



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 27 January 2023 and the information is correct at the time of publication (03:30 P.M., 27 January 2023). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Amazon Web Services

Chi Onwurah:

[\[127761\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether her Department has made a recent estimate of the percentage share that Amazon Web Service holds of the market in which it operates; and if she will make an assessment of the implications for her policies of the (a) size and (b) openness to competition of the the market in which that company operates.

Paul Scully:

It is for the CMA as the UK's independent competition authority to investigate specific markets and the behaviour of specific companies.

As part of the Autumn Statement last year, the Chancellor announced the government will legislate in this Parliamentary session for a new pro-competition regime for digital markets. The Digital Markets Unit (DMU), within the CMA, will oversee and enforce the new regime.

The new regime will address the far-reaching power of the most powerful tech firms. While new technologies are delivering huge value to consumers and businesses, a small number of firms exert immense control across strategically critical services online. The new tools will deliver fast, highly targeted action to make markets more contestable and level the playing field for UK tech firms.

■ Arts and Cultural Heritage: Mental Health

Duncan Baker:

[\[903269\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will make an assessment with Cabinet colleagues of the contribution of heritage and arts sites to wellbeing and mental health.

Stuart Andrew:

Heritage and the arts have an important role to play in boosting people's health and wellbeing – a point which has been underlined by our experience during, and since, the COVID-19 pandemic. DCMS and our arm's-length bodies, including Arts Council England and Historic England, play an important role in the Government's work to improve health and wellbeing.

Arts Council England's 'Creative Health and Wellbeing Plan' sets out its ongoing commitment to help people live happier, healthier lives, while Historic England's 'Wellbeing and Heritage Strategy' aims to ensure that everyone can experience the wellbeing benefits of heritage. Both organisations work with the NHS and partner with the National Academy of Social Prescribing.

The Government's [schools White Paper](#), published in March 2022, said that all children should be entitled to take part in sport, music and cultural opportunities, noting that "These opportunities are an essential part of a broad and ambitious curriculum, and support children's health, wellbeing and wider development, particularly as we recover from the pandemic." The Government published updated [plans](#) to support sport and [music](#) education in 2022, and will publish a [cultural education plan](#) in 2023, which DCMS is working with the Department for Education and our arm's-length bodies in developing.

■ Cultural Heritage: Coastal Areas

Damien Moore:

[\[125486\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport what steps her Department is taking to help (a) Southport and (b) other seaside towns preserve their cultural heritage..

Stuart Andrew:

HM Government works to preserve the rich cultural heritage of our seaside towns in many ways, including through the statutory heritage protection system, which recognises heritage assets of national significance and helps to protect them for the nation. There are currently 293 designated heritage assets in Southport, including 281 Listed Buildings.

Historic England, the Government's statutory adviser on heritage matters, regularly undertakes research and thematic designation projects which focus on recognising and protecting the cultural heritage assets of seaside towns – buildings, venues and other amenities which are often central to the local visitor economy. Historic England is currently working with local partners, such as Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council, on initiatives which will assist in revitalising Southport's economy and the appreciation and protection of its historic environment.

Through the High Street Heritage Action Zones programme, HM Government has invested over £23 million in coastal communities, breathing new life into high streets, benefiting local people and businesses, and providing assistance to much-loved historic buildings.

The recent announcement of the second round of the Levelling Up Fund included a range of projects focused on protecting and celebrating the cultural heritage of seaside towns. These include £50 million for the new major visitor attraction Eden Project North in Morecambe, transforming a derelict site on Morecambe's seafront to create a world-class cultural and visitor destination. It also includes a £40 million for Blackpool to deliver a new Multiversity, a carbon-neutral, education campus in the Talbot Gateway Central Business District, £19 million to improve access to Bexhill's art deco De La Warr pavilion, and £20 million to renovate Great Yarmouth's North Quay. The announcement also confirmed that there will be a further round of the Levelling Up Fund, providing more opportunity to level up seaside communities and other places across the UK.

■ Music: Streaming

David Warburton:

[\[127868\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent steps her Department has taken to help ensure that creators and performers receive a fair return from the income made from streaming music.

Julia Lopez:

A key priority for this Government is ensuring the music streaming market functions well and that creators and performers are properly remunerated. In response to the DCMS Select Committee's inquiry into the Economics of Music Streaming, the Government launched a comprehensive programme of work focusing on the key issues identified.

This includes the establishment of expert working groups, chaired by the Intellectual Property Office, to develop industry-led solutions on metadata and transparency. These aim to bring improvements for creators and performers, including quicker and more accurate payments for songwriters and enhanced confidence in creators' dealings with labels and publishers.

The Government encouraged the Competition and Market Authority (CMA) to conduct a market study into music and streaming services, which concluded in November 2022. The CMA found no suggestion that publishing revenues are being suppressed by distorted or restricted competition and that the overall share of streaming revenues enjoyed by publishers and songwriters has increased from 8% in 2008 to 15% in 2021.

We have also commissioned independent research into the impacts on creators, performers, and the wider industry of potential changes to copyright law in the areas of equitable remuneration, contract adjustment, and rights reversion. And the Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation has completed research into playlisting algorithms used by streaming services, which will be published shortly.

The Government also notes action taken by industry to improve remuneration for creators. The major record labels have committed to disregarding unrecouped advances in older contracts, meaning many artists are being paid from streaming for the first time. Many independent labels have gone further, leading the way by setting minimum digital royalty rates across new and existing contracts.

The work of the expert working groups is advanced, as is the research. Based on this, and the action taken by industry, the Government will be taking decisions on this work in the coming months.

EDUCATION**■ Adoption: Self-employed**

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[127696\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of equalising access to adoption (a) leave and (b) pay by introducing an adoption allowance for self-employed adoptive parents.

Claire Coutinho:

The department recognises that it is crucial to the success of an adoption placement that the adopter has time to care for and bond with their child.

Self-employed adoptive parents may be supported in a range of ways by local authorities, including through financial support where applicable, as set out in the statutory guidance on adoption. This states that local authorities should consider making a payment, equivalent to Maternity Allowance, in cases where adopters do not qualify for any statutory payment because of their self-employment. This payment is discretionary and is means-tested to ensure that resources are targeted at those adopters who need it most, as part of a package of post-adoption support.

■ Apprentices

Ian Byrne: [\[129976\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will make an assessment of the potential impact of closing the national traineeships programme on (a) disadvantaged young people and (b) young people who need additional support to access the employment market.

Robert Halfon:

I refer the honourable member for Liverpool West Derby to the answer I gave on 23 January 2023 to the questions [126871](#) and [126872](#).

■ Apprentices: Degrees

Nick Fletcher: [\[128728\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many UK nationals began a degree apprenticeship by sex in 2022.

Robert Halfon:

In the 2021/22 academic year, there were 43,200 apprenticeship starts in England at Level 6 and 7 (degree level), of which 22,000 were female and 21,200 were male. Information on the nationality of learners is not held for government funded further education courses via the Individualised Learner Record.

Further information on apprenticeship starts can be found in the apprenticeships and traineeships statistics publication, which can be accessed at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/apprenticeships-and-traineeships>.

■ Asylum: Schools

Sarah Champion:

[127772]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many secondary school-age unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children were able to get a school place within 20 days in each of the last two academic years.

Claire Coutinho:

The department does not hold information centrally on in-year admissions, so we are not able to provide the information requested.

■ Children in Care

Helen Hayes:

[127848]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate she has made of the number of children moved between care placements in each local authority in 2021-22; and how many children were moved more than once per authority.

Claire Coutinho:

Information on the number of looked-after children who stayed in one placement during 2021/22 and the number who moved at least once can be found in the attached table.

Figures on the number of looked-after children who changed placements three or more times during a one year period can be accessed here: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-tables/fast-track/53b32118-528e-4015-777b-08dab100bfc2>. This data is for the year ending 31 March 2018 to the year ending 31 March 2022.

All placement decisions are subject to the duty in Section 22 of the Children's Act 1989 that the placement is the most appropriate way to safeguard and promote the child's welfare. The department needs a range of options for care placements and support that reflects the diverse needs of children in care and care leavers.

Around 70% of looked-after children are placed with foster carers. For many children who cannot live with their birth parents, foster care offers them the opportunity to experience a stable environment. Looked-after children whose first placement in 2021/22 was with foster carers or placed for adoption were least likely to have more than two placement moves during the year compared with those in other settings.

Recognising the urgency of action in placement sufficiency, the department will prioritise working with local authorities to recruit more foster carers. This will include pathfinder local recruitment campaigns that build towards a national programme, to help ensure children have access to the right placements at the right time. As the Care Review recommends, the department will focus on providing more support throughout the application process to improve the conversion rate from expressions of interest to approved foster carers.

Kinship carers are a vital part of our society and play an important role in supporting a child's development. Councils can offer discretionary financial support to kinship

carers. Councils can offer discretionary financial support to kinship carers. We are rapidly working up an ambitious and detailed implementation strategy in response to the reviews and will publish early this year.

In recognition of rising costs, the government is also providing over £37 billion to help families, targeted to support the most vulnerable.

■ Children: Social Workers

Helen Hayes: [\[127851\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate she has made of the number of (a) new children's social workers entering the profession and (b) children's social workers leaving the profession in 2022.

Claire Coutinho:

In the year ending 31 March 2022, around 3,000 newly qualified child and family social workers were supported through the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment, which is the programme social workers undertake when they enter the profession.

2022 data is not available. In the year ending 30 September 2021, around 2,800 child and family social workers left children's services in local authorities.

■ Children's Social Care Independent Review

Rachael Maskell: [\[127810\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when she plans to publish the implementation strategy for recommendations from the independent review of children's social care; and what steps she will take to involve care experienced people in her announcement.

Claire Coutinho:

The department is rapidly working up an ambitious and detailed implementation strategy in response to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care, which we will publish shortly.

The department is committed to engaging widely with those with care experience and all interested stakeholders to help us drive the right change and scale up good practice across the country.

The department has established the National Implementation Board to challenge and support the development of the reform programme. The Board is chaired by a minister and its membership is made up of sector leaders with experience of leading transformational change, and those with lived experience of the children's social care system.

Since July 2022, the Board has provided advice and challenge on the strategy and our delivery plans, to help ensure we are taking the right actions to secure the outcomes we want to see for children and families in the short, medium, and long term.

There will be other avenues through which people can engage with the reform programme beyond the National Implementation Board. The department will share information on this shortly.

■ **Department for Education: Minimum Wage**

Chris Stephens: [\[129891\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of employees in their Department are paid the National Minimum Wage.

Nick Gibb:

All employees in the Department are paid above the National Minimum Wage.

■ **Department for Education: South Tyneside**

Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck: [\[127776\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much money South Tyneside Council has returned to her Department from grants allocated in the last two years as of 19 January 2023.

Nick Gibb:

The total amount of money received through payments made to the Department for Education by South Tyneside Council between 19 January 2021 and 19 January 2023 is £930,310.63.

■ **Department for Education: Trade Unions**

Chris Stephens: [R] [\[127794\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what human resources information their Department shares with trade unions on a regular basis.

Nick Gibb:

The Department does not have a prescribed set of data shared with the Departmental Trade Union Side (DTUS) on a regular basis. Instead, the Department shares data which is relevant to the areas being discussed each month or ad hoc requests from DTUS.

■ **Foster Care: Recruitment**

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[127698\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will make an assessment of the implications for her policies of trends in the level of recruitment for foster carers; and if she will take steps to increase the rate of recruitment for foster carers.

Claire Coutinho:

The department closely monitors data and research in trends relating to the recruitment of foster carers. Recognising the urgency of action in placement sufficiency, we will prioritise working with local authorities to recruit more foster carers. This will include pathfinder local recruitment campaigns that build towards a

national programme, to help ensure that children have access to the right placements at the right time. As the Care Review recommends, the department will focus on providing more support throughout the application process, to improve the conversion rate from expressions of interest to approved foster carers. More information on foster care placements can be found here: <https://childrensocialcare.independent-review.uk/final-report/>.

■ Further Education: Stockport

Navendu Mishra:

[127923]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to help improve post-18 education options for young people in Stockport constituency.

Robert Halfon:

The department is investing £3.8 billion more in further education and skills over the Parliament to ensure people across the country, including in Stockport, have access to the skills they need to get on the ladder of opportunity and build a fulfilling career in jobs the economy needs.

We are investing a further £125 million in 16-19 education in the 2023/24 financial year and an extra £1.6 billion in 2024/25 compared with 2021/22. This is the biggest increase in 16-19 funding in a decade and will help to fund the additional students anticipated in the system, 40 extra hours per student, and an affordable increase in funding rates per 16-19 student.

This additional funding will help providers such as Trafford College Group, which includes Stockport College and sixth form campuses within Stockport at Cheadle and Marple. The department provided significant financial support to enable these Stockport-based campuses to become part of the Trafford College Group, which was awarded an Overall Effectiveness grade of Good by Ofsted in January 2023. The department has also committed to significant capital investment at the Cheadle Campus, supporting a £27 million condition improvement scheme.

We are increasing investment in apprenticeships to £2.7 billion by the 2024/25 financial year and supporting employers in all sectors and all areas of the country, including Stockport, to use apprenticeships to develop the skilled workforces they need. Since May 2010, there have been a total of 10,930 apprenticeship starts in Stockport.

As part of the department's commitment through the £2.5 billion National Skills Fund aimed at re-skilling and up-skilling opportunities to make sure adults, at any age, can upskill to reach their potential, we have introduced the Free Courses for Jobs scheme. This enables learners without a level 3 qualification (or learners with any qualification level but earning below the National Living Wage) to gain a qualification for free. Residents in Stockport can access provision in a range of sector subject areas delivered through colleges and training providers in the area for example in accounting, creative digital media and counselling.

In addition, we have also introduced Skills Bootcamps, which are free, flexible courses of up to 16 weeks, giving people the opportunity to build up sector-specific skills and fast-track to an interview with an employer. All the Skills Bootcamps that the Greater Manchester Combined Authority deliver are available to residents and employers in the Stockport area. These include Skills Bootcamps in digital, construction, engineering, HGV driving and skills that support the green economy, delivered both online and face-to-face.

The department is continuing to invest in education and skills training for adults through the Adult Education Budget (AEB) at £1.34 billion in the 2021/22 academic year. The AEB fully funds or co-funds skills provision for eligible adults aged 19 and above from pre-entry to level 3, to help them gain the skills they need for work, an apprenticeship or further learning.

Currently, approximately 60% of the AEB is devolved to nine Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) and the Mayor of London. This includes the Greater Manchester MCA which covers Stockport. This gives the authority direct control over adult education provision for their residents and provides the local area with the opportunity to meet local needs.

■ **Midwives: Higher Education**

Dan Jarvis:

[129816]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many (a) Full Time Equivalent and (b) total midwifery academics there were in England in each of the last 10 years; and if she will provide an age profile of that group in (i) 2013, (ii) 2018 and (iii) at the most recent point for which figures are available.

Robert Halfon:

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) collects and publishes statistics on the higher education (HE) workforce in their staff record.

The staff record includes the cost centre that members of the workforce are employed in. Midwifery is not identified as a separate cost centre, so the data presented here show statistics on academic staff that fall within the nursing and allied health professions[1] cost centre, which includes midwifery academics.

HESA publish academic staff data by full-person equivalent (FPE) and full-time equivalent (FTE)[2], but do not publish all requested information for England specifically so, where available, this has been set out in the tables below. The department's analysis has been used to supplement the published data. The latest year for which HESA have published this level of detail on cost centres is 2020/21. HESA will publish data for 2021/22 on 21 February 2023.

Table 1 shows the full published time series for the UK for FPE and FTE. Table 2 shows the corresponding time series for England, with previously unpublished FPE figures produced by DfE. Table 2 data for 2012/13 and 2013/14 could not be produced in time for inclusion. Table 3 shows the age breakdowns for 2018/19 and

2020/21 for FPE in the UK (published by HESA) and England (previously unpublished). Table 3 data for 2013/14 could not be produced in time for inclusion.

Table 1: Full-person equivalent and Full-time equivalent number of nursing and allied health professions academics there were in the UK in each of the last 10 years.

ACADEMIC YEAR	COST CENTRE [3]	FPE [4]	FTE [5]
2011/12	Nursing & paramedical studies	9,010	7,570
2012/13	Nursing & allied health professions	9,055	7,575
2013/14	Nursing & allied health professions	9,460	7,795
2014/15	Nursing & allied health professions	9,545	7,755
2015/16	Nursing & allied health professions	9,805	7,930
2016/17	Nursing & allied health professions	10,030	8,125
2017/18	Nursing & allied health professions	10,535	8,435
2018/19	Nursing & allied health professions	11,100	8,785
2019/20	Nursing & allied health professions	11,445	9,015
2020/21	Nursing & allied health professions	11,725	9,460

Source:

¹[Table 1 - HE staff by HE provider and activity standard occupational classification 2014/15 to 2020/21 | HESA](#)

²[Publications archive | HESA](#)

Table 2: Full-person equivalent and Full-time equivalent number of nursing and allied health professions academics there were in England over the last 10 years where available.

ACADEMIC YEAR	COST CENTRE ³	FPE ⁴	FTE ⁵
2011/12	Nursing & paramedical studies	7,450	6,235
2012/13	Nursing & allied health professions	unavailable	6,175
2013/14	Nursing & allied health professions	unavailable	6,390
2014/15	Nursing & allied health professions	7,870	6,375
2015/16	Nursing & allied health professions	8,105	6,510
2016/17	Nursing & allied health professions	8,395	6,705
2017/18	Nursing & allied health professions	8,725	6,895
2018/19	Nursing & allied health professions	9,085	7,070
2019/20	Nursing & allied health professions	9,435	7,310
2020/21	Nursing & allied health professions	9,615	7,690

Source:

[1Table 1 - HE staff by HE provider and activity standard occupational classification 2014/15 to 2020/21 | HESA](#)

² DfE analysis of the HESA Staff record.

Table 3: UK and England age breakdowns of total nursing and allied health professions academics in the years 2018/19 and 2020/21 (most recent).

Age range	UK		ENGLAND	
	2020/21	2018/19	2020/21	2018/19
25 and under	135	140	105	120
26-30	540	485	445	385
31-35	1,020	890	835	710

	UK		ENGLAND	
36-40	1,410	1,225	1,165	1,005
41-45	1,630	1,505	1,345	1,230
46-50	1,875	1,860	1,510	1,500
51-55	2,120	2,160	1,735	1,780
56-60	1,890	1,850	1,550	1,525
61-65	825	760	675	635
66 and over	280	230	250	200

Source:

¹ <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/staff/table-21>.

² <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/publications#staff-higher-education>.

³ DfE analysis of the HESA Staff record.

[1] HESA changed cost centre groupings in 2012/13: for the academic year 2011/12, the relevant cost centre grouping is nursing and paramedical studies.

[2] FPE relates to the proportion of a person's time allocated to different activities, so total FPE is not a simple headcount (for example, a person working across cost centres would have a fractional FPE assigned to each). FTE relates to the proportion of working hours that a person has been contracted to work in different activities (so a part-time staff member would have lower FTEs for each activity than a full-time staff member). See HESA for a full explanation here: https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c20025/fte_vs_fpe.

[3] Cost centre is a financial concept which groups staff members to specific related cost centres. They relate to where the resources (staff) deployed to teach the student are located.

[4] Counts are based on full-person-equivalents. Individuals can hold more than one contract with a provider and each contract may involve more than one activity. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5, in line with HESA rounding conventions. Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

[5] Staff full-time equivalent (FTE) is defined by the contract(s) of employment and is proportioned to each activity's cost centre.

■ Pupil Exclusions: Blackpool North and Cleveleys

Paul Maynard:

[129778]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many exclusions of (a) SEN and (b) other pupils there were in schools in Blackpool North and Cleveleys constituency in each of the last three years.

Nick Gibb:

The Department publishes figures from the school census on permanent exclusions and suspensions from state funded schools in England. The latest full academic year figures are for the 2020/21 academic year and can be found here: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-in-england/2020-21>.

The attached Excel spreadsheet gives the number of permanent exclusions and suspensions for pupils with and without special educational needs at state funded schools in Blackpool North and Cleveleys constituency between the 2018/19 and 2020/21 academic years.

Attachments:

1. 129778_table [129778_permanent_exclusions_and_suspensions_table.xlsx]

■ Pupils: Absenteeism

Paul Maynard:

[128618]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to help tackle higher than average persistent absence rates in the Education Investment Areas.

Nick Gibb:

In all 55 Education Investment Areas (EIAs), the Department is taking steps to support underperforming schools to make necessary improvements. 24 of the areas were given priority status as Priority Education Investment Areas (PEIAs). PEIAs will have access to more intensive support, on top of the significant support available to all EIAs.

Attendance has been identified as one of the key issues to address in many of the PEIAs. The Department is working closely with schools, trusts, Local Authorities and other partners to address the specific issues in each area through the local area needs funding. An attendance adviser from the Department has been assigned to support every Local Authority in a PEIA. The Department is looking at how local plans build on this work. Local attendance action alliances will also be piloted in several PEIAs to share best practice and address area wide challenges.

The Department will track the progress of these and other initiatives in the PEIAs to gauge their impact on improving attendance.

■ Pupils: Attendance**Paul Maynard:**[\[128617\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when the attendance mentoring pilot commenced; how much her Department has spent on that pilot since it commenced; how many children in the pilot area have been supported through that scheme; and whether she plans to take steps to re-engage severely absent children outside of the pilot area.

Nick Gibb:

The Department launched a £2.32 million attendance mentoring pilot on 20 October 2022 to deliver one-to-one support to a group of persistently absent pupils and their families. The support will start in Middlesbrough, one of the Department's priority education investment areas (PEIAs). In the first year, 335 pupils will be supported. The pilot will be rolled out to an additional four PEIAs in its second and third years.

Barnardo's, the delivery partner for this contract, have now completed their recruitment and training. Mentoring support for pupils will begin later this month. The evidence gathered from this pilot will be shared with the sector and should enable schools, trusts, and Local Authorities to address persistent absence more effectively.

In May 2022, the Department published attendance guidance, which sets out an expectation that schools and Local Authorities should agree a joint approach and plan to support every severely absent pupil. This expectation will work alongside the mentoring pilot to provide targeted support for persistently absent pupils.

Paul Maynard:[\[128619\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many schools have (a) been offered and (b) accepted use of an attendance advisor; and what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of attendance advisors in reducing persistent absence from schools.

Nick Gibb:

Over the next two years, attendance adviser support will be offered to every Local Authority in the country. Advisers work closely with Local Authorities to ensure that they are fully implementing the key expectations in the Department's new attendance guidance:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1099677/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf.

This includes supporting Local Authorities to make effective use of their attendance data to develop a local strategy, putting in place effective multi-agency support for families to address attendance barriers, and meeting with all schools on a termly basis to discuss and agree support for any persistently absent pupils.

Attendance adviser support has also been offered this year to 24 multi-academy trusts with higher levels of persistent absence across their schools. These trusts are responsible for 226 schools in total.

The Department continues to assess the effectiveness of the attendance adviser initiative by monitoring the progress of Local Authorities and trusts in implementing

the action plans that they have developed with their adviser to reduce absence. School attendance data continues to be published regularly by the Department in the usual way.

■ Schools: Closures

Mark Pritchard: [\[127719\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will issue guidance to schools on the minimum notice which parents should be given of a decision to close a school due to bad weather.

Nick Gibb:

The Department has updated its emergency planning and response guidance, which sets out how education and childcare providers should plan for and deal with emergencies, including significant public health incidents and severe weather. This guidance is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-planning-and-response-for-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care-settings>.

All education and childcare providers should have emergency plans in place. The plans should detail what providers would do and how they would respond if any temporary actions needed to be taken in the event of an emergency, including severe weather. The aim of an emergency plan is to help providers respond effectively in an emergency, and, where possible, continue to prioritise and maximise face-to-face learning.

The guidance outlines that a good plan should cover how providers would communicate any changes to children, pupils, students, parents, carers, and staff.

■ Schools: Defibrillators

Olivia Blake: [\[128734\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, why respondents were only asked about Automated External Defibrillators purchased within the last four years in her Department's most recent survey on school defibrillator provision.

Olivia Blake: [\[128735\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, on what evidential basis did she determine the defibrillator requirements for (a) schools and (b) communities in her Department's recent tender for defibrillators.

Olivia Blake: [\[128736\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to his Answer of 17 October 2022 to Question 58927, if he will he publish information held by his Department on school and community defibrillator provision to allow areas of most need to be identified.

Nick Gibb:

The Department's defibrillator roll out, to all state funded schools in England without access to a defibrillator, began on 20 January 2023.

The Department's defibrillator survey asked schools a small number of questions to establish if they needed a defibrillator. This included asking if they had a device that was over four years old. This is because defibrillators typically have a five year warranty and the Department wanted to ensure no school would be left without provision. To support schools, the Department has secured an eight year warranty and support package for the devices it is providing.

The Department's defibrillator programme is targeted at schools. The Department will ensure defibrillators are available to over nine million pupils, visitors to schools and over 950,000 adults working in the school sector. NHS England, academic experts, and leading charities were all consulted in the development of the specification to ensure the device selected was suitable for both schools and communities. Each school will make the decision on whether to provide public use of their defibrillator. New guidance has been produced to support schools which can be found here: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1130210/Automated_External_Defibrillators_Guidance_jan_23.pdf.

The Department does not hold records on community provision of defibrillators. Over half of schools responded to the defibrillator survey, with approximately 60% of schools indicating they did not have a defibrillator or that their device was over four years old. The Department's roll out is expected to be completed by the end of the 2022/23 academic year, ensuring that all state funded schools in England have access to a defibrillator. The latest information can be found in the Written Ministerial Statement laid before both Houses on 20 January 2023, available here: <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2023-01-20/hcws506>.

■ Students: Cost of Living

Colleen Fletcher:

[129941]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to help support students in (a) Coventry, (b) the West Midlands and (c) England with the rising cost of living.

Robert Halfon:

The government reviews the support provided to cover students' living costs on an annual basis.

The government recognises the additional cost of living pressures that have arisen this year which have impacted students.

On 11 January 2023, the department announced a one-off reallocation of funding to add £15 million to this year's student premium to support additional hardship requests. There is now £276 million of student premium funding available this academic year to support disadvantaged students. This extra funding will complement the help universities are providing through their own bursary, scholarship and hardship support schemes. The department works with the Office for Students

(OfS) to ensure universities support students using both hardship funds and drawing on the student premium.

Many universities in the West Midlands area, including but not limited to, Coventry University, the University of Wolverhampton, the University of Birmingham and Birmingham City University have allocated money to hardship, scholarship and bursary funds to support students, and have detail available about these funds on their websites.

We have continued to increase maximum loans and grants each year with a 2.3% increase for the current 2022/23 academic year and a further 2.8% increase for 2023/24.

Loans that support with students' living costs are a contribution towards their living costs while attending university, with the highest levels of support targeted at students who need it the most, such as students from low-income families. Students who have been awarded a loan for living costs for the 2022/23 academic year that is lower than the maximum, and whose household income for the tax year 2022-23 has dropped by at least 15% compared to the income provided for their original assessment, can apply for their entitlement to be reassessed.

All households will save on their energy bills through the Energy Price Guarantee and the £400 Energy Bills Support Scheme discount. Students who buy their energy from a domestic supplier are eligible for the energy bills discount. The Energy Prices Act passed on 25 October 2022 includes the provision which requires landlords to pass any benefits they receive from energy price support onto end users, as appropriate. Further details of the requirements under this Act are set out in the legislation.

The Energy Bill Relief Scheme will provide a price reduction to ensure that all businesses and other non-domestic customers are protected from high energy bills this winter, including universities and private purpose-built student accommodation providers.

■ Supported Housing: Young People

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[127697\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether she is taking steps to ensure that her Department consults young people who have spent time in Supported Lodgings on all policy developments related to supported lodgings provision.

Claire Coutinho:

The department recognises that supported accommodation, which includes supported lodgings, can be the right option for some older children, where it is high quality and where the young person is ready for the level of independence it promotes. We are investing over £140 million to introduce mandatory national standards and Ofsted registration and inspection of providers who accommodate looked-after children and care leavers aged 16 and 17 in supported accommodation.

In developing these vital reforms, the department has consulted young people with experience of care at every step.

The department recently published a consultation aimed directly at care-experienced children and young people, which sought their views on proposed new quality standards for supported accommodation, the proposed new requirements on the providers of this provision, and how Ofsted should register, inspect, and take action against providers. This consultation received 60 responses from care-experienced young people, and the department is carefully considering this input. A response will be published in due course. This consultation document can be accessed at:

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/regulating-supported-accommodation-team/regulating-supported-accommodation/>.

This recent consultation builds on years of engagement with care-experienced young people on these reforms, including focus groups which gathered the views of over 220 care-experienced young people, and a previous public consultation which received 69 responses. This continued engagement with children and young people has been invaluable, and has truly helped the department to develop a set of quality standards and accompanying regulatory model which will ensure that supported accommodation can deliver the absolute best for the 16 and 17-year-olds who are ready for the level of independence it brings.

■ Young People: Unemployment

Helen Hayes:

[\[127850\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 9 January 2023 to Question 114667 on Special Educational Needs: Unemployment, if she will provide a breakdown by region of the 12,497 young people who are not in education, employment or training.

Robert Halfon:

The requested information is available in the National Statistics publication on education, health and care plans, which can be found at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/education-health-and-care-plans>.

The data requested can be found in the following table: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-tables/permalink/0f7f9d16-87a5-443e-7d55-08dafabf1de8>.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Air Pollution: West Yorkshire

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[127700\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of levels of air particulate matter (PM2.5) pollution at drive-thru points in (a) Huddersfield and (b) West Yorkshire.

Rebecca Pow:

Defra has not made an assessment of the levels of air particulate matter (PM2.5) pollution at drive-thru points in Huddersfield or West Yorkshire. Data on the location of monitoring sites, as well as the air pollutant concentrations recorded by these sites, is available on the UK Air website.

Mr Barry Sheerman:[\[127701\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of levels of air particulate matter (PM10) pollution at drive-thru points in (a) Huddersfield and (b) West Yorkshire.

Rebecca Pow:

Defra has not made an assessment of the levels of air particulate matter (PM10) pollution at drive-thru points in Huddersfield or West Yorkshire. Data on the location of monitoring sites, as well as the air pollutant concentrations recorded by these sites, is available on the UK Air website.

■ Flood Control: Shrewsbury**Daniel Kawczynski:**[\[127717\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to protect Castlefields in Shrewsbury constituency from flooding.

Rebecca Pow:

The Environment Agency is working with key partners, including Shropshire Council, to address flooding in areas of Shrewsbury. The River Severn Partnership, jointly chaired by the Environment Agency and Shropshire Council, is taking a holistic approach to the management of water across the Severn catchment. This work includes looking at areas upstream of Shrewsbury, through the Severn Valley Water Management Scheme, where changes to land use practices may provide benefit to areas downstream, such as Castlefields.

Several pilot projects are already well underway. The Environment Agency takes an agile approach, considering the potential for projects to reduce flood risk to people and property locally within its capital programme. Such projects will always follow partnership funding rules to ensure the benefits outweigh the costs. In 2021 Government committed to invest £5.2billion across the country to address flood and coastal erosion risk.

■ Packaging: Recycling**John Stevenson:**[\[127734\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will make an assessment of the potential impact of the proposed extended producer responsibility scheme on the number of incinerators that would be in operation.

John Stevenson: [\[127735\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will make an assessment of the implications for the proposed extended producer responsibility scheme of international best practice in that area.

John Stevenson: [\[127736\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will make an assessment of the potential impact of a producer-led packaging extended producer responsibility scheme on (a) recycling and (b) incineration rates.

John Stevenson: [\[127737\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions she has had with industry stakeholders on the potential merits of a producer-led Scheme Administrator within the Extended Producer Responsibility scheme.

Rebecca Pow:

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is an established policy approach adopted by many countries around the world, across a broad range of products and materials. It gives producers an incentive to make better, more sustainable decisions at the product design stage, including decisions that make it easier for products to be reused or recycled, and places the financial cost of managing products once they reach end of life on producers. We have considered the approach of many international EPR for packaging schemes that are in operation in finalising the approach to EPR for packaging in the UK.

We published an impact assessment on our proposed measures alongside the Government response to the 2021 consultation on introducing EPR for packaging in the UK. This assessment outlined how overall packaging recycling rates are expected to increase from 63% in 2021 to 76% in 2030 under a producer-led EPR scheme. These targets exceed standards currently set for 2030 for members of the European Union. Increased recycling of packaging waste will also mean that less packaging waste is sent to landfill or incinerated. We will publish an assessment of the impacts of EPR on residual waste infrastructure, including incinerators, in due course.

I met with a number of industry representatives in December 2022 to discuss how the Government will ensure the governance of the EPR Scheme Administrator (SA) is transparent and includes representation from industry. We will continue working closely with industry throughout the development of the SA and intend to use the private sector to deliver many of the SA functions. We have also recently embarked on an eight-week series of industry-wide Sprint events bringing together key stakeholders looking to shape the future vision of waste reforms.

■ Plastics: Recycling

Chi Onwurah:

[\[118999\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of the importance of investment in chemical recycling for delivering a circular economy in the plastics sector.

Rebecca Pow:

In the Resources and Waste Strategy, we have committed to taking actions which will help to stimulate private investment in recycling infrastructure. Chemical recycling offers a potential complementary route for plastic recycling where mechanical recycling is impractical or uneconomic and we continue to consider how chemical recycling could play a role in ensuring more of our plastic waste is recycled domestically to meet our ambition of a 65% recycling rate by 2035. WRAP recently published an updated plastic waste hierarchy which references chemical recycling and its potential for offering a complementary recycling route to mechanical recycling for certain plastics. The Government has also funded innovative demonstrator projects, including on chemical recycling, through UKRI's Smart Sustainable Plastic Packaging programme.

■ River Severn: Flood Control

Helen Morgan:

[\[126895\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when he plans to publish the Severn Valley Water Management Plan.

Rebecca Pow:

Working closely with partners on both sides of the English/Welsh border, the Environment Agency and the River Severn Partnership has been developing the initial plan for the Severn Valley Water Management Scheme. This will make a significant, positive difference to community resilience along the upper Severn.

This initial plan outlines a possible approach to effective water management across the Upper Severn catchment. The funding landscape is complex and Partnership working is critical to confirming the funding and delivery routes for the project, which will determine the final plan.

Over the next 12 months the Environment Agency will be working with partners and engaging with stakeholders and communities in the Upper Severn catchment to discuss this work in more detail.

Helen Morgan:

[\[126896\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of the impact of inflation on the adequacy of the funding allocated by the Government in June 2021 to support the development of the Severn Valley Water Management scheme.

Rebecca Pow:

The Severn Valley Water Management Scheme (SVWMS) is led by the Environment Agency and will represent a major change in the way water is managed, by reducing not only flood risk but also securing water resources for the future, benefitting and improving water quality, natural assets and the environment. The Government is investing over £34 million from the Flood Defence Grant-in-Aid and Economic Recovery Funding for projects in the scheme and the wider Severn catchment.

Higher than expected inflation is causing challenges to the delivery of all infrastructure programmes. Defra and the Environment Agency are currently undertaking an assessment of the potential impact of inflation on the £5.2 billion 2021-2027 capital investment programme for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management. The Environment Agency retains an oversight of the SVWMS project and its expenditure to ensure that it is being undertaken in an effective manner.

■ Trapping**Alex Norris:**[\[63325\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the Government's Action Plan for Animal Welfare, when he will launch a call for evidence on the use of snares.

Trudy Harrison:

If improperly used snares can cause immense suffering to both target and non-target animals. Used properly, some stakeholders consider them to be a valuable tool in the protection of rare and endangered species.

We are looking at how snares are regulated as part of our continued drive to maintain the highest animal welfare standards in the world, and working to ensure the regulated use of the most appropriate trap and cull method which causes the least suffering whilst providing the greatest protection to crops, game birds or endangered species

Through our Animal Action for Welfare Plan, published in May 2021, we are looking at whether changes need to be made to reflect concerns raised. Defra ministers are meeting with key external stakeholders and, once engagements are completed, we will be able to update on a timeframe for a call for evidence.

■ Water: Pollution**Mr Barry Sheerman:**[\[127702\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment she has made on the impact of tyre wear on water pollution in (a) West Yorkshire and (b) England.

Rebecca Pow:

No assessment has been being carried out specifically in West Yorkshire. However, more widely in 2020, Defra published the findings from research ([Tyre particles reach rivers and ocean - Defra in the media \(blog.gov.uk\)](#)) it has funded with Plymouth

University and others investigating the sources and pathways of synthetic fibre and vehicle tyre wear contamination into the marine and river environment. Researchers are also currently undertaking work for Defra to develop and test a new methodology to analyse vehicle tyre wear products in river sediments.

In addition, the Environment Agency contributed to research ([First phase of research paves the way for further studies on microplastics pollution - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)) undertaken by Highways England and industry experts on the extent of microplastic pollution from run-off from the major road network.

The outcomes from these research projects will be used in the development of policy options to help mitigate the impact of microplastics on the aquatic environment and provide design guidance for the major road network.

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

■ African Development Bank

Ruth Jones:

[\[126804\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with leadership of the African Development Bank.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

The Foreign Secretary and African Development Bank President Adesina met and shared a platform at COP27 in Sharm El Sheikh at the Accelerating Adaptation in Africa event on 8 November 2022. At the event the Foreign Secretary announced the UK's £200 million contribution to the Climate Action Window of the African Development Fund.

In addition the Minister for Development and Africa, the Rt. Hon. Andrew Mitchell spoke to President Adesina on 29 November 2022 about the UK's partnerships with the Bank, including our support for the African Development Fund, and our guarantee that is allowing the Bank to provide up to \$2 billion of climate finance to African countries. The Foreign Secretary announced the UK contribution to the Fund on 7 December 2022 during his visit to Kenya.

■ Cameroon: Foreign Relations

Alexander Stafford:

[\[126881\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has had discussions with his counterpart in Cameroon on the Southern Cameroons.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

Minister Mitchell met with Cameroon's Minister of Defence earlier this month, and set out the UK's commitment to supporting a peaceful resolution to conflict in the North-West South-West regions. The former Minister for Africa, Sir James Duddridge MP,

also made this commitment to President Biya and Prime Minister Ngute when he visited Cameroon in March 2021.

■ Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Electronic Purchasing Card Solution

Emily Thornberry: [\[123886\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to his Department's publication of government procurement card spending over £500, what items were purchased from (a) KTLondon.com on 21 August 2021, (b) Highball on 14 September 2021 and (c) Shake Swirl on 7 June 2022.

David Rutley:

The Highball payment was for English wine. There is an expectation that UK diplomatic missions procure and serve British wine whenever possible for official entertainment to boost exports, support and promote UK business overseas and project soft power.

The payment to Shake Swirl was for service and kitchen support staff for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee event at the High Commissioner's Residence in Singapore, for 600 people, including key government, commercial and diplomatic contacts.

The expenditure with KTLondon.com was for the provision of meal items for approximately 250 working on multiple shifts of the UK end response of Operation Pitting, the humanitarian evacuation from Afghanistan, in the FCDO's Crisis Centre. Expenditure for all 3 was subject to normal FCDO controls.

Emily Thornberry: [\[123889\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to his Department's publication of government procurement card spending over £500 for February 2022, what services were purchased from (a) Bolsons Ltd on 16 February 2022 and (b) Boss Media between 18 and 22 February 2022; and for what purposes those services were required.

David Rutley:

The payment to Bolsons was for stationery and equipment at the British High Commission in Kingston. The Boss Media spend was part of a project to improve the data processing and user experience of the Export to Japan platform, which has over 10,000 registered members and helps provide information on the Japanese market to UK businesses. Expenditure was subject to normal controls.

■ Ghana: Currencies

Alexander Stafford: [\[126885\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will make an assessment of the potential impact of Ghana's gold for Oil policy on the Ghanaian Cedi.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

The UK has noted Ghana's Gold Purchase Programme and will watch its development with interest. The UK is supporting Ghana as it navigates a set of economic challenges.

■ Ghana: Foreign Relations

Alexander Stafford: [\[126882\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Ghanaian counterpart on improving UK-Ghana relations.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

The UK and Ghana have a strong, wide-ranging partnership and cooperate closely on areas of mutual interest. The Minister of State for Development and Africa was pleased to visit Ghana in December 2022 to co-host the UK-Ghana Business Council and meet with senior figures. Minister Mitchell looks forward to the next meeting which will take place later this year. In addition, we hosted the second UK-Ghana Security Dialogue in London in July 2022, where we agreed steps to advance our bilateral cooperation to tackle organised crime and terrorism. In November 2022 the Minister for Armed Forces attended the Accra Initiative conference in Ghana, to express the UK's commitment to supporting regional stability.

■ Ghana: Inflation

Alexander Stafford: [\[126883\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the (a) political situation and (b) impact on local people of trends in the level of inflation in Ghana.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

Ghana is a well-established democracy with a history of successful political transitions. Following fair and transparent elections in 2020, the UK expects the Presidential elections in 2024 to continue in this pattern. The UK understands that rising levels of inflation have had significant implications for people in Ghana, including rising costs of food and fuel. We will continue to work closely with Ghana to build economic resilience and welcome the Staff Level Agreement they have reached with the International Monetary Fund.

■ Ghana: Marburg Virus

Alexander Stafford: [\[126886\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of Ghana's response to the recent outbreak of the Marburg virus.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

On 16 September 2022, Ghana announced the country was free of Marburg virus disease, two months after the start of the outbreak. The Minister of State for

Development and Africa congratulated the Government of Ghana on an effective response.

The UK continues to support Ghana's Ministry of Health to build a resilient health system able to respond promptly and effectively to outbreaks. Prior to the outbreak, the UK trained over 7,000 health workers on surveillance and response, including in the regions affected by the outbreak. The UK is contributing to outbreak investigation studies to identify the origin of the disease and will participate in the outbreak response review scheduled for February 2023.

■ Israel: Palestinians

Wera Hobhouse:

[\[126759\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has made representations to the Israeli Government over settlement expansion and demolitions of Palestinian homes and other buildings.

David Rutley:

The UK urges the Government of Israel to permanently end its settlement expansion and settlement activity in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. The UK is clear that in all but the most exceptional of circumstances, demolitions and evictions are contrary to International Humanitarian Law. Our opposition to the demolition of Palestinian property and the evictions of Palestinians from their homes is long-standing. The practice causes unnecessary suffering to Palestinians and is harmful to efforts to promote peace. We repeatedly call on Israel to abide by its obligations under international law and have a regular dialogue with Israel on legal issues relating to the occupation. The Minister for the Middle East, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon reinforced this message during a visit to a UK donor funded school facing demolition on 12 January.

■ Venezuela: Sanctions

Kenny MacAskill:

[\[120149\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the report of the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights - Visit to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, what assessment he has made of the impact of the UK sanctions towards Venezuela on Venezuelan citizens.

David Rutley:

The UK has sanctioned 41 Venezuelans under our Venezuela Autonomous, Global Human Rights and Global Anti-Corruption regimes. Sanctions are in place against individuals who are responsible for egregious human rights violations, the undermining of democracy and exploitation of public programmes. UK sanctions are helping to encourage democratic change by keeping pressure on the illegitimate Maduro regime, targeting illicit finance, and calling out human rights abuses.

■ Zimbabwe: Crops

Ruth Jones:

[\[126806\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent steps he has taken to support crop production in Zimbabwe.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

The UK's £22 million investment in the multi-donor funded Zimbabwe Resilience Building Fund has improved crop production for more than 250,000 people over 2015-2022. It has also strengthened farmer knowledge on climate smart agriculture, crop diversification, soil fertility management and water harvesting. The programme has learned that integrating a range of activities is most effective at building resilience, such as crop and livestock production with community financial services and strengthened links to markets. This has improved the ability of more than 1 million people to cope with the effects of climate change in Zimbabwe.

We are exploring what we can do to harness this learning and embed some of these approaches in national systems, within our reduced Official Development Assistance programme.

■ Zimbabwe: Food Aid

Ruth Jones:

[\[126805\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent estimate he has made of the number of (a) women and (b) children who require food assistance in Zimbabwe.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

The World Food Programme (WFP) estimates that 5.2 million people currently have insufficient food consumption. Unfortunately, this data is not broken down by women and children.

Zimbabwe is one of the most climate vulnerable countries in the world - droughts, floods and natural disasters mean many households are food insecure. The UK is providing targeted cash transfers to more than 10,000 highly food insecure people in Southern Zimbabwe via the WFP. We are working with the Government of Zimbabwe and other partners to coordinate response efforts and to shift the focus towards long-term resilience building - this includes improving agricultural techniques and investments we are making in climate-resilient irrigation and solar power in rural communities.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ Cancer: Medical Treatments

Chris Green:

[\[129954\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what percentage of cancer therapies assessed by the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (NICE) have

been for combination therapies rather than monotherapies in each year since 2017; and what percentage of terminated NICE appraisals for cancer therapies have been for combination therapies rather than monotherapies in each year since 2017.

Helen Whately:

Between 1 January 2017 and 31 December 2022, 27% of cancer appraisal recommendations made by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence related to combination therapies and 38% of terminated cancer drug appraisals related to combination therapies.

■ **Cancer: Waiting Lists**

Feryal Clark:

[\[126861\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what measures he will use to assess the Government's success in reducing waiting lists for cancer (a) diagnosis and (b) treatment; and if he will make a statement.

Helen Whately:

NHS England collects and publishes a range of data to help assess cancer waiting time performance. This work includes their monthly publication of performance data against the nine cancer standards. These standards include the Faster Diagnosis Standard and 31-day standards in respect of cancer treatment.

On referrals, November 2022 saw the highest number of urgent general practice referrals for cancer ever, with nearly 265,000 patients referred.

On cancer treatment, over 321,000 people received their first cancer treatment from December 2021 to November 2022, up by more than 10,000 on the same period pre-pandemic.

■ **Chronic Fatigue Syndrome**

David Warburton:

[\[127864\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will increase funding for (a) the treatment of and (b) research into myalgic encephalomyelitis.

Helen Whately:

It is the responsibility of integrated care boards to make available appropriate provision to meet the health and care needs of the local population, including people with ME/CFS. The Department is developing a cross-Government Delivery Plan on ME/CFS. As part of the plan, we are working with other Government departments and stakeholders to determine ways to improve experiences and outcomes for all people who have ME/CFS.

The Government invests in health research through the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) and the Medical Research Council (MRC), through UK Research and Innovation. The NIHR and MRC both welcome high-quality applications for research into all aspects of ME/CFS, including biomedical research. It is not usual practice to ring-fence funds for particular topics or conditions.

■ Coronavirus: Kidney Diseases

Daisy Cooper:

[127904]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to ensure that national guidance on covid-19 includes specific information for people with chronic kidney disease.

Helen Whately:

Our guidance for people at high risk from COVID-19 which was last updated in October, lists chronic kidney disease as a condition that means people are eligible for monoclonal antibody and antiviral treatments. The Government have taken the view that there is no need for more specific guidance for people with chronic kidney disease. People with this and other conditions listed in this guidance should consult their clinician if they have specific questions about the risk or impact of COVID-19.

Daisy Cooper:

[127906]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the adequacy of measures to safeguard clinically extremely vulnerable kidney patients from covid-19; whether he plans to take steps to (a) evaluate (i) new protective treatments, (ii) modified prescriptions and (iii) existing antiviral treatments and (b) implement other additional measures to safeguard kidney patients.

Will Quince:

We have introduced enhanced protections which may benefit the small number of people whose immune system means they are at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19, despite vaccination, which includes free testing and public health guidance on managing this risk. Antiviral treatments are also available, which can be accessed in the community and in hospital. While a small minority may not be able to receive an antiviral, including some kidney patients, as of 28 November 2022, Sotrovimab can be prescribed in exceptional circumstances where other treatments have been deemed unsuitable. The National Institute for Health Excellence (NICE) is currently evaluating the treatments for COVID-19, including existing antiviral treatments, as well as Evusheld as a prophylactic. If NICE finds the medicines clinically and cost effective, the National Health Service will make them available as appropriate. We are also exploring options for an antibody testing study to improve the understanding of risks to this patient cohort. The scope of this study is currently being developed and further information will be available in due course.

■ Dementia

Stephen Hammond:

[R] [127723]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to publish the terms of reference for the national dementia mission.

Helen Whately:

We are in the process of developing plans for this mission. We cannot yet confirm when we will publish the terms of reference for the mission.

Stephen Hammond: [R] [\[127724\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking enable charities and patient organisations to feed into the dementia mission led by Dame Barbara Windsor.

Helen Whately:

We are in the process of developing plans for this mission, engaging with a wide variety of stakeholders, including leading charities and patient organisations in the dementia and neurodegeneration space. We will continue to involve them as our plans develop.

■ Department of Health and Social Care: Trade Unions

Chris Stephens: [R] [\[127797\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what human resources information their Department shares with trade unions on a regular basis.

Will Quince:

Human Resources (HR) hold meetings with the Department's recognised trade unions on at least a monthly basis. As part of this engagement, routine human resources information is shared with the trade unions. In addition to this, trade unions have access to HR information published on the Department's internal intranet as well as a range of HR information, including transparency publications, which is published and publicly available on GOV.UK.

■ Diabetes: Lighting

Jim Shannon: [\[129785\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the potential impact of artificial light on the risk of developing type two diabetes.

Helen Whately:

We have no plans to make an assessment.

■ Disability: Income Support

Dr Lisa Cameron: [\[129936\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has conducted an impact assessment on the impact of the Minimum Income Guarantee on disabled users of social care.

Helen Whately:

No specific assessment has been made. The level of the Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) is reviewed annually, with the next review ongoing. Following the last review, from 6 April 2022 the MIG was increased in line with inflation. The impact of this uprating was taken into account in the Social Care Charging Reform Impact Assessment. Any revised rates for next year will be published in a Local Authority Circular.

■ Draft Mental Health Bill**Siobhain McDonagh:** [\[129722\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the forthcoming Mental Health Bill will include a statutory duty to provide early intervention strategies to detect and address mental health issues for children and young people within all primary and secondary schools; and if he will make a statement.

Andrew Rosindell: [\[129734\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Mental Health Bill, whether he plans to include a statutory duty to provide early intervention strategies to detect and address mental health issues for children and young people within primary and secondary schools; and if he will make a statement.

Ian Paisley: [\[129800\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Mental Health Bill, whether he plans to include a statutory duty to provide early intervention strategies to detect and address mental health issues for children and young people within primary and secondary schools; and if he will make a statement.

Peter Dowd: [\[129867\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Mental Health Bill, whether he plans to include a statutory duty to provide early intervention strategies to detect and address mental health issues for children and young people within primary and secondary schools; and if he will make a statement.

Mohammad Yasin: [\[129868\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Mental Health Bill, whether he plans to include a statutory duty to provide early intervention strategies to detect and address mental health issues for children and young people within primary and secondary schools; and if he will make a statement.

Ben Lake: [\[130002\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Mental Health Bill, whether he plans to include a statutory duty to provide early intervention strategies to detect and address mental health issues for children and young people within primary and secondary schools; and if he will make a statement.

Kim Johnson: [\[130003\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Mental Health Bill, whether he plans to include a statutory duty to provide early intervention strategies to detect and address mental health issues for children and young people within primary and secondary schools; and if he will make a statement.

Mike Amesbury:[\[131354\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Mental Health Bill, whether he plans to include a statutory duty to provide early intervention strategies to detect and address mental health issues for children and young people within primary and secondary schools; and if he will make a statement.

Maria Caulfield:

The draft Mental Health Bill, published in June 2022, is intended to modernise the Mental Health Act and work better for people with serious mental illness. The draft Bill has completed its pre-legislative scrutiny and the Joint Committee published its report on 19 January 2023 on the Draft Mental Health Bill. The Department will consider the Committee's recommendations carefully and we will introduce the Bill when parliamentary time allows.

Separate to the provisions in the draft Bill, there are currently 287 mental health support teams in place in around 4,700 schools and colleges across the country, offering support to children experiencing anxiety, depression and other common mental health issue. These

teams now cover 26% of pupils, a year earlier than originally planned and this will increase to 399 teams, covering around 35% of pupils by April 2023 with over 500 planned to be deployed by 2024.

Health Visitors**Rachael Maskell:**[\[131244\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps is he taking to (a) fund and (b) recruit increased numbers of Health Visitors; and if he will introduce a Health Visitor implementation plan.

Helen Whately:

It is the responsibility of local authority commissioners, working with the service provider, to determine health visitor numbers based upon local needs. There are no current plans to introduce a Health Visitor implementation plan.

Mental Health Services: Children**Rachael Maskell:**[\[129929\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of the (a) quantity and (b) quality of residential facilities for children requiring mental health residential care.

Maria Caulfield:

No specific assessment has been made. It is for integrated care systems to commission services, both National Health Service and local authority, in order to meet the needs of their local population.

■ Mental Health Services: Children in Care

Rachael Maskell: [\[129926\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has made an assessment of the proportion of children in care who enter mental health services.

Maria Caulfield:

No specific assessment has been made.

■ Mental Illness: Coronavirus

Martyn Day: [\[117706\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his policies of the findings of the research article, Heightened COVID-19 Mortality in People With Severe Mental Illness Persists After Vaccination: A Cohort Study of Greater Manchester Residents, published in the Schizophrenia Bulletin in August 2022; and whether his Department is taking steps to protect patients with severe mental illness from covid-19.

Maria Caulfield:

The Department takes key research and evidence into consideration when developing its policies. This includes evidence that relates to the cohorts at high risk of developing COVID-19 including severe mental illness.

The NHS Long Term Plan commits to at least an additional £2.3 billion a year to expand and transform National Health Service mental health services in England by 2023/24 so that an additional two million people get the support they need. This is on top of the additional £500 million provided for 2021/22, to accelerate our NHS mental health expansion plans and to target those groups whose mental health has been most affected by the pandemic including those with severe mental illness, young people, and frontline staff.

■ Oral Cancer

Helen Hayes: [\[127857\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many oral cancers were identified at stage (a) 0, (b) 1, (c) 2, (d) 3 and (e) 4 in each year since 2015; and how many and what proportion of those were identified by dentists.

Helen Whately:

The National Cancer Registration and Analysis Service (NCRAS), part of NHS Digital, collects data on all cancers diagnosed in England. The following table shows the number of diagnoses of oral cancer in England between 2015 and 2020.

YEAR	STAGE AT DIAGNOSIS	DIAGNOSES OF ORAL CANCER	NUMBER REFERRED BY DENTISTS	PROPORTION REFERRED BY DENTISTS
2015	1	1,015	117	12%
2015	2	580	49	8%
2015	3	637	25	4%
2015	4	3,104	176	6%
2015	Not staged	418	12	3%
2015	Unstageable	11	0	0%
2016	1	1,027	111	11%
2016	2	615	53	9%
2016	3	554	27	5%
2016	4	3,392	177	5%
2016	Not staged	417	18	4%
2016	Unstageable	7	0	0%
2017	1	1,061	134	13%
2017	2	613	58	9%
2017	3	620	31	5%
2017	4	3,429	214	6%
2017	Not staged	383	20	5%
2017	Unstageable	9	0	0%
2018	1	1,060	132	12%
2018	2	561	55	10%
2018	3	864	41	5%
2018	4	3,339	235	7%
2018	Not staged	520	19	4%
2018	Unstageable	9	0	0%
2019	1	1,727	162	9%

YEAR	STAGE AT DIAGNOSIS	DIAGNOSES OF ORAL CANCER	NUMBER REFERRED BY DENTISTS	PROPORTION REFERRED BY DENTISTS
2019	2	1,063	88	8%
2019	3	918	56	6%
2019	4	1,941	270	14%
2019	Not staged	1,091	63	6%
2019	Unstageable	2	0	0%
2020	1	1,782	131	7%
2020	2	902	73	8%
2020	3	929	49	5%
2020	4	2,065	312	15%
2020	Not staged	742	33	4%
2020	Unstageable	2	0	0%

Source: Cancer Registration Statistics, England 2020

■ Prescriptions: ICT

Chris Green:

[\[129963\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when his Department will publish a specification for an electronic prescribing system for homecare medicines services.

Helen Whately:

The National Homecare Medicines Committee's (NHMC) standardisation programme includes an NHS Digital strategy project. Within the NHMC there is a digital sub-group working closely with NHS Digital on the output-based specification for e-prescribing for homecare medicines services to use an Electronic Prescribing System. This work is at an advanced stage in preparation for consultation with NHMC during 2023.

■ Weather: Death

Henry Smith:

[\[129759\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department is taking steps to investigate the reasons for the increase in excess deaths over winter 2022/23.

Neil O'Brien:

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities produces a monthly update of excess mortality statistics, which have been used to monitor excess deaths since July 2020 and adjust for age and size of the population. There are a range of different organisations producing different estimates based on different methodologies.

It is likely that a combination of factors has contributed to excess deaths over winter 2022/23, including high flu prevalence, cold, the ongoing challenges of COVID-19 and health conditions such as heart disease and diabetes.

We are taking steps to help reduce excess deaths, including those which involve COVID-19, and those due to other factors.

HOME OFFICE■ **Police: DNA****Chi Onwurah:**[\[129799\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of storing the DNA profile of police officers on the National DNA database.

Chris Philp:

In order to address concerns around police vetting caused by high-profile cases of police abuse of power, the Home Secretary has asked the College of Policing to strengthen the statutory code of practice for police vetting to make the obligations all forces must legally follow stricter and clearer. Separately, the National Police Chiefs' Council has asked all police forces to check their officers and staff against the police national database to help identify anyone who is unfit to serve.

The National DNA Database (NDNAD) can only hold the DNA profiles of people arrested for a recordable offence, under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984. We have no plans to add the DNA profiles of police officers to the NDNAD.

The Police Regulations 2003 set out that a candidate for appointment as a police officer or special constable must undergo biometric vetting, with consent, and the chief officer must be satisfied with the results prior to appointment. More information on biometric checks and retention of DNA profiles are set out in the College of Policing's vetting authorised professional practice (APP) guidance.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE■ **Department for International Trade: Trade Unions****Chris Stephens:**[\[R\] \[127795\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what human resources information their Department shares with trade unions on a regular basis.

Nigel Huddleston:

The Department for International Trade regularly shares information with the recognised departmental trade unions where appropriate and that supports union representatives in carrying out their responsibilities under the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. This includes details on pay, terms and conditions and other human resource policies, as well as information regarding employee experience initiatives and other organisational transformation or change which is shared as part of regular trade union engagement.

In addition, a range of information regarding the departmental workforce is available publicly on GOV.UK.

Trade Promotion**Chi Onwurah:**[\[126639\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether her Department has considered the potential merits of increasing the involvement of the UK's diverse diasporas in trade delegations; and whether she has made a recent assessment of the diversity of trade delegations.

Andrew Bowie:

The Department for International Trade (DIT) aims to be a diverse, inclusive department that is representative of the communities we serve. DIT supports and embeds the Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion strategy to promote fair representation within the workforce, with a number of actions to support increased representation of underrepresented groups.

This includes the Export Strategy, within which our commitments will be underpinned by improving our data on diversity and inclusion in international trade. Recent trade delegations have included DIT support to the Tavola Food and Drink Trade show in Belgium in March 2022, where DIT supported 20 businesses, 10 of which were from an ethnic minority background, to exhibit their products.

World Economic Forum**Nick Thomas-Symonds:**[\[127827\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what the cost to the public purse was of her travel arrangements for the World Economic Forum in Davos.

Nigel Huddleston:

[Holding answer 25 January 2023]: Details of Ministerial travel are routinely recorded on the Department's transparency returns, published at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dit-ministerial-gifts-hospitality-travel-and-meetings>. Returns are published on a quarterly basis.

Nick Thomas-Symonds:[\[127828\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if she will list the meetings she held whilst at the World Economic Forum in December 2022.

Nigel Huddleston:

[Holding answer 25 January 2023]: All meetings held by the Secretary of State in her Ministerial capacity are routinely released on quarterly Departmental transparency returns. These will be published at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dit-ministerial-gifts-hospitality-travel-and-meetings> in due course.

Nick Thomas-Symonds: [\[127829\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether she held discussions with the United States Trade Representative at the World Economic Forum in December 2022.

Nick Thomas-Symonds: [\[127830\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many times she has met with the United States Trade Representative since September 2022.

Greg Hands:

[Holding answer 25 January 2023]: The Secretary of State had a bilateral discussion with the United States Trade Representative at the World Economic Forum in Davos on 18 th January 2023.

This was their second bilateral discussion since the Secretary of State's appointment in September 2022.

LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES**■ Liverpool City Region: Local Government Finance****Bill Esterson:** [\[128626\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what change there has been in real-term levels of funding for each of the six boroughs in the Liverpool City Region since 2010.

Lee Rowley:

[Holding answer 25 January 2023]: Local authorities receive a wide range of grants from multiple government departments to reflect their broad responsibilities. Information on specific grants, including where relevant the amount returned, is held by the department that is responsible for administering the grant.

Core funding for local authorities is available through the local government finance settlement. We measure core funding through 'Core Spending Power' which consists of grant funding, redistributed business rates and council tax. It reflects regular, annual funding government makes available to deliver local authorities to deliver key services, both incorporating central grants and locally raised taxation, and allows comparisons across years which ensures a transparent measure of available funding. Due to changes in the function and financing of local government, comparable data on Core Spending Power is not available prior to 2015/16. Allocations back to 2015/16, including provisional allocations for 2023/24 are available [here](#).

CORE SPENDING POWER

Local Authority	2015 - 16£ million	2016 - 17£ million	2017 - 18£ million	2018 - 19£ million	2019 - 20£ million	2020 - 21£ million	2021 - 22£ million	2022 - 23£ million	2023 - 24£ million
Halton	104.0	100.7	102.9	105.0	106.7	113.1	116.8	125.7	137.9
Knowsley	152.5	146.3	149.3	152.3	154.5	165.0	172.3	186.8	206.7
Liverpool	445.0	436.2	445.9	454.2	460.7	492.6	505.8	547.2	606.3
Sefton	221.8	216.5	221.2	227.3	231.0	245.7	252.4	273.7	301.1
St Helens	141.8	137.7	141.6	144.8	146.8	156.8	162.2	176.7	194.4
Wirral	261.9	252.2	257.8	264.4	268.3	285.0	297.4	321.2	355.4

■ **Parking: Codes of Practice**

David Warburton:

[\[127867\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what recent steps his Department has taken in reissuing a parking code of practice.

Dehenna Davison:

I refer my Hon. Friend to the answer I gave to Question UIN [54476](#) on 12 October 2022.

NORTHERN IRELAND

■ **Northern Ireland Office: Disease Control**

Daisy Cooper:

[\[131394\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, whether their Department has purchased mobile UV virus irradiation units.

Mr Steve Baker:

My Department has not purchased any mobile UV irradiation units.

■ **Northern Ireland Office: Trade Unions**

Chris Stephens:

[R] [\[127802\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what human resources information their Department shares with trade unions on a regular basis.

Mr Steve Baker:

The Northern Ireland Office shares relevant human resources updates and information with trade unions when required as part of ongoing engagement. There is also a range of publicly available HR information, which is published on GOV.UK.

SCOTLAND■ **Scotland Office: Equality**

Chris Stephens: [R] [\[128665\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what steps he is taking to ensure his Department complies with section 2.1.6 of the Civil Service Management Code; and whether that monitoring data gathered is shared with union representatives.

Mr Alister Jack:

The Scotland Office is aware of, and complies with, its obligations under the Civil Service Management Code. As the Scotland Office does not employ any staff directly, detailed monitoring data is held by the employing departments.

There is a range of HR information which is published on GOV.UK and is therefore publicly available. In addition, the employing departments share routine human resources information with their recognised trade unions as part of their normal engagement.

TRANSPORT■ **Air Traffic Control: Strikes**

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[127743\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department has held discussions with its French counterparts on possible industrial action in the air traffic control sector in the coming months.

Jesse Norman:

The Department monitors the potential impact of possible industrial action in air traffic control through its engagement with NATS, the provider of air traffic control services in the UK and EUROCONTROL, the inter-governmental body responsible for the management of air traffic within Europe.

■ **Bus Services**

Rachael Maskell: [\[128674\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to ensure that impact assessments are (a) undertaken and (b) published where bus transport providers intend to remove a bus route from their network.

Mr Richard Holden:

The majority of bus services outside London are run on a commercial basis and decisions on routes are made and agreed between local authorities and bus operators. As part of The Public Service Vehicles (Registration of Local Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2018, operators are required to provide a copy of their proposed application to local authorities at least 28 days before they can submit an application to the traffic commissioner if they wish to vary or cancel a bus service. During this period, local authorities have the powers to request information from bus operators to understand the impact of the proposed changes will have and whether they want to subsidise or tender for a replacement service. Local authorities are free to publish their impact assessment of the bus service.

■ Bus Services: Disability**Chloe Smith:**[\[129772\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he has taken to support the installation of audio-visual real time information on buses for visually-impaired and hard-of-hearing passengers (a) nationally and (b) in Norfolk.

Mr Richard Holden:

We plan to require the provision of audible and visible information on local bus and coach services across Great Britain, and will introduce the Accessible Information Regulations shortly.

Ben Everitt:[\[130067\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make an assessment of the number and proportion of buses outside Greater London that are fitted with the necessary equipment for audio-visual next stop and final destination announcements.

Mr Richard Holden:

The percentage of buses, in England outside London, using the Audio Visual information system, to provide route/direction, next stop and diversion information to passengers was 15% in 2020/21.

■ Electric Vehicles: Stockport**Navendu Mishra:**[\[127924\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to increase the use of electric transport in Stockport borough.

Mr Richard Holden:

Government has already invested over £2 billion to support the transition to zero emission vehicles. This funding has focused on reducing barriers to adoption, including offsetting their higher upfront cost and accelerating the rollout of chargepoint infrastructure.

In Stockport 2,166 charging devices have been installed through the Department's Electric Vehicle Homecharge Scheme and 196 sockets through our 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 residents without access to private parking. I encourage Stockport Council to make use of the scheme.

■ Heaton Chapel Station

Navendu Mishra: [\[128722\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of trends in the number of cancelled planned rail services to and from Heaton Chapel station in 2022.

Huw Merriman:

Through its timetable development process, Northern seeks to provide a robust and resilient service to customers that aims to reduce cancellations as much as possible.

The Department's Rail North Partnership with Transport for the North continues to have regular discussions with Northern to manage the provision of services and work to reduce cancellations in the face of broad disruption across the network due to industrial action among other issues.

■ Manchester Airport: Air Routes

Navendu Mishra: [\[131436\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the ten most popular international flight destinations departing from Manchester Airport in 2021-22.

Navendu Mishra: [\[131437\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the ten most popular international flight routes departing from the UK in 2021-22.

Jesse Norman:

Data on commercial flight operations is collected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and is currently complete and held by the Department until the end of October 2022.

The top ten most popular international flight routes between January 2021 and October 2022, based on the number of terminal passengers departing from UK airports, is presented as **Table 1**.

The top ten most popular international flight routes between January 2021 and October 2022, based on the number of terminal passengers departing from Manchester Airport specifically, is presented as **Table 2**.

Table 1: Top ten most popular international flight routes based on the number of terminal passengers departing UK airports, January 2021 to October 2022

UK AIRPORT	INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT	TERMINAL PASSENGERS*
Heathrow	Dubai	1,273,000
Heathrow	New York (JF Kennedy)	1,254,000
Heathrow	Doha Hamad	750,000
Heathrow	Dublin	728,000
Heathrow	Madrid	668,000
Heathrow	Los Angeles International	644,000
Heathrow	Amsterdam	636,000
Gatwick	Dublin	635,000
Heathrow	Istanbul	611,000
Heathrow	Frankfurt Main	585,000

**rounded to the nearest 1,000*

Table 2: Top ten most popular international flight routes based on the number of terminal passengers departing Manchester Airport, January 2021 to October 2022

UK AIRPORT	INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT	TERMINAL PASSENGERS*
Manchester	Tenerife (Sur Reina Sofia)	463,000
Manchester	Palma De Mallorca	451,000
Manchester	Dublin	448,000
Manchester	Alicante	416,000
Manchester	Amsterdam	398,000
Manchester	Dubai	394,000
Manchester	Malaga	317,000
Manchester	Doha Hamad	311,000
Manchester	Antalya	294,000
Manchester	Faro	285,000

**rounded to the nearest 1,000*

■ Railways: Standards

Rachael Maskell: [\[128680\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the number of train tickets sold for cancelled trains in the last six (a) months and (b) years for which data is available; and what steps he is taking to ensure that those tickets are refunded.

Rachael Maskell: [\[128681\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will take steps to require train operators to allow passengers to travel on the next available train when if their train is cancelled, regardless of which train operating company is operating that train.

Rachael Maskell: [\[128682\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will take steps to require train companies to inform all passengers with advance tickets when a train is cancelled.

Huw Merriman:

The Department has not made an estimate of the number of train tickets sold for cancelled trains.

If a train is cancelled passengers can get a full refund, including for Advance tickets, if they decide not to travel, and passengers are able to use their train ticket on the next available train operated by that train operating company (TOC). During times of disruption operators often allow passengers to use their tickets on services operated by other TOCs, but these agreements are managed locally.

Many DfT-contracted TOCs have put in place systems whereby passengers who have purchased through their websites are notified if the train they have booked has been cancelled. Third party retailers will operate their own alert systems for their customers. The Department continues to work with industry to improve communication with passengers during times of disruption.