an estimate of the number and proportion of deaths that would have been preventable if medical attention had been available sooner in Wansbeck constituency in each month since September 2022.

**Neil O'Brien:**

No specific estimate has been made.

## ■ Dementia: Health Services

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[\[114550\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of treatment for (a) Alzheimer's Disease and (b) Dementia in the North East London Clinical Commissioning Group.

**Helen Whately:**

No specific assessment has been made. Provision of dementia health care services is the responsibility of local independent care boards (ICBs). NHS England would expect ICBs to commission services based on local population needs.

## ■ Dentistry

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[105400\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what powers integrated care boards will have to determine the number of NHS dentists recruited from (a) overseas and (b) dental schools in this country.

**Neil O'Brien:**

*[Holding answer 12 December 2022]:* There are no current plans to provide independent care boards with additional powers to determine the number of National Health Service dentists recruited from overseas or domestically. The General Dental Council holds records on the countries in which dentists are trained, however this does not differentiate between those delivering NHS dental activity and those which are wholly private.

The NHS Business Services Authority is responsible for collecting data on NHS dental activity, and therefore the dentists who deliver this activity.

## ■ Diabetes

**Dame Diana Johnson:**

[\[114555\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps the Government is taking to help reduce the potential inequity in (a) diabetes prevalence, (b) care and (c) outcomes in England; and what steps he plans to take to help reduce the rise in number of people being diagnosed with type 2.

**Helen Whately:**

The NHS Diabetes Prevention Programme is available to anyone identified as being at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Local systems receive regular data on whether the numbers of people accessing the programme who are black or minority ethnic or who live in areas of higher deprivation are proportionate to the local population.

Additionally, in September 2020 the National Health Service started piloting a low calorie diet programme to support people diagnosed with type 2 diabetes to lose weight, and make better decisions about their health.

In 2022/23, funding worth £36m was allocated to independent care boards, weighted by local levels of deprivation, to support more people to receive all recommended diabetes care processes, alongside other NHS Long Term Plan diabetes commitments.

**■ Draft Mental Health Bill****Rachael Maskell:****[117698]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of how effectively the measures in the draft Mental Health Bill would facilitate early intervention measures where mental health concerns are raised in relation to children and other young people; and what his proposed timetable is for bringing forward the Mental Health Bill.

**Maria Caulfield:**

No specific assessment has been made. The NHS Long Term Plan commits to an additional £2.3 billion a year for the expansion and transformation of mental health services in England by 2023/24, so that an additional 345,000 children and young people can access National Health Service funded mental health support, including early intervention services.

The Government published a draft Mental Health Bill on 23 June 2022. It is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/draft-mental-health-bill-2022>

The proposed legislative reforms aim to provide greater autonomy to individuals to inform the care and treatment they receive when they are made subject to the Act. This includes children and young people.

The draft Bill is currently subject to pre-legislative scrutiny by a joint Parliamentary Committee. Information on the Committee is available at the following link:

<https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/605/joint-committee-on-the-draft-mental-health-bill/>

Following pre-legislative scrutiny, the Government will bring forward a Mental Health Bill when parliamentary time allows.

## ■ Functional Neurological Disorder

**Seema Malhotra:**

**[114682]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he has taken to encourage health boards to establish specific agreements to treat functional neurological disorders.

**Helen Whately:**

No specific steps have been taken.

## ■ General Practitioners: Barking and Dagenham

**Dame Margaret Hodge:**

**[110545]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much the NHS spent on GP services in Barking and Dagenham in (a) 2018-19, (b) 2019-20 and (c) 2020-2021.

**Neil O'Brien:**

*[Holding answer 20 December 2022]:* The following table shows what NHS North East London, Barking and Dagenham Clinical Commissioning Group, spent on general practice services in 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21.

FINANCIAL YEAR	TOTAL AMOUNT SPENT
2018/19	£34,441,000
2019/20	£36,193,000
2020/21	£38,833,000

## ■ Health Services: Screening

**Seema Malhotra:**

**[117593]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the take-up of free health checks by over-40s in each local authority area in each of the last four years for which data is available.

**Neil O'Brien:**

Data on NHS Health Check participation, by local authority, is published every three months and goes back to April 2013. The data is available from the following link:

<https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/nhs-health-check-detailed>

Between April 2018 and September 2022, over 8.6 million people in England were offered an NHS Health Check, with participation at over 40% of offers. Delivery of the programme was largely suspended between April 2020 and February 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and in line with national guidance from NHS England. Data from September 2022 indicates recovery of the service is underway, with activity at 81% of pre-pandemic levels.

The Department is taking forward a programme of work to modernise the NHS Health Check, including the development of a national digital NHS Health Check to complement the face to face service and enable people to self-check at home.

### ■ Hereditary Spastic Paraplegia

**Lisa Nandy:**

[\[119009\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to improve (a) the diagnosis rate of Hereditary Spastic Paraplegia and (b) the co-ordination of care and access to specialist care, treatment and support for people with HSP.

**Helen Whately:**

Genomic testing for patients with hereditary spastic paraplegia is available on the Test Directory. Seven NHS Genomic Medicine Service (GMS) Alliances play an important role in supporting the strategic systematic embedding of genomic medicine in end-to-end clinical pathways and clinical specialities, as well as raising awareness among clinicians and the public of the genomic testing available through the NHS. More broadly, the government's UK Rare Diseases Framework sets out four key priorities for improving the lives of people living with rare diseases, such as hereditary spastic paraplegia, which include faster diagnosis, better coordination of care and improved access to specialist care, treatment and drugs.

### ■ Home Care Services: Labour Turnover and Recruitment

**Dan Carden:**

[\[114844\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to improve recruitment and retention in the homecare sector.

**Helen Whately:**

In February 2022, we made care workers eligible for the Health and Care Visa and added them to the Shortage Occupation list. We are also investing £15 million to support local areas to boost overseas recruitment opportunities. We are running a national recruitment campaign, with continuous activity across jobs boards, video on demand, digital audio, radio and social media until 31 March. We are also making available £500 million to support safe and timely discharges from hospital. Where appropriate local areas can use this funding for measures related specifically to the recruitment and retention of the social care workforce.

### ■ Infectious Diseases: Disease Control

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[117677\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has taken recent steps to prepare for the need to implement an effective vaccination programme in the event of an epidemic or pandemic.

**Maria Caulfield:**

UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) has established a new Vaccine Development and Evaluation Centre, which will lead on developing and evaluating new and existing



vaccines in collaboration with partners across government, industry, and academia, ensuring we have the tools we need to protect health.

We have also established the Centre for Pandemic Preparedness (CPP) within UKHSA to ensure the United Kingdom's future pandemic responses are more effective and efficient and reduce the negative impacts of health threats. Part of the CPP's role will be assessing what worked during the COVID-19 pandemic and applying those lessons to future events, including areas such as pandemic vaccine programmes.

## ■ IVF: Health Services

**Steve McCabe:** [\[117425\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps his Department has taken to improve access to NHS-funded IVF services for women in the West Midlands.

**Steve McCabe:** [\[117426\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps the Department is taking to review and address regional discrepancies in the provision of IVF services as outlined in the Women's Health Strategy.

**Steve McCabe:** [\[117427\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to address disparities in access to NHS-funded IVF services for couples in England.

**Maria Caulfield:**

Funding decisions for health services in England are made by integrated care boards and are based on the clinical needs of the local population. We expect these organisations to commission fertility services in line with National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines, ensuring equal access to fertility treatment across England.

The Women's Health Strategy, published on 20 July 2022, contained a number of important changes and future ambitions to improve the variations in access to NHS-funded fertility services. We will update shortly on our priorities for implementation.

In addition, NICE is currently reviewing its fertility guidelines and will consider whether the current recommendations for access to National Health Service funded treatment and preservation are still appropriate. We expect that this review will be published in 2024.

## ■ Medical Equipment: Databases

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[117690\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, for what reason his Department does not keep a centralised record of implanted medical devices which would allow the

effective future identification of all affected patients in case of faults or risks being identified; and if he will take steps to create such a database.

**Maria Caulfield:**

*[Holding answer 11 January 2023]:* The Independent Medicines and Medical Devices Safety (IMMDS) review update published in December 2022 outlines our next steps in this area, including taking forward the NHS England outcomes registries programme in England. NHS England are working to expand the coverage and breadth of existing outcome registries which will deliver data collections that contain patient, device and outcome-level data. Exemplar registries already record 600,000 to 700,000 patients a year with device details.

As set out in the IMMDS update, the aim is to increase outcome registry coverage from 15% to 80% of Class III implants and Class IIb therapeutic devices over the next three years. The outcome registries will allow traceability and patient outcome data to be gathered for priority medical specialties and therapeutical areas, prioritised according to patient and clinic risk. The outcome registries will be unified under one platform.

We are in discussions with the devolved Governments to develop a United Kingdom wide approach that will enable secure data sharing, system interoperability and coverage where it is appropriate to do so.

■ **Medicine: Education**

**John Spellar:**

[\[117444\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many medical students are studying in the UK.

**Will Quince:**

The information requested is not held centrally.

■ **Members: Correspondence**

**John Penrose:**

[\[114620\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to reply to the letters from the hon. Member for Weston-super-Mare of 4 November and 2 December 2022 on behalf of his constituent Clive Smith regarding his granddaughter.

**Helen Whately:**

We have received your letters of 4 November 2022 and 2 December 2022 and will respond shortly.

■ **Mental Health Services**

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[117702\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress he has made on considering the potential merits of establishing a public inquiry into the adequacy of

mental health services provided (a) by Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust and (b) in England.

**Maria Caulfield:**

*[Holding answer 11 January 2023]:* Mental health patients and their families deserve and expect the highest standards of care and it is important we learn from any mistakes made to improve care across the National Health Service and protect patients in the future. Ministers are considering options to address the issues in mental health inpatient care identified recently at Tees Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust and other providers. We will have an update on this in due course.

## ■ NHS: Disclosure of Information

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[\[114780\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 19 December 2022 to Question 109669 on NHS: Disclosure of Information, for what reason the National Guardian's Office did not receive Freedom to Speak Up speaking up data for Q1 2022/23 from University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust; and what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of the Freedom to Speak Up network.

**Maria Caulfield:**

*[Holding answer 10 January 2023]:* The National Guardian's Office (NGO) requires that Freedom to Speak Up Guardians provide quarterly data returns on speaking up cases that are raised with them. However, sometimes complexities with data collections or specific difficulties meeting deadlines may mean that data is not provided. A consolidation period at year-end provides a second opportunity to complete data returns.

The Freedom to Speak Up Guardians network plays an important role in improving speaking up culture in the National Health Service. The network have handled more than 76,000 speaking up cases between 2017/18 and 2021/22. To help ensure continuous improvement and compliance with its guidance which includes data returns, the NGO has developed and rolled out training and mentorship to Freedom to Speak Up guardians and an annual refresher course.

**Helen Hayes:**

[\[117725\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he will make an estimate of the number of whistleblowing incidents in the NHS in each of the past five years.

**Maria Caulfield:**

This information is not collected centrally.

**Helen Hayes:**

[\[117726\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an estimate of the total amount spent by NHS trusts (a) on employment tribunals and (b) compensation awards to people found to have been unfairly dismissed after whistleblowing.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The information requested is not held centrally. National Health Service organisations are independent employers and have their own policies and procedures for disciplinary and hearings aligned to general employment law and good human resource practice. Any such cases are a private legal matter between the employer and employee.

**■ NHS: Drugs**

**Alex Cunningham:** [\[117583\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department are taking to tackle medicine shortages.

**Alex Cunningham:** [\[117584\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department are taking to tackle antibiotic shortages.

**Alex Cunningham:** [\[117586\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department plans to provide additional support with sourcing medicines to community pharmacy teams.

**Will Quince:**

The Department has well-established procedures to deal with medicine supply issues and works closely with the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, the pharmaceutical industry, NHS England and others within the supply chain to help prevent shortages and to ensure that the risks to patients are minimised when they do arise.

The continued demand for antibiotics to treat Strep A is making it difficult for some pharmacies to obtain certain antibiotics. We have been taking decisive action to address these temporary issues and to improve access to these medicines. These actions include working with manufacturers and wholesalers to expedite deliveries, bring forward stock they have to help ensure it gets to where it is needed and to boost supply to meet demand as quickly as possible. Deliveries to wholesalers and pharmacies are currently being made, with more expected in the coming days and weeks.

Eight Serious Shortage Protocols have been issued to allow pharmacists to supply an alternative form of penicillin V, or alternative antibiotic, if they do not have the specific product stated on the prescription. Advice has also been provided to pharmacists and general practitioners on the management of the current supply issues, including direction to use alternatives, as necessary.

Community pharmacies make an important contribution to the National Health Service, supporting patients across the country and we are taking action to support them. The Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework 2019-24 five-year deal commits £2.592 billion each year to the sector. The deal sets out the vision for how community pharmacy will support the NHS Long Term Plan by being better integrated

into the NHS, delivering more clinical services and becoming the first port of call for minor illness. On 22 September we announced a £100 million investment into pharmacy for the remainder of the five-year deal.

## ■ **NHS: Industrial Disputes**

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[114742\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps the Government needs to take to end the industrial dispute in the NHS.

**Will Quince:**

The independent pay review body process (PRB) is the established mechanism for determining pay uplifts in the public sector, including for staff working in the National Health Service (NHS).

The PRBs are made up of industry experts who carefully consider evidence submitted to them from a range of stakeholders, including government and trade unions. They base their recommendations on several factors including the economic context, cost of living, recruitment and retention, morale, and motivation of NHS staff. We carefully consider their reports when we receive them. For the pay settlement in 2022-23, we accepted their recommendations in full.

Ministers have met unions several times over recent months and we are clear that it is important that we keep talking about how together we can make the NHS a better place to work. We are in regular communication with NHS England about how they can support this, and reduce the likelihood of strike action, too.

## ■ **NHS: Labour Turnover and Recruitment**

**John Redwood:**

[\[117393\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent discussions he has had with NHS staff on (a) conditions of employment, (b) workload and (c) other non pay matters affecting recruitment and retention.

**Will Quince:**

Ministers' regularly meet with National Health Service staff and their representative bodies to discuss ongoing issues, including conditions of employment, workload, recruitment and retention.

The NHS People Plan and NHS People Promise, published in July 2020, sets out a comprehensive range of actions that are focussed on making the NHS a better place to work and improving retention. This includes a stronger focus on health and wellbeing, strengthening leadership and management to support staff and expanding opportunities for flexible working. The long term workforce plan that we have committed to publishing this year will build on this so that we can ensure the NHS has the robust and resilient workforce it needs for the future.

**■ NHS: Pay****John Redwood:**[\[117392\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he is taking steps to encourage NHS managers to use (a) promotions (b) increments and (c) flexibilities in pay scales to retain and motivate staff.

**Will Quince:**

Retention within the National Health Service is a complex issue and decisions to leave are taken due to a multitude of factors, of which pay is only one. The NHS Retention Programme seeks to understand why staff leave, resulting in targeted interventions to support staff to stay whilst keeping them well. Locally, employers in the NHS have the option to use measures like pay increments and promotions to attract and retain staff.

**■ NHS: Recruitment****John Redwood:**[\[117394\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to help recruit more permanent staff to the NHS and reduce dependence on Agency staff.

**Will Quince:**

This Government is growing the National Health Service workforce. There are now over 42,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) more staff working in NHS provider trusts and commissioning bodies than October 2021, including almost 4,700 more doctors and over 10,500 more nurses. We are working hard to deliver 50,000 nurses by the end of March 2024 and we are well on the way towards achieving this aim with over 36,000 more nurses working in the NHS now compared with September 2019.

The Government has funded 1,500 more medical school places each year for domestic students in England, a 25% increase over three years. This expansion was completed in September 2020 and has delivered five new medical schools in England. There are currently record numbers of medical students in training.

The Department of Health and Social Care has also commissioned NHS England to develop a long-term workforce plan. The plan will look at the mix and number of staff required across all parts of the country and will set out the actions and reforms that will be needed to reduce supply gaps and improve retention. A temporary workforce market allows the NHS to meet demand fluctuations without the need to increase capacity above that which would be required on a sustained basis. Staff can be drawn from internal staff banks or external agencies.

Measures were introduced in 2015 to control agency spending and include price caps, limiting the amount a trust can pay to an agency for temporary staff, the mandatory use of approved frameworks for procurement, and the requirement for all trusts to stay within the specified Annual Expenditure Ceilings for agency staff. The agency rules outlined were effective in reducing spending on agency staffing by a third between 2015/16 and 2020/21.

## ■ Ophthalmic Services: Children

**Siobhain McDonagh:**

[\[117420\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many outpatient (a) paediatric ophthalmology, (b) optometry and (c) orthoptic appointments for children under 19 years of age were (i) missed as the patient did not attend or (ii) cancelled in 2021-22.

**Neil O'Brien:**

In 2021/22, there were 67,588 outpatient paediatric ophthalmology appointments, 3,967 optometry appointments and 54,615 orthoptic appointments for children under 19 years of age that were missed as the patient did not attend.

In 2021/22, there were 49,720 outpatient paediatric ophthalmology appointments, 3,286 optometry appointments and 48,122 orthoptic appointments for children under 19 years of age that were cancelled.

**Siobhain McDonagh:**

[\[117421\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what was the average waiting time for an outpatient paediatric ophthalmology appointment in 2021-22.

**Neil O'Brien:**

The average waiting time for an outpatient paediatric ophthalmology appointment in 2021/22 was 88 days from the point of referral to the first outpatient appointment attended.

## ■ Pharmacy

**Dr Luke Evans:**

[\[119165\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress he has made on the integration of community pharmacies into the NHS in (a) Bosworth constituency, (b) Leicestershire and (c) England.

**Dr Luke Evans:**

[\[119169\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has taken recent steps to expand the range of services available from community pharmacies in (a) England, (b) Leicestershire and (c) Bosworth constituency.

**Neil O'Brien:**

The Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework 2019-24 (CPCF) five-year deal commits £2.592 billion each year to the sector. The deal sets out the vision for how community pharmacy will support the NHS Long Term Plan by being better integrated into the National Health Service, delivering more clinical services and becoming the first port of call for minor illness. A range of clinical services have been introduced under the deal including blood pressure checks and minor illness referrals from general practitioners and NHS 111 which can be delivered by all community pharmacies in England, Leicestershire and Bosworth.

In September 2022, we announced a £100 million investment into pharmacy for the remainder of the five-year deal. The agreement also includes new and expanded



services in community pharmacy. We will enable community pharmacists across England to manage and initiate contraception and provide extra support for patients newly prescribed anti-depressants. Urgent and emergency care settings will be able to refer patients to a community pharmacist for a minor illness consultation or for an urgent medicine supply.

## ■ Prescription Drugs

**Alex Cunningham:**

[\[117585\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department are taking to prevent community pharmacies making a loss when dispensing NHS prescriptions.

**Will Quince:**

When market prices go up and pharmacies cannot purchase products at or below the Drug Tariff National Health Service reimbursement price, the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC) can request the Department to reconsider the reimbursement price. If a new reimbursement price is issued this is known as a concessionary price. Concessionary prices are established using real time data from suppliers to generate prices that are reflective of the overall market.

Further, as part of the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework, pharmacies are allowed to keep £800 million medicines margin per year. Medicine margin is the difference between the reimbursement price and the prices paid by pharmacies. The Department assesses the overall medicine margin retained by pharmacies, through a medicine margin survey. If less than £800 million has been retained during the year an upwards adjustment is made to some reimbursement prices and if more than £800 million has been retained a downward adjustment is made.

## ■ Prisoners: Learning Disability and Mental Illness

**Stephen Morgan:**

[\[117914\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many and what proportion of the UK prison population have (a) pre-existing mental health conditions and (b) learning difficulties.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The data requested for England is not held in the format requested. Data relating to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are a matter for the Devolved Administrations.

## ■ Rare Diseases: Children

**Seema Malhotra:**

[\[113400\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what support is available for mothers of children and infants with rare diseases.



**Helen Whately:**

The England Rare Diseases Action Plan 2022 sets out specific commitments for improving the lives of those living with rare diseases. The Action Plan aims to support both individuals living with rare conditions and their carers, including mothers of children and infants living with rare diseases, through faster diagnosis, raising awareness of rare diseases among healthcare professionals, improving coordination of care, and improving access to specialist care, treatments, and drugs.

**Tourette's Syndrome****Tracey Crouch:**[\[117554\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of requiring the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence to provide guidance on (a) Tourette Syndrome and (b) other tic disorders.

**Maria Caulfield:**

Clinical guideline topics are formally referred to the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) by NHS England and take into account factors such as available evidence and clinical need.

In line with its process for considering requests for new guidelines, NICE has considered the possible development of a guideline on Tourette syndrome, which was discussed at a meeting of the cross-agency topic prioritisation group in November 2022. The group did not consider this topic to be a national priority at this time and therefore decided not to prioritise development of a NICE guideline on Tourette syndrome.

**HOME OFFICE****Antisocial Behaviour: Barnsley East****Stephanie Peacock:**[\[119167\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent steps her Department has taken to ensure that (a) South Yorkshire police and (b) Barnsley Council have the resources to address increases in anti-social behaviour in Barnsley East.

**Stephanie Peacock:**[\[119168\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent steps her Department has taken to help increase charge rates for repeated anti-social behaviour.

**Stephanie Peacock:**[\[119170\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent steps her Department has taken to help prevent anti-social behaviour on the sites of derelict buildings.

**Chris Philp:**

The Government is committed to tackling and preventing anti-social behaviour (ASB). We know the serious impact that persistent ASB can have on both individuals and the wider community.

We provided the police, local authorities, and other local agencies with a range of flexible tools and powers that they can use to respond quickly and effectively to ASB through the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. It is for local areas to decide how best to deploy these powers depending on the specific circumstances. They are best placed to understand what is driving the behaviour in question, the impact that it is having, and to determine the most appropriate response.

The Home Office published statutory guidance to support local areas to make effective use of these powers. The guidance sets out the importance of focusing on the needs of the victim and the local community, as well as ensuring that the relevant legal tests are met. This guidance was updated in June 2022 to ensure a victim-centred approach to tackling ASB as well as stronger use of the powers and tools in the 2014 Act.

One of the commitments outlined in the Beating Crime was to establish the principles required for a strong and effective partnership response to anti-social behaviour, working with PCCs, local authorities and other partners to help set expectations for local agencies, so that they work together to address ASB issues, including dealing with persistent offenders. This was published in July 2022.

The Home Office announced in March 2022 that ASB would be one of the primary crime and issue types being targeted in the next rounds of the Safer Streets Fund. This funding goes towards local projects aimed at increasing the safety of public spaces for all with a particular focus on addressing neighbourhood crime, anti-social behaviour and tackling violence against women and girls. At the end of July last year, we announced the outcome of Round Four of the Safer Streets Fund, investing an additional £50 million and supporting 111 projects across England and Wales.

South Yorkshire Police's funding will be up to £314.3m, in 2022/23 an increase of up to 17.2 when compared to 2021/22. As at 30 September 2022, South Yorkshire has recruited 408 additional uplift officers against a total three year allocation of 504 officers.

**■ Fraud****Sarah Olney:**[\[119244\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department plans to publish a new National Fraud Strategy.

**Tom Tugendhat:**

The Fraud Strategy will be published shortly.

The Government will work with industry to remove the vulnerabilities that fraudsters exploit, with intelligence agencies to shut down fraudulent infrastructure, with law

enforcement to identify and bring the most harmful offenders to justice, and with all partners to ensure that the public have the advice and support they need.

■ **Members: Correspondence**

**Sir Stephen Timms:** [\[114513\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department plans to respond to correspondence from the Rt Hon. Member for East Ham dated 15 September 2022, reference ST100032.

**Robert Jenrick:**

The Home Office replied on 22 December.

**Dan Carden:** [\[114810\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the email of 15 November 2022 from the hon. Member for Liverpool Walton, relating to Mahdi Neisy.

**Dan Carden:** [\[114811\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the email of 16 November 2022 from the hon. Member for Liverpool Walton, relating to Claudia Gisella Fabara Cuadros.

**Dan Carden:** [\[114812\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the email of 16 November 2022 from the hon. Member for Liverpool, Walton relating to Saba Esmaeili.

**Dan Carden:** [\[114813\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the email of 16 November 2022 from the hon. Member for Liverpool Walton, relating to Jaime Perez Sandoval and family.

**Robert Jenrick:**

114810 – the Home Office replied on 29 December 2022.

114811 – the Home Office replied on 23 December 2022.

114812 – the Home Office will respond shortly.

114813 - the Home Office replied on 10 January 2023.

**John Penrose:** [\[117536\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the correspondence from the hon. Member for Weston-super-Mare of 2 November 2022 and 1 December 2022 on behalf of his constituent Michelle Michael on visa applications for a Ukrainian family.

**John Penrose:**

[\[117537\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she will respond to the correspondence of 4 November and 5 December 2022 from the hon. Member for Weston-super-Mare on indefinite leave to remain for Arif Shabbir.

**Robert Jenrick:**

MPAM/0467238/22 – The Home Office responded to the hon. Member's correspondence on 9 January 2023.

MPAM/0471321/22 – The Home Office responded to the hon. Member's correspondence on 10 January 2023.

## ■ **Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984**

**Janet Daby:**

[\[117945\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to amend the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 to align with the changes to the criteria for the use of court remand for children introduced in the Policing, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022.

**Chris Philp:**

Police custody is a core element of the criminal justice system and is critical for keeping the public safe. The Government maintains that children should only be detained in custody as a last resort and any opportunities to divert children away from custody should be taken.

The Government is aware of concerns regarding children being detained in police custody overnight and therefore introduced the Concordat on Children in Custody protocol for when children have been charged and bail has been refused. The Concordat sets out the statutory duties of the police and local authorities and provides a protocol for how transfers of children from custody to local authority accommodation should work in practice.

The Government has no plans to amend the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 at present but will keep under review the implementation of the changes for court remand for children introduced in the Policing, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022.

## ■ **Police Custody and Prisoners on Remand: Children**

**Janet Daby:**

[\[117948\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make a comparative assessment of the number of children (a) detained in police custody and (b) remanded by criminal courts in each of the past three years.

**Chris Philp:**

The Home Office collects and publishes data on detentions in police custody, including age of the person detained. Data for the year ending March 2022 is

available here: [Police powers and procedures: Other PACE powers, England and Wales, year ending 31 March 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-powers-and-procedures-other-pace-powers-england-and-wales-year-ending-31-march-2022)

As this was the first year of data collection, not all forces were able to provide data. As such, the data are based on a subset of 26 out of 43 territorial police forces and are labelled as experimental statistics due to data quality issues, therefore should be interpreted with caution. Of the forces that provided data, there were 546,170 people detained in custody, of whom 35,114 were children (aged under 18).

Data on children remanded by criminal courts, including children remanded at a police station, are published by the Ministry for Justice. Data for 2021 are available here: [Criminal justice statistics quarterly - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-justice-statistics-quarterly)

Magistrates courts tool:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1113402/remands-magistrates-court-tool-2021-revised-2.xlsx](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1113402/remands-magistrates-court-tool-2021-revised-2.xlsx)

Crown court tool:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1113403/remands-crown-court-tool-2021-revised-2.xlsx](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1113403/remands-crown-court-tool-2021-revised-2.xlsx)

Since the custody and criminal courts datasets cover different time periods, and the custody data is based on a subset of 26 forces, a comparison between datasets has not been made.

## ■ Police Custody: Children

**Janet Daby:**

**[117947]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the statistics published by her Department entitled Police powers and procedures, published on 17 November 2022, if she will make it her policy to require the collection of specific offences currently identified as non-notifiable offences for which children are detained in police custody.

**Chris Philp:**

The collection and publication of this data will bring additional transparency and accountability to police custody in England and Wales and help us better understand how and why police powers and procedures are used within the custody process. We intend to build on this by working with police forces and the NPCC to improve data quality in future years.

The police custody data collection became mandatory for 2022/23. We will continue to keep the scope of the data we request from forces under review. All data collections and new requests are reviewed each year by the Policing Data Requirement Group (PDRG) to ensure that data requested from the police is proportionate to the need for the data and that forces have the technical capabilities to provide the data requested.

## ■ Property: Ownership

**Sarah Olney:**

[\[114824\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if he will make an assessment with Cabinet colleagues of the potential impact of property ownership by citizens of countries considered to pose a threat to national security on national security.

**Tom Tugendhat:**

We take any threats to national security extremely seriously. The 2020 National Risk Assessment considered that the property market faced a high risk from money laundering. This included an assessment that since 2017 law enforcement have seen an increase in overseas based buyers under investigation and that corrupt foreign elites continue to be attracted to the UK property market.

We use all available tools to identify and counter activity by individuals posing a national security threat. Where appropriate, action can be taken on the property and asset ownership of such individuals. This includes through the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, which we can use to deprive criminals of their money or other property connected to criminal activity, inclusive of crimes which threaten the national security of the UK. The Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Bill currently going through Parliament will make it harder for kleptocrats, criminals and terrorists to engage in activities such as money laundering, corruption, terrorist-financing, illegal arms movements and ransomware payments.

## ■ Refugees: Ukraine

**Steve McCabe:**

[\[117432\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether Ukrainian refugees living in other European countries are able to take holidays in the UK to visit family and friends.

**Robert Jenrick:**

Ukrainian refugees living in other European countries can visit the UK for holidays and to visit family, subject to applying for and receiving the necessary entry clearance. Visitors are assessed on the balance of probabilities against a set of suitability and eligibility rules based on credibility.

## ■ Speed Limits

**Scott Benton:**

[\[117967\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an estimate with Cabinet colleagues of the average cost of policing a 20mph zone in the last 12 months.

**Chris Philp:**

The Home Office does not hold or collect information on the average cost of policing a 20mph zone, nor are there any current plans to do so.

The enforcement of speed limits is an operational matter for the police and any costs associated with enforcement activity will inevitably vary between forces.

## ■ Visas: Foreign Investment in UK

**Layla Moran:**

[\[113391\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Minister for Security's oral contribution on 19 December 2022, Official Report, when her Department plans to publish the review of Tier 1 investor visas.

**Tom Tugendhat:**

The Home Secretary has substantively responded on the findings of its review by way of Written Ministerial Statement published on the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2023

## ■ Wagner Group: Proscribed Organisations

**Andrew Percy:**

[\[117549\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her policy to proscribe the Wagner Group as a terrorist organisation.

**Tom Tugendhat:**

Whilst the Government keeps the list of proscribed organisations under review, we do not routinely comment on whether an organisation is or is not under consideration for proscription.

The Government remains concerned about Russia's use of private military companies such as the Wagner Group. We take the provision of mercenaries and other military support to parties in conflicts such as Libya, Syria, Ukraine and elsewhere very seriously. We continue to work closely with our international partners to counter Russian malign activity and respond to actions that undermine the rules based international system.

Our package of sanctions in support of Ukraine targets those aiding Russia's invasion of Ukraine. This includes the Wagner Group and on 24 March 2022 the UK designated Wagner Group under our autonomous sanctions regime.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

### ■ Richmond House

**Michael Fabricant:**

[\[114516\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for Broxbourne, representing the House of Commons Commission, pursuant to the Answers of 20 November 2022 to Question 110565 on Parliamentary Estate: Repairs and Maintenance and Question 110567 on Norman Shaw Buildings, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of constructing new (a) rear and (b) Whitehall entrances to Richmond House.

**Sir Charles Walker:**

The Commission has no plans to assess the merits of constructing a new Whitehall entrance to Richmond House.

Proposals are being pursued to develop the existing entrance at Derby Gate to improve access for all users of the Northern Estate, including Richmond House.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

### ■ Department for International Trade: Public Expenditure

**Nick Thomas-Symonds:** [\[114753\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what estimate she has made of spending by her Department for the next five years.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

At the Spending Review 2021, the Department for International Trade (DIT) secured a Total Departmental Expenditure Limit (TDEL) settlement of £562.2m and £552.8m in financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25 respectively to deliver DIT's priority outcomes. Funding requirements for the Department, beyond this point, will be confirmed at the next Spending Review.

### ■ Solid Fuels: Exports

**Chris Grayling:** [\[117485\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if she will permit the export of hexamine solid fuel tablets to Ukraine.

**Andrew Bowie:**

All goods that require an export licence are assessed against the Strategic Export Licensing Criteria on a case-by-case basis. The Export Control Joint Unit, which is responsible for export licensing in my Department, refuses only a very small proportion of export licence applications, but we will not grant an export licence if to do so would be inconsistent with the Strategic Export Licensing Criteria.

### ■ Trade Agreements

**Nick Thomas-Symonds:** [\[114754\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, when she expects the UK to meet the Government's target for 80 per cent of UK Trade to be carried out under Free Trade Agreements.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

The UK Government has secured trade agreements with 71 countries plus the EU. These partners accounted for 63% (£814bn) of UK bilateral trade in 2021. It is important to remember that when the Government adopted this target the United States was in ongoing talks on a free trade agreement (FTA) with the UK but has since taken a different approach to FTA talks under the Biden administration. The US is 16.6% of our total global trade. We continue to make progress, signing three Memoranda of Understanding at state-level to facilitate trade and investment opportunities.



Our Free Trade Agreement programme continues at unprecedented pace and scale. We are negotiating with seven partners concurrently – India, the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Canada, Mexico, Israel and Greenland. We are also in preparations to begin negotiations on new trade deals with Switzerland and South Korea.

We have an ambitious programme, but it is the substance of trade deals that is important, not the timing.

## ■ Trade Promotion

**Nick Thomas-Symonds:**

[\[114752\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, when she expects the Government's target of exporting £1 trillion in exports via the Made in the UK, Sold to the World plan will be reached.

**Andrew Bowie:**

Our ambition, set out in the Export Strategy in November 2021, is for the UK to achieve £1 trillion exports per year by 2030. The latest Office for National Statistics figures show that UK exports were £758.5bn in the 12 months ending October 2022.

Extrapolations of the Office for Budget Responsibility forecast suggest £1 trillion exports could be achieved by around 2035 without additional intervention. We recognise the speed by which the UK reaches this milestone will be impacted by macro-economic factors such as global demand and exchange rates. This has proven to be the case over the past year where we have experienced external shocks and a spike in inflation.

## JUSTICE

### ■ Anti-social Behaviour

**Steve Reed:**

[\[119120\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many individuals received (a) civil injunctions, (b) Community Protection Notices and (c) Criminal Behaviour Orders in each year since 2010.

**Steve Reed:**

[\[119121\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many (a) civil injunctions, (b) Community Protection Notices and (c) Criminal Behaviour Orders were issued for (a) drunken or threatening behaviour, (b) vandalism and graffiti and (c) playing loud music at night in each of the last 12 years.

**Mike Freer:**

The information requested in relation to civil injunctions could only be obtained at disproportionate cost. We do not record whether a defendant is an individual or a company nor the grounds for an injunction on our case management systems and

therefore this information could only be obtained by reviewing the individual case files.

The Ministry of Justice does not hold any information on Community Protection Notices which are not issued by courts.

I refer the honourable Member to the answer given on 01 December 2022 to Question [96637](#) regarding the number of Criminal Behaviour Orders issued at all courts in England and Wales on an all offence, all disposal basis for the years 2014 (first year of the legislation) to 2021.

The specific offences of (a) drunken or threatening behaviour, (b) vandalism and graffiti and (c) playing loud music at night cannot be separately identified from wider offences within the Court Proceedings Database held by the Ministry of Justice and can only be obtained at a disproportionate cost.

#### ■ Duncan Lewis Solicitors: Legal Aid Scheme

**Tim Loughton:** [\[117408\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how much public funds in the form legal aid were paid to Duncan Lewis Solicitors for immigration cases in each of the last 5 years.

**Mike Freer:**

The requested information can be found in the table below:

FINANCIAL YEAR	TOTAL COSTS, £
2017-18	9,224,878
2018-19	9,150,426
2019-20	8,091,003
2020-21	7,737,439
2021-22	8,055,383

Duncan Lewis is the largest Legal Aid provider in the UK currently operating across 23 offices.

The Legal Aid Agency publishes data regarding civil legal aid expenditure broken down by category of law and legal aid provider as part of its [official statistics](#).

Legal aid is only available in respect of immigration cases which are within the scope of legal aid as set out under Schedule 1, Part 1 of the [Legal Aid and Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012](#) and subject to the application of a strict financial eligibility and merits test.

## ■ Homicide: Sentencing

**Steve Reed:**

[\[117604\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many and what proportion of murderers failed to attend court for their sentencing in the latest period for which data is available.

**Steve Reed:**

[\[117605\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many and what proportion of rapists failed to attend court for their sentencing in the latest period for which data is available.

**Edward Argar:**

Information on the number of defendants who failed to attend court for their sentencing for PQ 117604 and 117605 is not centrally recorded in the Court Proceeding Database held by Ministry of Justice and to obtain it would involve a manual interrogation of court records which would result in a disproportionate cost to the department.

Prisoners who are ordered to attend their sentencing hearing and refuse to do so could be charged with a disciplinary offence resulting, for example, in forfeiture of privileges or additional days added to their sentence.

## ■ Powers of Attorney: Applications

**Liz Saville Roberts:**

[\[119216\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of enabling digital applications for a lasting power of attorney to be made through the medium of Welsh.

**Mike Freer:**

The Office of the Public Guardian's services cover both England and Wales and as such we provide paper forms to allow customers to apply for Lasting Powers of Attorney in Welsh.

The Powers of Attorney Bill currently progressing through Parliament will, for the first time, provide users with the option to digitally create a lasting power of attorney and to apply to register it. We intend this digital channel to be available in Welsh to ensure our Welsh customers benefit from this service. As part of ongoing work to design how the digital service will work, officials are engaging with key stakeholders in Wales to ensure that the needs of Welsh speaking users are met.

## ■ Prison and Probation Service: Travellers

**Stephen Morgan:**

[\[117913\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps HMPPS is taking to ensure its data collection methods accurately record the experiences of people from Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller backgrounds.

**Damian Hinds:**

Ethnicity data is collected locally upon a prisoner's initial reception into prison.

We understand that not everyone will be comfortable or confident about declaring their ethnicity at the point of entry into a prison: His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) has therefore developed a Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) strategy to improve data collection, experiences and outcomes for GRT people in prison.

## ■ Prisoners' Transfers: Albania

**Tim Loughton:**

[\[117405\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many Albanian nationals have voluntarily been transferred from UK prisons to detention in Albania in the last year.

**Damian Hinds:**

More than 10,000 foreign national offenders have been returned to their home countries in the last three years.

The Prisoner Transfer Agreement with Albania. This agreement came into force in May 2022. We are working closely with our counterparts in Albania to begin transferring prisoners – with or without the offender's consent – as soon as possible, as outlined in our new bilateral prisoner transfer agreement.

Justice is a devolved matter in both Scotland and Northern Ireland. The Scottish Prison Service (SPS), an agency of the Scottish Government, operates Scottish prisons. Similarly, the Northern Ireland Prison Service is responsible for the management of prisons in Northern Ireland. The MoJ therefore does not hold this information in relation to prisoners in Scottish or Northern Irish prisons.

## ■ Prisoners: Travellers

**Stephen Morgan:**

[\[117915\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his policies of the report by the Traveller Movement entitled *Disrupting the School to Prison Pipeline*, published on 2 August 2022; and if he will take steps to implement the recommendations of that report.

**Damian Hinds:**

The Ministry of Justice acknowledges the over-representation in the youth justice system of young people from the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities and is working closely with the Youth Justice Board and other government partners to address this. This government is supporting those at risk of offending at the earliest opportunity by working with families and in schools to prevent the escalation of offending behaviour and further interaction with the justice system.

Current guidance for youth offending teams sets out expectations for ensuring that pre-sentence reports are sufficiently detailed to give sentencers a full picture of the child's background, including for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children. We are giving frontline youth justice services the tools and data to understand the needs of ethnic minority children and are working to make sure alternatives to custody are used to divert children from all backgrounds away from the youth justice estate, where this is

appropriate, including through Out of Court Disposals. For children who are already in the justice system, the Youth Custody Service (YCS) are putting greater emphasis on a flexible and individually bespoke approach to vocational training and technology, to improve their employment prospects and reduce reoffending.

#### ■ Prisons: Broadband

**Ellie Reeves:**

[\[119184\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what progress his Department has made on installing broadband on the prison estate.

**Damian Hinds:**

We are working to ensure prisons have appropriate digital infrastructure access to secure transactional services and education platforms.

Services were in place in 15 establishments in the male, female and youth estate, by the end of October 2022.

#### ■ Prisons: Staff

**Ellie Reeves:**

[\[119181\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he has made of (a) the time taken by and (b) total cost of prison staff transferring prisoners to court.

**Damian Hinds:**

The time taken to escort prisoners to court is dependent on the distance to be travelled. The Prison Service aims, wherever possible, to hold prisoners in establishments that are close to the court hearing the case.

The total cost of transferring prisoners to court is included in the overall contract costs of the Prisoner Escort Custody Service. Staffing costs form part of the total contract costs and are not separately identified.

#### ■ Remote Hearings

**Ellie Reeves:**

[\[119183\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the ability for vulnerable (a) prisoners and (b) witnesses to take part in remote hearings effectively.

**Mike Freer:**

At the start of the pandemic HMCTS considered its public sector equality duty and completed an Equality Impact Assessment for remote participation in hearings. This material has been updated throughout design and implementation. Reasonable adjustment guidance and training has been developed for staff to assist users in effectively participating in remote hearings. Remote participation is subject to judicial discretion.

## ■ Victims' Commissioner

**Steve Reed:**

**[112090]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what meetings he held with Dame Vera Baird during her tenure as Victims Commissioner.

**Edward Argar:**

The Deputy Prime Minister engaged with Dame Vera through regular correspondence and formally met with her twice during her tenure. Dame Vera also met with the relevant Parliamentary under Secretary of State responsible for victims on at least 7 separate occasions when the Deputy Prime Minister was Secretary of State for Justice. As Victims' Commissioner, Dame Vera was a member of the Victim and Witness Sector Engagement Group, a monthly government forum regularly attended by Ministers that brings together criminal justice agencies, commissioners and the victims' sector on key policies affecting victims and witnesses. The Deputy Prime Minister attended this forum twice in addition to his one-to-one meetings with Dame Vera.

The Deputy Prime Minister invited Dame Vera to reapply for her role and offered her a contract extension until the end of 2022 which she declined. A campaign to recruit a new Victims' Commissioner is underway, and we expect to identify the next Commissioner by the spring. Officials and Ministers engage with the victims' sector on a regular basis, and we will continue to ensure that the voices of victims and witnesses are heard whilst appointment of the next Victims' Commissioner is made.

## ■ Young Offenders: Ethnic Groups

**Stephen Morgan:**

**[117920]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether his Department has put support mechanisms in place to help support young people from ethnic minorities to transition to the adult prison estate.

**Damian Hinds:**

The Transition of Young People from the Children and Young People Secure Estate to Adult Custody Policy Framework was published in April 2022.

The Framework provides that individual circumstances and needs, including protected characteristics such as ethnicity, will be taken into account when young people in custody transition into the adult prison estate.

The framework is available on gov.uk here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transition-of-young-people-from-the-children-and-young-people-secure-estate-to-adult-custody-policy-framework>.

**LEADER OF THE HOUSE**■ **Members: ICT****Catherine West:**[\[119174\]](#)

To ask the Leader of the House, whether she has had discussions with (a) the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, (b) the Speaker and (c) relevant security agencies on the potential security implications of the use of TikTok on Parliamentary-supplied devices.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

I have regular discussions with Ministerial colleagues and the Speaker, on a range of matters. The Government does not publicly comment on issues relating to the security services. More broadly, Parliament's information protocol for all social media includes that it should not be used for sharing sensitive information. The Parliamentary Digital Service regularly engages with the National Cyber Security Centre and briefs the Speakers of both Houses. I have also had meetings with the National Cyber Security Centre and the Parliamentary Security Department, including the Members' Security Support Service. Although there is some training and briefing available for Members and staff on cyber security, I have commissioned new support.

**LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES**■ **Buildings: Safety****Daisy Cooper:**[\[114777\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, pursuant to the Answer of 11 November to Question 78844, what steps his Department has taken to (a) signpost people to and (b) raise awareness of the advice notes and frequently asked questions guidance on leaseholder deeds of certificate.

**Lucy Frazer:**

Alongside the commencement of the leaseholder protections provisions, we publicised the new provisions and the available guidance across a range of platforms. Following commencement, we have continued to engage with leaseholder groups, freeholders, landlords and others, including lenders, and updated the guidance in light of those conversations to ensure it reflects frequently asked questions, including on the leaseholder deed of certificate. We have also worked with Citizens Advice and LEASE to ensure they are able to offer guidance and advice that is clear and up to date.

■ **Elections: Proof of Identity****Charlotte Nichols:**[\[114890\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether a person who has to temporarily surrender their driving license to DVLA on health grounds

will be provided with alternative documentation to use as ID at an election during that period.

**Lee Rowley:**

A wide range of identification documents will be accepted at polling stations. A full list of acceptable identification can be found [here](#).

**Grahame Morris:**

**[118989]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, when the Voter Authority Certificate application form will be available online.

**Lee Rowley:**

Electors will be able to apply online for a Voter Authority Certificate from Monday 16 January 2023. A paper form will also be available to download, or direct from Electoral Registration Officers. Further information about applying for a Voter Authority Certificate can be found [here](#).

■ **High Rise Flats and Public Buildings: Repairs and Maintenance**

**Kenny MacAskil:**

**[119132]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will take steps to encourage the prioritisation of retrofitting over demolition and rebuilding for (a) public buildings, (b) high-rise flats and (c) other public housing.

**Lucy Frazer:**

It is important to find the right balance between demolition and retrofitting of buildings to enable sustainable development.

We believe that consideration of the prioritisation allotted to retrofit compared to demolition is best addressed through a holistic review of national planning policy as part of our programme of changes to the planning system. We have also committed to consulting this year on our approach to measurement and reduction of embodied carbon in new buildings.

Planning is a devolved power, so it is up to each individual Administration to decide how they wish to develop policy in these areas.

■ **Members: Correspondence**

**John Penrose:**

**[114619]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, when he plans to reply to the letters from the hon. Member for Weston-super-Mare of 11 October and 21 November 2022 on behalf of his constituent, Mr Alan Brown, regarding solar panels.

**Lee Rowley:**

I apologise for the delay in responding to my My Hon. Friend's letters. The Department attaches great importance to the effective and timely handling of correspondence from Honourable Members. A response was issued to my Hon. Friend on the 6 January 2023.



## ■ Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017

**Stella Creasy:**

[\[119051\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the Retained EU Law Bill, whether he plans to (a) retain, (b) revoke or (c) replace the Town and Country Planning (Environmental) Regulations 2017.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The government is taking powers in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill to introduce a new framework of environmental assessment to replace the EU systems of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

## NORTHERN IRELAND

### ■ Police Service of Northern Ireland: Finance

**John Spellar:**

[\[117457\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how much annual funding the Government provides to Police Service Northern Ireland.

**Mr Steve Baker:**

Policing is a devolved matter in Northern Ireland and the PSNI's main budget is allocated by the Department of Justice from the Northern Ireland block grant.

The recent Budget that the Secretary of State set for Northern Ireland provides the Northern Ireland Department of Justice with a 3.1% uplift on its 2021-2022 budget with a total allocation of £1.18 billion.

In addition to the block grant, the UK Government provides the Police Service of Northern Ireland with the additional security funding it needs to ensure that it has the resource to tackle the SUBSTANTIAL threat from Northern Ireland-related terrorism. This additional security funding ensures PSNI's ability to tackle the terrorist threat while ensuring day-to-day policing is not compromised.

The UK Government contribution for the financial year 22/23 will be £32 million. This is the same as what has been provided each year since 2015/16. This continued level of Additional Security Funding for the PSNI from the UKG has been confirmed through to 2024/25.

## SCOTLAND

### ■ Scotland Office: Remote Working

**Dr Matthew Offord:**

[\[118943\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what proportion of his Department's employees work from home at least one day a week.

**Mr Alister Jack:**

The Scotland Office does not employ staff directly. All staff that join do so on an assignment, loan or secondment from other Government bodies, principally the Scottish Government and the Ministry of Justice, who remain the employers. Staff assigned to the Scotland Office adhere to the policies of their parent department including policies on flexible working. All staff have the opportunity to work away from the office at least one day a week where this aligns with the business needs of the Scotland Office.

The Scotland Office is committed to fully utilising the benefits of flexible working while ensuring that we use our buildings effectively and maximise the advantages of in-person collaboration. Occupancy data for our London office is published weekly on [Gov.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

It should be noted that over the past two years, the Civil Service as a whole has had to work in a more agile way while still delivering essential public services.

Before the pandemic, most departments worked on a basis of a ratio of desks to staff and that remains the case – so hybrid working arrangements are not new. No office will operate at 100% occupancy given there will always be a number of reasons why staff may be out of the office, for example people being on annual leave, attending meetings off-site or external visits.

**TRANSPORT****■ Bus Services****Charlotte Nichols:****[117823]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much funding his Department provided to bus services in England in 2022.

**Mr Richard Holden:**

The Department for Transport has provided nearly £2 billion in emergency and recovery funding since March 2020 to bus operators and local transport authorities in England outside London to support services and mitigate the impacts of the pandemic. £953.4 million of this funding was provided across FY21/22 and FY22/23.

In addition to this recovery funding, we provide £42 million annually through the Bus Service Operator Grant (BSOG) directly to LTAs to subsidise socially necessary bus services. We also provide over £200 million directly to bus operators every year through BSOG to help keep fares down and maintain a larger network than would otherwise be possible.

Transport in London has different funding arrangements and is devolved to the Mayor of London and it is up to him to decide how to best invest in London's bus network. The TfL settlement of 30th August 2022 supports almost £3.6 billion worth of projects to secure the long-term future of London's transport network.

## ■ **Bus Services: Kingston upon Hull North**

**Dame Diana Johnson:**

[\[117514\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he plans to take steps to improve bus services in Kingston upon Hull North constituency.

**Mr Richard Holden:**

Hull City Council have been allocated funding totalling £416,388, to strengthen their in-house capacity to help deliver their Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). They will be able to access practical assistance under the planned new Bus Centre of Excellence. The BSIP covers Kingston upon Hull North constituency.

Hull City Council has been recently allocated emergency and recovery funding of around £130,000, to help the bus sector mitigate the impacts of the pandemic, in addition to almost £135,000 annually, to support socially necessary bus services.

## ■ **Buses: Electric Vehicles**

**Kerry McCarthy:**

[\[118846\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the proportion of Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas funding that will be spent on vehicle charging infrastructure.

**Jesse Norman:**

As part of the Zero Emission Bus Regional Area (ZEBRA) scheme, local authorities were able to bid for:

- 75% of the cost difference between a diesel bus and an equivalent zero emission bus, either battery electric or Hydrogen Fuel Cell buses.
- 75% of the total costs of infrastructure, either electric vehicle charging infrastructure or hydrogen refuelling infrastructure.

As the costs of zero emission buses and supporting infrastructure will vary between projects, the proportion of grant funding spent on supporting infrastructure varies between projects.

As a proportion of the total grant funding awarded for the entire scheme, approximately 19% of the costs relate to infrastructure, including both electric vehicle charging and hydrogen refueling infrastructure.

## ■ **Electric Scooters: Pedestrian Areas**

**Stephen Doughty:**

[\[119150\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department plans to take steps to bring forward further regulations to help tackle the dangerous use of e-scooters in (a) pedestrianised areas and (b) on pavements.

**Jesse Norman:**

The use of e-scooters in pedestrianised areas and on the pavement is illegal under current legislation, and the Government has no plans to change this. As the

Department develops regulations for e-scooters, it is determined to protect vulnerable road users by making users accountable for their actions and improving compliance with the rules. This work is informed by lessons learnt from trials, where measures have been put in place to improve rider training and require that e-scooters have a bell or a horn so that they are audible.

Enforcement is a matter for the police. The Department for Transport has been in regular contact with the National Police Chiefs' Council, who are developing a national strategy for enforcing the law around e-scooters to encourage a uniform approach to the issue. It will consult before any new arrangements come into force, and all interested parties will have a chance to shape the new regime.

### ■ **Electric Vehicles: Kingston upon Hull North**

**Dame Diana Johnson:**

[\[117516\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to increase the use of electric transport in Kingston upon Hull.

**Jesse Norman:**

Overall, the Government has invested over £2 billion to support the transition to zero emission vehicles. This funding has largely gone to reduce barriers to adoption, including offsetting higher upfront costs, and to accelerate the rollout of chargepoint infrastructure.

In Kingston upon Hull, 411 charging devices have been installed to date through the Department's Electric Vehicle Homecharge Scheme, and 184 sockets through its Workplace Charging Scheme.

Under the Department's On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) grant, funding is available to all UK local authorities to provide public chargepoints for their residents without access to private parking. The Department encourages Hull City Council to make use of the scheme and apply for funding.

### ■ **Government Departments: Printing Machinery**

**Stephen Doughty:**

[\[119149\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many printers the Government (a) owns and (b) has access to for the production of (i) biometric residency permits and (ii) driving licences.

**Mr Richard Holden:**

The Government owns and has access to six laser engraving machines that can be used for printing biometric residency permits and driving licences.

### ■ **Public Transport: Industrial Disputes**

**Wera Hobhouse:**

[\[117784\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much revenue risk the Government has incurred from strike action by the transport unions since 1 January 2022; and what

estimate he has made of the revenue risk the Government has incurred on the strike dates of (a) 24-27 December 2022, (b) 3-4 January 2023 and (c) 6-7 January 2023.

**Huw Merriman:**

When the pandemic started Government put in place emergency agreements with operators to mitigate the financial impacts resulting from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and ensure that rail services could continue to operate. These agreements transferred most financial risk to Government.

Strikes can cause revenue losses up to £25 million on typical weekdays and £15 million on typical weekends, though losses depend on factors such as the nature of industrial action and unions involved.

■ **Public Transport: Strikes**

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[118928\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has had recent discussions with Transport for London on (a) train, (b) rail and (c) bus strikes.

**Mr Richard Holden:**

Transport in London is devolved and is the responsibility of the Mayor of London and Transport for London (TfL), this includes action to mitigate TfL strikes. However, the Secretary of State for Transport is regularly updated on impacts of industrial action on passengers of the London Underground, rail and bus services.

■ **Railways: Standards**

**Sir Julian Lewis:**

[\[119256\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what his Department's policy is on whether survey results on proposed passenger service reinstatement should be presented (a) on an overall basis for the entire area and (b) broken down according to subdivisions of the area through which the reinstated service would operate; and for what reason Network Rail is refusing to release the results of the survey which are specific to the Marchwood Ward of New Forest District Council.

**Huw Merriman:**

Network Rail undertook a public consultation during the summer of 2022 as part of its assessment of the case for reopening the Waterside line as part of the Restoring Your Railway initiative. I understand that publication of detailed responses for the Marchwood Ward could place Network Rail in breach of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

■ **Roads: Accidents**

**Stephanie Peacock:**

[\[119164\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make an estimate of the number of speed-related traffic accidents in each month in 2022.

**Mr Richard Holden:**

Statistics on road collisions reported to the police for 2022 are scheduled for publication in September 2023.

■ **Roads: Freight****Emma Hardy:**[\[117874\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has had discussions with police forces in England on the impact of abnormal load movement restrictions on the road haulage industry.

**Mr Richard Holden:**

My Department is aware of concerns including those raised by an important industry body, the Heavy Transport Association (HTA), regarding changes to movement restrictions placed on abnormal load vehicles. Local police forces have the power to put in place restrictions on the movement of abnormal loads. My Department has passed on the concerns of the HTA to the National Police Chiefs Council, which has confirmed that this is an operational matter for local police forces. Therefore, my officials have advised the HTA that they should liaise directly with the relevant police forces on the matter.

■ **Transport: Levelling Up Fund****Samantha Dixon:**[\[117904\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, on what date he expects to announce the outcome of bids to the second round of the UK Levelling Up Fund for transport-related investments.

**Mr Richard Holden:**

We aim to announce the results of the second round by the end of January, which will see much needed investment awarded to level up communities across the UK.

**TREASURY**■ **Arms Trade: Export Controls****Ruth Cadbury:**[\[117615\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many fines were issued for breaches of the UK's arms export control in 2022; and if he will publish a breakdown of the (a) amount and (b) date of each fine issued for that purpose in that period.

**Victoria Atkins:**

HMRC's enforcement outcomes will be published in the UK Strategic Export Controls Annual Report 2022. This will be available on the GOV.UK website. This will include collated Compound Settlement details for this period.

HMRC publicises details of Compound Settlements throughout the year. These details are released through Department for International Trade Notices to Exporters.

HMRC has issued 18 Compound Settlements from January to October 2022 for breaches of the UK arms export regime. The details for each of those settlements are within each of the following links:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/notice-to-exporters-202212-uk-exporters-fined-for-unlicensed-strategic-exports/note-202212-uk-exporters-fined-for-unlicensed-strategic-exports>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/notice-to-exporters-202231-uk-exporters-issued-compound-settlements-for-unlicensed-strategic-exports/note-202231-uk-exporters-issued-compound-settlements-for-unlicensed-strategic-exports>

Details of compound settlements for November and December 2022 are due to be released in the next few weeks, the details of which will be published at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/notices-to-exporters#notices-to-exporters-2023>

## ■ Disguised Remuneration Loan Charge Review

**Tim Loughton:**

**[114508]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people who have requested a refund under the changes resulting from the Morse Review have been refunded by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.

**Victoria Atkins:**

Following Lord Morse's Independent Loan Charge Review in 2019, HMRC established the Disguised Remuneration (DR) Repayment Scheme 2020 to repay voluntary payments that taxpayers had agreed to make as part of settlements concluded before changes were made to the scope of the Loan Charge. Individuals and employers had until 30 September 2021 to apply to HMRC for a refund or waiver.

HMRC repays amounts that were paid in DR scheme settlements, and/or waives amounts of instalments due that have not yet been paid if certain conditions are met.

By the end of November 2022, HMRC had processed approximately 2400 applications, of which approximately 1375 had received either a repayment, a waiver, or both. Over 1000 of the applications processed at that date were either invalid or ineligible.

## ■ Housing: Older People

**Bob Blackman:**

**[114621]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of exempting operators of Integrated Retirement Communities from liability for Stamp Duty Land Tax when buying back leases as part of the sale of a units to a new resident.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The Government has recently been made aware of this proposal for a Stamp Duty Land Tax relief. All taxes are kept under review.

**■ Large Goods Vehicles: Customs****Ruth Cadbury:**[\[119144\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many vehicles were unable to use the Goods Vehicle Management System due to technical difficulties with the system on Monday 2 January 2023.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The disruption to the Goods Vehicle Movement Service only affected certain movements with customs declarations that had been made on 1 or 2 January 2023. HMRC worked with carriers and traders affected by the disruption and enabled vehicles to move across the border.

**Ruth Cadbury:**[\[119145\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate his Department has made of how long the Goods Vehicle Management System was not operating in January 2023.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The disruption to the Goods Vehicle Movement Service only affected certain movements with customs declarations that had been made on 1 or 2 January 2023. HMRC worked with carriers and traders affected by the disruption and enabled vehicles to move across the border.

**■ Local Government Finance: South Tyneside****Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:**[\[119061\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much money have South Tyneside Council returned to his Department from Government Grants allocated over the past two years as of 6 January 2023.

**John Glen:**

Local authorities receive a wide range of grants from multiple government departments to reflect their broad responsibilities.

HM Treasury does not maintain a central record of grant funding provided to individual local authorities. Information on specific grants, including where relevant the amount returned, is held by the department that is responsible for administering the grant.



## WORK AND PENSIONS

### ■ Employment Schemes: Disability

**Jonathan Ashworth:**

[\[119160\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people have participated in the Local Supported Employment programme in each of the last five years.

**Tom Pursglove:**

The proof of concept for Local Supported Employment (LSE) went live in November 2017, and ran for 18 months in nine local authorities. The last date of provision was 31 May 2019 and around 550 people participated.

The next stage of LSE began in November 2022, in 23 local authority areas, running until March 2025. The provision will support around 2000 people over the service delivery period.

### ■ Job Centres: Training

**Sir Stephen Timms:**

[\[118801\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether work coaches receive disability awareness training in relation to (a) service users and (b) colleagues.

**Tom Pursglove:**

DWP Work Coaches undergo comprehensive learning to support customers with additional or complex needs, particularly disabilities and they continue to build on this in the workplace through accessing point of need learning products.

The learning provides Work Coaches with the knowledge and skills to enable them to:

- treat each claimant as an individual;
- to be aware and support claimants with their disability and the impacts of their condition;
- help overcome any barriers; and
- support them into moving closer to the working environment.

Learning includes DWP Fundamental Learning Journey which contains a number of training courses that cover disability awareness:

- Becoming Disability Confident - seeing past the misconceptions that can exist around disabilities and being able to have open, honest and well-informed conversations with disabled colleagues in order to create, or contribute to, an inclusive work environment in which disabled colleagues can thrive;
- Helping customers who need additional support – working with customers who need additional support either because they are in a vulnerable situation, are disabled, or suggest suicide or self-harm, requires additional customer service skills; and

- Vulnerable Customers and Complex Needs.

Learning also includes technical learning which enables Work Coaches to determine what is required and never assume to know and to cultivate effective communication skills, including the sensitive use of questions, to reach joint decisions with the claimant.

DWP also provides the Work Coach with an understanding of assisted digital, and how they can effectively coach claimants who find using digital services a challenge.

Work Coaches are also signposted to tools, guidance support and websites to effectively use resources from both internal and external sites. This ensures that they access the most up to date advice and expertise on a particular health condition.

## ■ Jobcentres

**Jonathan Ashworth:** [119152]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people have accessed a mid-life MOT at a Jobcentre in the last year.

**Guy Opperman:**

Towards the end of 2022 Mid-life MOTs were tested in four Jobcentre sites. The feedback from these sessions have helped shape the content that will be included in the full rollout across Jobcentres in Great Britain which is expected to take place in early 2023.

## ■ Pension Wise

**Jonathan Ashworth:** [119156]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many appointments for the Pension Wise service have been conducted in the each of the last 5 years.

**Laura Trott:**

Data on the number of individuals attending Pension Wise appointments can be found here: [MoneyHelper pension take up dashboard | The Money and Pensions Service](#).

## ■ Personal Independence Payment

**Andrew Bridgen:** [118968]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many applications for Personal Independence Payments were made in each region in each month of the last five years.

**Tom Pursglove:**

Data on Personal Independence Payment (PIP) applications can be found on [Stat-Xplore](#). In particular, the 'PIP Registrations' dataset includes the number of applications by month, which can be broken down by region. Regions within England and Wales can be found under 'Geography', within the 'DWP policy ownership' category. Data is currently published up to, and including, October 2022.

You can log in, or access Stat-Xplore as a guest user, which still gives instant access to the main functions, and, if needed, you can access [guidance](#) on how to extract the information required.

## ■ Sick Leave: Mental Health

**Rosie Duffield:**

[\[119116\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of bringing forward legislative proposals to require companies to provide information on levels of sickness due to (a) stress and (b) other mental health issues.

**Tom Pursglove:**

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has no current plans for legislation regarding sickness reporting, but will keep this under review. DWP already provides a voluntary reporting framework for employers (voluntary reporting on disability mental health and wellbeing, (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/voluntary-reporting-on-disability-mental-health-and-wellbeing>)) and we encourage transparency in this space.

DWP works closely with Mind, the Health and Safety Executive and the business-led Mental Health at Work Leadership Council to review guidance and practice for employers on mental health in the workplace.

## ■ Social Security Benefits: Appeals

**Kate Osamor:**

[\[117738\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 20 December 2022 to Question 110773 on Social Security Benefits: Appeals, how many appeals were determined by the First Tier Tribunal; and how many determinations upheld his Department's decision.

**Tom Pursglove:**

Of the 175 RRT cases lodged under the appeals process quoted in PQ110773, 42 were determined by the First tier Tribunal. Of these, 19 upheld the department's decision either partially (2) or fully (17).

## ■ Training

**Jonathan Ashworth:**

[\[119158\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people have participated in training delivered by Group Work in each of the last five years.

**Tom Pursglove:**

A randomised control trial of Group Work was conducted between January 2017 and March 2018. Across the trial period, 2,596 claimants attended the course.

**Jonathan Ashworth:**

**[119159]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much his Department has spent on the Group Work training course in each of the last 5 years.

**Tom Pursglove:**

Between January 2017 and March 2018, the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department of Health and Social Care Joint Work and Health Unit conducted a Randomised Control Trial of Group Work. The costs of the trial can be found here:

[Summary: An evaluation of the Group Work/JOBS II evaluation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/674442/Summary_An_evaluation_of_the_Group_Work_JOBS_II_evaluation_-_GOV.UK.pdf).

The total costs of Group Work were estimated at £3.3 million, of which £1.7 million was spent on delivering the intervention and £1.6 million on running the trial and evaluation.

## ■ Universal Credit: Deductions

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[117703]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many households with one or more claimants of Universal Credit who were (a) assessed to have limited capability for work and (b) in receipt of a disabled child element had a deduction made to their standard allowance in (i) York and (ii) the UK in each of the last 12 months.

**Tom Pursglove:**

The requested information is provided in the attached spreadsheet.

**Attachments:**

1. Attachment [\[117703 Table 1.xlsx\]](#)

## WRITTEN STATEMENTS

### BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

#### ■ Energy Bills Support Scheme Contingent Liability Notification

**Minister of State (Minister for Energy and Climate) (Graham Stuart):**

**[[HCWS493](#)]**

Today, I have laid a Departmental Minute which describes a contingent liability undertaken by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to support citizens of Northern Ireland with their energy costs this winter, through the Energy Bills Support Scheme and Alternative Fuel Payment in Northern Ireland (EBSS AFP NI).

It is normal practice, when a Government Department proposes to undertake a contingent liability in excess of £300,000 for which there is no specific statutory authority, for the Minister concerned to present a Departmental Minute to Parliament giving particulars of the liability created and explaining the circumstances; and to refrain from incurring the liability until 14 parliamentary sitting days after the issue of the statement, except in cases of special urgency. A letter has been sent to the Public Accounts Committee and BEIS Select Committee to explain the need behind this retrospective notification.

The Energy Bills Support Scheme and Alternative Fuel Payment in Northern Ireland (EBSS AFP NI) is being delivered through the six domestic electricity suppliers operating in NI. Suppliers have indicated they will engage with Post Office for voucher production and delivery and for Post Office to fulfil its role in the delivery of the scheme, a contract is required between it and each of the NI electricity suppliers.

The Departmental Minute sets out details of the new liability undertaken by BEIS. The liability provides Post Office with a letter of comfort, enabling the removal or amendment of some of the company's standard contract terms in this instance. This has enabled the Department to progress with scheme delivery to provide much needed support with energy bills to the people of Northern Ireland.

Our assessment of the expected value of the total liability is £3.125m, with the immediate beneficiaries being Post Office (for which the Secretary of State is the sole shareholder) and the relevant NI electricity suppliers. If the liability is called, provision for any payment will be sought through the normal Supply procedure. There is no sunset clause built into the letter of comfort, as it is tightly linked to the delivery of the specific scheme, and it is our expectation that the likelihood of the liability being called will reduce significantly following the completion of the end of scheme audit in quarter 3 of 2023-24.

HM Treasury has approved the proposal. A full departmental Minute has been laid in the House of Commons providing more detail on this contingent liability.

**FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE****■ Hong Kong Six-monthly Report**

**Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs (James Cleverly):** [\[HCWS495\]](#)

The latest Six-monthly Report on the implementation of the Sino-British Joint Declaration on Hong Kong was published today, and is attached. It covers the period from 1 January to 30 June 2022. The report has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses. A copy is also available on the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office website [LINK](#). I commend the report to the House.

**Attachments:**

1. Hong Kong Six-monthly Report [[Six-monthly report on Hong Kong January to June 2022.pdf](#)]

**■ UK Government position on Venezuela**

**Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Americas and Caribbean) (David Rutley):** [\[HCWS496\]](#)

On 30 December 2022 the 2015 National Assembly of Venezuela democratically voted to disband the interim Government and the position of constitutional interim President held by Juan Guaidó, with effect from 5 January 2023.

We respect the result of this vote. We continue to consider the National Assembly elected in 2015 as the last democratically elected National Assembly in Venezuela, and take note of the Assembly's vote to extend its mandate for another year.

It remains the UK Government's position that the 2018 presidential election was not held in accordance with international democratic standards. The UK continues not to accept the legitimacy of the administration put in place by Nicolás Maduro.

We will continue to work with our international partners to encourage all parties concerned to do everything necessary to bring about a return to democracy in Venezuela and to hold free, fair presidential elections in 2024, in accordance with international democratic standards. The restoration of democratic institutions and practices in Venezuela is essential and will help bring an end to the multiple crises afflicting the Venezuelan people.

**HOME OFFICE****■ The Tier 1 (Investor) route: Review of operation between 30 June 2008 and 6 April 2015**

**The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Suella Braverman):**  
[\[HCWS492\]](#)

In March 2018, following the Salisbury poisonings, the then Home Secretary Amber Rudd committed to a review of individuals who had entered the UK under the Tier 1 (Investor) immigration route, prior to reforms made in 2015.

I am now providing here the government's final response summarising the findings of that review.

The Tier 1 (Investor) route had allowed individuals (primarily non-EEA nationals) investing in the UK to enter, and eventually settle in, the UK. It was launched in 2008 and at that time required applicants to be able to demonstrate they had access to £1 million of available funds to invest in UK government bonds and shares or loan funds to UK companies. The UK had operated some form of investor visa programme for high-net-worth personal investment since 1994. The Tier 1 (Investor) visa route was ultimately closed on 17th February 2022.

I can confirm that the Home Office considered the cases of the 6,312 Tier 1 (Investor) migrants and Tier 1 (Investor) adult dependants who obtained leave between the launch of the route on 30 June 2008, and the introduction on 6 April 2015 of a requirement to open a regulated UK bank account before applying for a visa under the route. Each case was reviewed for potential links to criminality or other risk factors. Officials also considered whether there were wider risks presented in the design and implementation of the route at that time, and the overall economic benefit of the route.

The review of cases identified a small minority of individuals connected to the Tier 1 (Investor) visa route that were potentially at high risk of having obtained wealth through corruption or other illicit financial activity, and/or being engaged in serious and organised crime. I should stress that the work carried out only implies that a particular individual potentially poses a risk of having connections to criminality; it does not mean guilt has been proven. UK law enforcement have access to this data and are taking action as appropriate under their operational remits. Information on all high-risk individuals has been discussed with the Home Office's independent operational partners and a range of actions has and is being considered including, where appropriate, immigration action. Given the importance of ensuring the independence of the law enforcement process I am unable to say more on the operationally sensitive work being taken forward in this area. Whilst unable to comment specifically due to operational sensitivity of work - as an example of the range of actions we are taking I can say that we have already sanctioned 10 oligarchs who had previously used this route as part of our extensive response to Russian aggression in the Ukraine.

The Home Office is robust in refusing leave where this is appropriate. During the operation of the Tier 1 (Investor) visa programme the route has had a refusal rate for

main applicants and their dependents of 7.9% for Entry Clearance applications, 4% for Leave to Remain applications, for main applicants seeking Indefinite Leave to remain (settlement) the refusal rate is 2.2%[1].

The lessons learned from this review, and from ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the Tier 1 (Investor) route and the impact of reforms made between 2014 and 2019, formed a significant part of evidence base on which the government made its decision to ultimately close the route on the 17th February 2022. The Home Office has found that there are inherent difficulties in an investment-based immigration route based on passive wealth, both in terms of security and economic value. I am determined this government will ensure such mistakes are not repeated.

In that spirit, I am setting out in more detail broader systemic findings from the review:

- The route attracted a disproportionate number of applicants from the countries identified in the UK's National Risk Assessment of money laundering and terrorist financing 2020 as particularly relevant to the cross-border money laundering risks faced and posed by the UK.
- The review did not find evidence of a systemic failure across financial institutions to carry out appropriate Customer Due Diligence checks on Tier 1 (Investor) visa applicants in the period in question. However, there was evidence of high-risk Tier 1 (Investor) applicants seeking out and exploiting financial institutions that had the weakest Customer Due Diligence controls. In a number of instances, financial institutions associated with multiple high-risk migrants at the time have since been issued significant fines by the Financial Conduct Authority. This has been due to the firms' handling of Customer Due Diligence for high-risk clients in general rather than specifically for Tier 1 (Investor) visa applicants.
- The review found that the particular risks presented by the Tier 1 (Investor) route compared with other visa routes meant that the immigration system was not as well equipped to respond. UK Visas and Immigration are trained immigration caseworkers, but the risks posed by this route would require specialist expertise in detecting financial criminality. Cases linked to historical allegations of corruption or financial crime are complex, may be based on suspicion or allegations only, and not evidenced by criminal enforcement action in the country of origin. Complex financial crimes such as corruption and embezzlement can also remain undetected for significant periods of time.

I recognise that the UK's openness to global business carries risks that malign actors will take advantage of our systems to pursue corrupt and criminal ends. We must ensure that kleptocracies such as Russia are not able to act with impunity overseas. That is why the UK has taken strong action since the start of the war, and why we will continue to do so in the years to come. We have swiftly implemented the strongest set of economic sanctions ever imposed against a G20 country. This stands at 1,200 individuals and 120 entities linked to the Russian state. In total, we have frozen over 18 billion pounds in Russian assets since the war began.



We have established a new Combatting Kleptocracy Cell in the National Crime Agency to investigate criminal sanctions evasion and high-end money laundering. And we have brought forward new and robust legislation to prevent corrupt elites abusing our open economy, including establishing a new, open register for overseas entities owning property in the UK.

The Government is clear that any future visa route to facilitate investment-based migration must not offer entry solely on the basis of the applicant's personal wealth. We are continuing to consider options to bring forward alternative provisions to support investment-based migration benefiting the UK economy on a fundamentally different model within the Innovator visa programme, placing more emphasis on the applicant's track record as an investor in innovative business and an assessment of their plans to actively engage in such activity in the UK. We will ensure any new provisions are brought forward carefully.

[1] Entry Clearance refusal rate 30th June 2008 to Q3 main applicants and dependents

Refusal rate for Tier 1 (Investor) Leave to Remain from 30th June 2008-2020

Settlement for main applicants (Indefinite Leave to Remain) Apr 2013-09 December 2022

## TRANSPORT

### ■ Dartford-Thurrock Crossing annual accounts 2021 to 2022

**Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport (Mr Richard Holden):**  
[\[HCWS494\]](#)

Under regulation 3(1)(d) of the Trunk Road Charging Schemes (Bridges and Tunnels) (Keeping of Accounts) (England) Regulations 2003, annual accounts for the Dartford – Thurrock Crossing Charging Scheme are published today. The accounts relate to financial year 2021-2022 and will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.