



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 31 January 2023 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:31 P.M., 31 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

### ATTORNEY GENERAL

#### ■ Attorney General: Minimum Wage

**Chris Stephens:**

[R] [\[129905\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many and what proportion of employees in their Department are paid at the rate of the National Minimum Wage.

**Michael Tomlinson:**

The Attorney General's Office has a shared HR service with the Government Legal Department (GLD) and do not report separately on this matter. This Government is committed to paying people a decent living wage, which is being addressed through the statutory National Living Wage. In April 2022, the Government increased the National Living Wage to £9.50 per hour. This will rise to £10.42 an hour from 1 April 2023, an increase of 9.7%. Further information can be found on National Living Wage and National Minimum wage here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-national-minimum-wage-in-2022>

#### ■ Intestacy

**Matthew Pennycook:**

[\[133684\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, pursuant to the Answer of 26 January 2023 to Question 129848 on bona vacantia residential properties, who is responsible for notifying the Bona Vacantia Division of the Government Legal Department that an empty property is suspected of being bona vacantia.

**Michael Tomlinson:**

It is open to anyone to notify the Bona Vacantia Division (BVD) of the Government Legal Department (GLD) of an empty property if it is an asset of a dissolved company or a deceased person's estate (where it is believed they died intestate and without known entitled relatives). Information and guidance on how to notify of a dissolved company asset or refer a deceased person's estate can be found on their website [www.gov.uk/bonavacantia](http://www.gov.uk/bonavacantia)

#### ■ Sentencing

**Julian Knight:**

[\[129965\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many referrals were made under the Unduly Lenient Sentences scheme in 2022.

**Julian Knight:**

[\[129966\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many sentences were increased under the Unduly Lenient Sentences scheme in 2022.



**Michael Tomlinson:**

To date, the Law Officers have referred the cases of 135 offenders sentenced in 2022 to the Court of Appeal under the Unduly Lenient Sentence scheme.

Of those cases referenced, 120 have so far concluded. The Court granted leave to refer in 93 (77.5%) and the sentence was increased in 80 (67%). These figures are accurate as of 25 January 2023.

**BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY****■ Business: St Helens****Conor McGinn:**[\[131229\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many businesses in St Helens have received the Government energy subsidy.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Energy Bill Relief Scheme (EBRS) provides a discount on the wholesale element of gas and electricity bills to ensure that all eligible small businesses that receive their energy from licensed suppliers, are protected from high energy costs over the winter period. The EBRS discount is applied directly to the energy bills of eligible businesses by their energy providers. Therefore the Government does not currently have a breakdown of support received by location.

**■ Business: Stockport****Navendu Mishra:**[\[133785\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many businesses in Stockport constituency have received the Government energy subsidy.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Energy Bill Relief Scheme (EBRS) provides a discount on the wholesale element of gas and electricity bills to ensure that all eligible businesses in Stockport, that receive their energy from licensed suppliers, are protected from excessively high energy costs over the winter period. The EBRS discount is applied directly to the energy bills of eligible businesses by their energy providers. Therefore the Government does not have a breakdown of support received by location. The new Energy Bill Discount Scheme (EBDS) will run from April until March 2024 and provide a discount to eligible businesses.

**■ Business: Taxation****Dan Carden:**[\[131296\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of his proposed Scale-Up Britain initiative on distributive tax reform for UK corporations.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

Scale-up Britain is about harnessing and building on our existing strengths – our world class universities, the second most start-ups in the world, the biggest venture capital market in Europe – to make sure Britain leads in the emerging markets of the future. The world is changing rapidly, and Scale-up Britain is about making sure our country seizes that opportunity. Tax policy is a matter for my Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer.

**■ Clothing: Manufacturing Industries****Mrs Pauline Latham:**[\[129760\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of introducing an independent regulator which monitors the treatment of direct suppliers in the fashion industry, similar to the role of the Groceries Code Adjudicator.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

In response to the single enforcement body consultation published in 2021, the Government reaffirmed its commitment to continue engaging with the enforcement bodies and industry partners to strengthen our understanding of the garment trade. We will continue to review this issue and consider options to drive up standards across the sector.

**■ Consumers: Protection****Steve McCabe:**[\[133541\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of increasing penalties for firms found to have misled consumers about their rights.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

This is an important issue which the Government has committed to act on shortly. We will introduce new civil monetary penalties for breaches of consumer law. The Government will do so through the Digital Markets, Competition and Consumer Bill which will be brought forward in this session of Parliament.

This means that anyone ripping off consumers with misleading claims, unfair terms and conditions and hard-to-exit contracts may be penalised up to 10% of annual global turnover, or £300,000, whichever is higher.

Under these plans, the Competition and Markets Authority will be given direct fining powers, alongside the civil courts which would be able to act on application from enforcers like sector regulators and local authority trading standards departments.

## ■ Copyright

**John Spellar:**

[\[133539\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when the consultation on copyright protection from text and data mining will be concluded; and when she will decide on the steps the Government will take in response to that consultation.

**George Freeman:**

The Government commenced a period of stakeholder engagement on implementation options for its proposals for text and data mining in December 2022. The Government aims to conclude this engagement in early 2023 and a decision on next steps will subsequently be taken.

## ■ Death: Weather

**Dan Carden:**

[\[129988\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the End Fuel Poverty Coalition's analysis of official data on the levels of excess winter deaths caused by cold homes, published in December 2022, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies of that organisation's findings on trends in the number of excess deaths caused by living in cold and damp homes.

**Graham Stuart:**

It is likely that a combination of factors has contributed to excess deaths over winter 2022/23, including high flu prevalence, cold weather, the ongoing challenges of COVID-19 and health conditions including heart disease and diabetes. However, the Government recognises the difficulty many households, especially vulnerable households, are experiencing this winter.

Energy efficiency improvements are the best way to tackle fuel poverty in the long term. Measures are available through a range of schemes including the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, the Home Upgrade Grant and the Energy Company Obligation.

The Government has also announced significant support for this winter and next with specific measures for the most vulnerable.

## ■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Disease Control

**Daisy Cooper:**

[\[131389\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether their Department has purchased mobile UV virus irradiation units.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has purchased mobile UV irradiation units.

**■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Minimum Wage****Chris Stephens:****[R] [129889]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many and what proportion of employees in their Department are paid at the rate of the National Minimum Wage.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

This Government is committed to paying people a decent living wage, which is being addressed through the statutory National Living Wage(NLW). In April 2022, the Government increased the National Living Wage to £9.50 per hour. This will rise to £10.42 an hour from 1 April 2023, an increase of 9.7%.

By 2024, the Government has committed that the National Living Wage will reach 66% of median UK earnings.

The National Living Wage is the statutory minimum wage for workers aged 23 and over. Different minimum wage rates apply to 21-22 year olds, 18-20 year olds, 16-17 year olds and apprentices aged under 19 or in the first year of an apprenticeship.

All employees of The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) are paid above the National Living Wage rate.

**■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Written Questions****Jessica Morden:****[131162]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 20 January 2023 to Question 122087, what proportion of (a) ordinary and (b) named-day written questions his Department answered on time between 1 January and 31 July 2022.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

The latest official statistics produced by the Table Office are as follows:

**4<sup>th</sup> Jan 2022 – 26<sup>th</sup> Apr 2022:**

- Named Day PQs – 92%
- Ordinary Written PQs – 91%

**10<sup>th</sup> May 2022 – 21<sup>st</sup> Jul 2022 :**

- Named Day PQs – 89%
- Ordinary Written PQs – 99%

Statistics for September to the December recess are currently being compiled.

## ■ District Heating: Standards

**Marsha De Cordova:**

**[131453]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure that heat network suppliers maintain adequate consumer service standards.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Energy Bill introduces a regulatory framework for heat networks. Under the proposed regulatory framework, Ofgem will be given new powers to regulate prices in this sector. The legislation contains the ability for government to set minimum efficiency standards for heat networks. Ofgem will also have powers to set rules requiring heat networks to disclose publicly sufficient information to the consumer to understand how much they are paying. This includes fixed charges, tariffs, and unit rates, and clear explanations about how prices are set and how heat network consumers are billed.

## ■ Electricity Generation

**Duncan Baker:**

**[133783]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an estimate of the proportion of UK electricity use in 2050 that will be derived from (a) UK-generated renewable energy, (b) UK-generated fossil fuels, (c) UK-generated nuclear and (d) net imports.

**Graham Stuart:**

Annex O (sub-Annex L) of the Energy and Emission Projections<sup>[1]</sup> shows annual generation by technology (including imports) for four power sector scenarios (two with higher levels of electricity demand and two with lower levels of electricity demand).

<sup>[1]</sup>[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1058212/Annex-J-total-electricity-gen-by-source\\_NZSFeb22.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1058212/Annex-J-total-electricity-gen-by-source_NZSFeb22.ods)

## ■ Energy Bills Rebate: Boats

**Wera Hobhouse:**

**[129846]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what progress his Department has made on including people who live on a boat in the Energy Bills Support Scheme.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Funding (EBSS AF) will provide support of £400 for energy bills for around 900,000 households without a relationship to a domestic electricity supplier. Subject to applications meeting the eligibility criteria, houseboats that can provide proof of address will receive the EBSS AF. Those who are eligible for the EBSS AF will need to submit a short online form via the Government's GOV.UK pages. The application portal will open on or before 27th February.

**■ Energy Bills Rebate: Voucher Schemes****Beth Winter:****[130107]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the oral contribution of the Minister on 23 January 2023, if he will publish a list of supplier redemption rates for the Energy Bills Support Scheme vouchers.

**Graham Stuart:**

In the first 3 months of the Energy Bills Support Scheme energy suppliers issued 6,020,560 (99%) vouchers to customers with traditional prepayment meters, of which 4,261,940 (71%) had been redeemed by end December, an increase from 66% in the previous month.

Supplier redemption rates have now been published. Full details are here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/energy-bills-support-scheme-payments-made-by-electricity-suppliers-to-customers>.

**■ Energy Bills Rebate: Warwick and Leamington****Matt Western:****[129997]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many people in Warwick and Leamington are eligible for Energy Bills Support Scheme vouchers; and how many of those eligible have redeemed those vouchers.

**Graham Stuart:**

In the first 3 months of the Energy Bills Support Scheme energy suppliers issued 6,020,560 (99%) vouchers, of which 4,261,940 (71%) had been redeemed by end December. This is an increase from 66% on the previous month.

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

**■ Energy Intensive Industries Exemption Scheme: Leisure****Tulip Siddiq:****[129864]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has plans to make (a) swimming pools and (b) leisure centres eligible for support under the Energy Intensive Industries Exemption Scheme.

**Graham Stuart:**

There are currently no plans to review the list of Energy and Trade Intensive Industries eligible for support under the Energy Bill Discount Scheme. The Government has taken a consistent approach to identifying the most energy and trade intensive sectors, with all sectors that meet agreed thresholds for energy and trade intensity eligible for Energy and Trade Intensive Industries support. These thresholds have been set at sectors falling above the 80th percentile for energy intensity and 60th percentile for trade intensity, plus any sectors eligible for the existing energy compensation and exemption schemes.

## ■ Energy Performance Certificates

**Darren Jones:**

[\[129989\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Improvement Energy Performance Certificates: action plan - progress update, published on 8 November 2021, what progress his Department has made on updating regulations related to Energy Performance Certificates since publication of that update.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Department works closely with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on progressing the outstanding actions in the Energy Performance Certificate Action Plan.

## ■ Energy Supply

**Dan Carden:**

[\[130097\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will take steps to prevent disconnection from the energy network by ensuring that a minimum level of energy is supplied to each household.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Government's 5-point plan on prepayment meters forms part of a wider effort to ensure that energy users are protected. The Government is also exploring longer term measures to address the issues.

## ■ Energy: Licensing

**Dan Carden:**

[\[130056\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 23 January 2023 to Question 126778 on Energy: Licensing, if he will take steps to ensure that Ofgem publishes an update on the compliance action being taken against energy suppliers found to be in breach of their licensing conditions, including an update on actions taken since November 2022.

**Graham Stuart:**

Ofgem, as the independent energy regulator, regularly monitors how energy suppliers operate in the energy market and where necessary, can take enforcement action on energy suppliers who systematically fail to meet their licence obligations. Following Market Compliance Reviews, Ofgem requires energy suppliers with any weaknesses to take action to improve upon their performance by creating and implementing an improvement plan. Ofgem will publish updates to this work on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

## ■ Energy: Meters

**Catherine West:**

[\[129883\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent discussions he has had with energy suppliers on vulnerable households being required by energy companies onto prepayment energy meters.

**Graham Stuart:**

I met with energy suppliers, Ofgem, Energy UK and Citizens Advice to discuss matters related to prepayment meters.

**Catherine West:**

[\[129884\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make it his policy to ban energy suppliers from forcibly switching households having difficulty paying energy bills onto energy prepayment meters.

**Graham Stuart:**

Prepayment meters (PPMs) allow customers to pay for energy on a pay-as-you-go basis and serve an important function by helping the avoidance of debt and court action. A ban on PPM switching as a last resort could lead to an increase in bailiff action. There are no plans to remove this option.

Ofgem has stringent rules on the force-fitting of PPMs. My Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State has written to Ofgem asking them to conduct a review to make sure suppliers are complying with those rules. The Secretary of State has also asked energy suppliers to commit voluntarily to stopping this practice.

**Catherine West:**

[\[129885\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent discussions he has had with energy suppliers on lost, delayed or unclaimed energy vouchers for prepayment meter customers.

**Catherine West:**

[\[129886\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to help customers redeem lost, delayed or unclaimed repayment energy vouchers.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Government works with suppliers and other stakeholders to communicate the scheme, the importance of checking post, emails and text for vouchers, and taking action to redeem them.

Suppliers are obliged to provide evidence to BEIS of action to encourage prepayment customers to redeem their vouchers. Suppliers should make a minimum of three attempts to contact customers who have not redeemed their voucher.

**Marsha De Cordova:**

[\[130040\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department plans to prevent energy suppliers from requiring customers to switch to energy prepayment meters.

**Graham Stuart:**

Prepayment meters (PPMs) allow customers to pay for energy on a pay-as-you-go basis and serve an important function by helping avoid debt and court action. A ban on PPM switching as a last resort could lead to an increase in bailiff action. There are no plans to remove this option.



Ofgem has stringent rules on the force-fitting of PPMs. My Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State has written to Ofgem asking it to conduct a review to make sure suppliers are complying with those rules. The Business Secretary has also asked energy suppliers to commit voluntarily to stopping this practice.

**Dan Carden:**

**[130057]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 23 January 2023 to Question 126777 Energy: Meters, when he plans to publish those letters on the Government website.

**Graham Stuart:**

My Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State's letter to Ofgem has been published on the GOV.UK website and is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/business-secretary-warns-energy-suppliers-to-end-mistreatment-of-customers>.

Ofgem has outlined how it intends to tackle inappropriate energy supplier prepayment meter practices online: <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/news-and-views/blog/tackling-inappropriate-energy-supplier-prepayment-meter-practices>.

**Dan Carden:**

**[130096]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to his Oral Contribution to the Urgent Question on Forced installation of prepayment meters in homes by energy companies on 23 January 2023, for what reason the Government will not implement a ban on forced prepayment meter installations.

**Graham Stuart:**

Prepayment meters (PPMs) allow customers to pay for energy on a pay-as-you-go basis and serve an important function by helping the avoidance of debt and court action. A ban on PPM switching as a last resort could lead to an increase in bailiff action. There are no plans to remove this option.

Ofgem has stringent rules on the force-fitting of PPMs. My Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State has written to Ofgem asking it to conduct a review to make sure suppliers are complying with those rules. The Secretary of State has also asked energy suppliers to commit voluntarily to stopping this practice.

**Dan Carden:**

**[130101]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Urgent Question on Forced installation of prepayment meters in homes by energy companies of 23 January 2023, Official Report, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the criteria of last resort for mandatory prepayment meter installations.

**Graham Stuart:**

A supplier can only force-fit a prepayment meter by warrant after they have taken all reasonable steps to agree payment with a customer.

Ofgem will be carrying out a review focusing specifically on self-disconnections, remote switching and forced installations and, the checks and balances companies

have around any decision to put a customer on a pre-payment meter. Furthermore, Ofgem will continue to look at the rules around mandatory moves to pre-payment meters, when a court warrant can be applied for, and the steps that need to be taken first.

**Dan Carden:**

**[130102]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to his Oral contribution to the Urgent Question on Forced installation of prepayment meters in homes by energy companies on 23 January 2023, what reduction targets his Department has set for energy suppliers to end the practice of forced prepayment meter installations.

**Graham Stuart:**

Several energy suppliers have already paused forced installations of prepayment meters by warrant this winter, and my Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State has called on more suppliers to stop voluntarily the practice and make greater effort to help the most vulnerable as part of the 5-point plan to tackle supplier bad behaviour.

Reduction targets on forced prepayment meter installations have not been made but the Department will be discussing these matters further with stakeholders including energy suppliers.

**Beth Winter:**

**[130104]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the oral contribution of the Minister on 23 January 2023, if he will publish his letter to energy suppliers of 22 January 2023.

**Graham Stuart:**

The letter from my Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State to energy suppliers has been published and is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/business-secretary-warns-energy-suppliers-to-end-mistreatment-of-customers>.

**Beth Winter:**

**[130105]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the oral contribution of the Minister on 23 January 2023, whether his Department has conducted an assessment to compare the potential effect of customers of his call for suppliers to voluntarily stop the practice of forced prepayment switching with requiring energy suppliers by regulation to stop forced prepayment switching.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Government is focused on helping energy customers, especially those in vulnerable circumstances, through the cost-of-living crisis. My Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State's call for suppliers to stop voluntarily the practice of forced prepayment switching is one part of the 5-point plan on prepayment meters. A blanket ban on prepayment meter switching as a last resort could lead to an increase in bailiff action and physical disconnections. The Government has no plans to remove this option.

**Beth Winter:**

**[130106]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the oral contribution of the Minister on 23 January 2023, if he will publish supplier data on the number of warrant applications that have been made to forcibly enter homes to install energy prepayment meters.

**Graham Stuart:**

As part of my Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State's 5-point plan regarding prepayment meters, he has written to energy suppliers asking that they share the number of warrants that they have applied for in recent months, and Ofgem has encouraged suppliers to be fully transparent with their data around prepayment meter warrants.

**Beth Winter:**

**[130109]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the oral contribution of the Minister on 23 January 2023, what steps he is taking to ensure that the process by which energy suppliers bring warrant cases to court for prepayment meter installation is fair, transparent and supports vulnerable customers.

**Graham Stuart:**

My Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State has asked Ofgem to do more to ensure suppliers protect vulnerable consumers. This includes revisiting their approach to compliance enforcement, as well as the urgent publication of recent investigations into outcomes for vulnerable customers.

Ofgem will be carrying out a review with a focus on forced installations, and the checks and balances suppliers have around any decision to put a customer on a prepayment meter. Furthermore, Ofgem will continue to look at the rules around mandatory moves to prepayment meters, when a court warrant can be applied for, and the steps that need to be taken first.

**Beth Winter:**

**[130110]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 11 January 2023 to Question 114828 on Powers of Entry: Meters, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of amending legislation to require energy suppliers to demonstrate that they are acting as a last resort in seeking a warrant to install a prepayment meter.

**Graham Stuart:**

My Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has set out a 5-point plan on prepayment meters including coordination with Ofgem to ensure that it takes a more robust approach to the protection of vulnerable customers and conducts a review to make sure energy suppliers are complying with rules.

Additionally, the Secretary of State is working with Ofgem and my Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Justice to ensure that the process by which suppliers bring

cases to court to obtain a warrant is fair, transparent and supports vulnerable customers.

**Conor McGinn:**

[131232]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of (a) how many prepayment energy meters there are in (i) St Helens and (ii) Merseyside and (b) what proportion of those are in households.

**Graham Stuart:**

BEIS produced a one-off publication in March 2019 of [annual prepayment meter electricity statistics](#) for Great Britain by country, English regions and local authority. These statistics cover electricity prepayment meters which have a domestic meter profile in 2017.

Data on regional variation of payment method (prepayment, direct debit or credit) for domestic standard electricity customers, domestic economy 7 electricity customers and domestic gas customers is published in [Quarterly Energy Prices](#) table 2.4.2, table 2.4.3 and table 2.5.2.

**Dan Carden:**

[131278]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 23 January 2023 to Question 126776, whether his Department will publish the minutes of the roundtable discussion.

**Graham Stuart:**

Ministers will keep the House updated as this work progresses.

**Dan Carden:**

[131315]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 24 January 2023 to Question 127884 on Energy: Meters, if he will publish on the Government website any data his Department holds on the number of (a) warrant applications energy suppliers have made for forced prepayment meter switching and (b) households energy suppliers have remotely switched to prepayment mode.

**Graham Stuart:**

As part of the Government's 5-point plan regarding prepayment meters (PPMs), energy suppliers have been asked to self-publish the number of warrants for which they have applied.

The independent regulator Ofgem collects and publishes a range of data on PPMs, including the numbers of households that have been remotely switched to PPMs. I refer the Hon. Member to the answer I gave the Hon. Member for Newport East on 9th November 2022 to Question [75843](#).

**Andy Slaughter:**

[133567]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make it his policy to ban the forcible installation of prepayment meters.

**Graham Stuart:**

Prepayment meters (PPMs) allow customers to pay for energy on a pay-as-you-go basis and serve an important function by helping the avoidance of debt and court action. A ban on PPM installation as a last resort could lead to an increase in bailiff action and physical disconnections. The Government has no plans to remove this option.

Ofgem has stringent rules on the force-fitting of PPMs. My Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State has written to Ofgem asking them to conduct a review to make sure energy suppliers are complying with those rules. He has also asked suppliers to commit voluntarily to stop this practice.

**Drew Hendry:**[\[133711\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to help people who live in areas without adequate radio coverage access alternatives to standard smart meters.

**Graham Stuart:**

As many households and small businesses as possible should benefit from smart metering. The Data Communications Company (DCC), which operates the national communications infrastructure for smart metering, is obliged under its licence to provide communications coverage to at least 99.25% of premises across Great Britain.

In addition, the DCC is also required to seek to provide coverage where it is practicable and cost proportionate, and to assess opportunities to increase the overall level of coverage. Ofgem is responsible for regulating the DCC against its licence conditions.

**■ Energy: Prices****Dan Carden:**[\[130059\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of introducing an energy social tariff for disabled customers.

**Graham Stuart:**

As set out in the Autumn Statement, the Government is developing a new approach to consumer protection in energy markets, which will apply from April 2024 onwards, after the closure of the Energy Price Guarantee.

The Government has committed to work with consumer groups and industry to consider the best approach, including options such as social tariffs, as part of wider retail market reforms.

**Beth Winter:**[\[130108\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the oral contribution of the Minister on 23 January 2023, whether his Department has

proposed specific levels of additional credit and debt forgiveness that energy suppliers have been asked to consider to help consumers in payment difficulties.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Department has not proposed specific levels of additional credit and debt forgiveness. I discussed matters related to support for energy customers on prepayment meters with stakeholders, including energy supply companies, at a roundtable on Wednesday 25 January.

**Dr Kieran Mullan:**

[\[131457\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to help support households with their energy bills.

**Graham Stuart:**

In order to support households with energy bills, the Government has set up the Energy Bills Support Scheme which is delivering a £400 non-repayable government discount this winter.

The Energy Price Guarantee reduces the amount a household is charged per unit of gas or electricity, to an annual equivalent of around £2,500 for a typical household in Great Britain from 1 October 2022 to end of March 2023.

For households that use alternative fuels such as biomass, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) or heating oil, the Alternative Fuel Payment scheme will deliver an additional £200.

**Margaret Greenwood:**

[\[132515\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans he has to introduce a social tariff for energy.

**Graham Stuart:**

As set out in the Autumn Statement, the Government is developing a new approach to consumer protection in energy markets, which will apply from April 2024 onwards.

The Government has committed to work with consumer groups and industry to consider the best approach, including options such as social tariffs, as part of wider retail market reforms.

■ **Energy: Stockport**

**Navendu Mishra:**

[\[133786\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of how many prepayment energy meters there are in Stockport (a) constituency and (b) borough; and what proportion of those are in households.

**Graham Stuart:**

BEIS produced a one-off publication in March 2019 of [annual prepayment meter electricity statistics](#) for Great Britain by country, English regions and local authority. These statistics cover electricity prepayment meters that had a domestic meter profile in 2017.

Data on regional variation of payment method (prepayment, direct debit or credit) for domestic standard electricity customers, domestic economy 7 electricity customers and domestic gas customers is published in [Quarterly Energy Prices](#) table 2.4.2, table 2.4.3 and table 2.5.2.

## ■ Heat Network Efficiency Scheme

**Marsha De Cordova:**

[\[131449\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he plans to increase the Heat Network Efficiency Scheme grant support programme in (a) 2023-24 and (b) 2024-25.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Heat Network Efficiency Scheme (HNES) has £32m of grants across 2023/24 and 2024/25. There are no plans to increase this funding.

**Marsha De Cordova:**

[\[131450\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many applications have been made to the Heat Network Efficiency Scheme as of 24 January 2023; and how much and what proportion of that scheme's funding had been allocated by that date.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Heat Network Efficiency Scheme (HNES), the Government's £32m grant programme, will be opening for applications in early February 2023 with the first funding round closing to applicants on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. As of 24 January 2023, the Government has not received any applications, nor allocated any funding.

## ■ Heat Network Efficiency Scheme: Battersea

**Marsha De Cordova:**

[\[131451\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many Heat Network suppliers operating in Battersea constituency have applied for the Heat Network Efficiency Scheme grant support programme.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Heat Network Efficiency Scheme (HNES), the Government's £32m grant programme, will be opening for applications in early February 2023 with the first funding round closing to applicants on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. The HNES Demonstrator, which ran from October 2021 to March 2022, received one application from a heat network project in Nine Elms, Battersea.

## ■ Heat Pumps: Ceredigion

**Ben Lake:**

[\[131284\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many domestic households in Ceredigion depend on (a) air source and (b) ground source heat pumps for their heating.



**Graham Stuart:**

The Microgeneration Certification Scheme Installations Database shows that as of 31 December 2022, (a) 436 air source heat pumps and (b) 53 ground/water source heat pumps were installed in domestic properties in Ceredigion.

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

■ **Heat Trust****Marsha De Cordova:****[131452]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department holds data on how many and what proportion of heat network suppliers are registered with the Heat Trust (a) in total and (b) operating in Battersea.

**Graham Stuart:**

Data on Heat Trust membership is owned by Heat Trust rather than BEIS. Heat Trust publishes information on registered participants and sites here:

<https://heattrust.org/members>.

BEIS does not currently publish data on the number of unique heat suppliers, but does publish estimates for the number of heat network sites. BEIS has not estimated a breakdown of heat network sites by constituency, but has published a breakdown by local authority. The most recent published data identified 13,995 heat networks in the UK, of which 111 heat networks were identified in the local authority of Wandsworth ( <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/energy-trends-march-2018-special-feature-article-experimental-statistics-on-heat-networks> ).

■ **Heating: Non-ionizing Radiation****Darren Jones:****[129991]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of increasing the use of infrared heating.

**Graham Stuart:**

BEIS research to date, such as the Cost Optimal Domestic Electrification<sup>[1]</sup> project, has compared infrared heating with other electrical heating options and concluded that heat-pumps are the most cost-optimal electric heating technology for most UK homes. To improve the Government's understanding of the potential role of infrared heating in decarbonising heat, BEIS has commenced a further programme of evidence gathering on the performance of these systems relative to other technologies.

<sup>[1]</sup>[\*Cost Optimal Domestic Electrification \(CODE\): research study\*](#)



*Ref: BEIS Research Paper Number: 2021/051, published September 2021. (Viewed on 24 January 2023)*

## ■ Housing: Energy

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[133662\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what data his Department holds on the number of domestic properties in (a) York local authority, (b) Yorkshire and the Humber and (c) England deemed to have high energy costs based on the property's characteristics of (i) type, (ii) age and (iii) floor area in the context of a modelled energy cost score.

**Graham Stuart:**

The table below provides the (rounded) number of domestic properties calculated to have a high energy cost score based on Valuation Office Agency and, where missing, imputed property characteristic data for the 2022/23 scheme year:

AREA	NUMBER WITH A HIGH ENERGY COST SCORE
York local authority	44,000
Yorkshire and the Humber	1,230,000
England	12,330,000

## ■ Iron and Steel: Manufacturing Industries

**Bill Esterson:**

[\[132358\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 16 January 2023 to Question 119981, whether he has made an assessment of the reasons for the change in the UK's global ranking for steel production.

**Ms Nusrat Ghani:**

Over recent years, developing economies have expanded their steel sectors. As a result, developed economies have dropped down the global league table for steel production since 2008. The G20 Global Forum on Steel Excess Capacity (GFSEC) has identified that a significant proportion of the world's excess steel capacity is coming from China, who provide a range of unfair subsidies and support to their steel industry.

**Bill Esterson:**

[\[132360\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the reasons for which the quantity of steel produced in the UK has reduced since 2007.

**Ms Nusrat Ghani:**

Between 2007 and 2021, crude steel production reduced from c.14 million tonnes per annum to c. 7 million tonnes. 3.6 million tonnes of this reduction can be attributed to

the closure of the SSI steel site at Redcar which entered insolvency in 2015 with no ability to restart the blast furnaces.

**Bill Esterson:** [132361]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make a comparative assessment of the steel produced in the (a) UK and (b) German steel industry.

**Ms Nusrat Ghani:**

The UK steel sector produced c.7m tonnes of steel in 2021, employing c.34,000 (SIC 24.1-3) in the same year. The German steel industry produced c. 40mt in 2021, and in 2020 employed c.125k (SIC 24.1-3). (Sources: World Steel Association, ONS, BG level employment, table 2, Eurostat, Annual Detailed Enterprise Statistics for Industry).

**Bill Esterson:** [132362]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make a comparative assessment of the impact of energy costs on steel companies in (a) the UK, (b) Germany, (c) Italy, (d) France and (e) Sweden.

**Ms Nusrat Ghani:**

Ofgem has previously carried out research on what drives comparatively high GB electricity prices for energy intensive industries (EIIs) and have compared them with selected European countries. They published a report in 2021 which can be found here:

<https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications/research-gb-electricity-prices-energy-intensive-industries>.

The Government has supported the steel sector extensively, including providing over £800m since 2013 to help with the costs of electricity and to support a low carbon transition. The 2022 British Energy Security Strategy announced that the EII Compensation Scheme would be extended for a further 3 years with increased aid intensity, representing a doubling of relief. It also announced that the Government would consider making similar changes to the related EII Exemption Scheme and that we will explore other possible measures to reduce electricity costs for EIIs.

## ■ Large and Medium Sized Companies and Groups (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008

**Stella Creasy:** [133621]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Retained EU Law Bill, whether he plans to (a) revoke, (b) retain or (c) replace the Large and Medium Sized Companies and Groups (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy is reviewing all REUL in line with usual policy development to determine whether to repeal, replace or preserve it.

The Government will, in due course, provide further information regarding its plans for those aspects of company law which are within the scope of the Retained EU Law Bill's sunset provisions.

**■ National Grid: Stockport****Navendu Mishra:**[\[131363\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the impact of capacity issues at the national grid on housebuilding in Stockport constituency.

**Graham Stuart:**

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 20th September 2022 to Question [46191](#). In addition, Ofgem's upcoming distribution network price control provides £22.2bn in baseline funding to deliver electricity to homes and meet expected increases in electricity demand. It incentivises networks to invest ahead of demand to future-proof the network. Transmission and distribution network companies are also working together to improve the connection processes and embed best practice. This should help release network capacity and accelerate connection timescales.

**■ Rolls Royce: Nuclear Reactors****Michael Fabricant:**[\[129721\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Rolls Royce small modular reactor; and whether he has plans to use them for energy generation.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Government has awarded up to £210m to support development of the Rolls Royce Small Modular Reactor (SMR) design. The Rolls-Royce SMR entered the Generic Design Assessment process in April becoming the first SMR to begin UK nuclear regulation.

As outlined in the British Energy Security Strategy, the Government intends to initiate a selection process in 2023 for the next nuclear projects, including SMRs.

**■ Small Businesses: Energy****Tom Hunt:**[\[131424\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent steps his Department has taken to support small businesses with energy costs.

**Tom Hunt:**

[\[131425\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of Government support for small businesses with energy costs.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Energy Bill Relief Scheme provides a discount on the wholesale element of gas and electricity bills to ensure that all eligible businesses, that receive their energy from licensed suppliers, are protected from high energy costs over the winter period.

This support is preventing insolvencies and protecting jobs and livelihoods. Following an HMT-led review, the new Energy Bill Discount Scheme, will run from April until March 2024, and continue to provide a discount to eligible businesses. The support offered through the EBRS and EBDS schemes is in addition to a package of support including recent fuel duty and VAT cuts, business rate holidays and government backed loans worth around £400 billion.

#### ■ **Small Businesses: Stockport**

**Navendu Mishra:**

[\[131359\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to support small businesses in Stockport constituency in the context of the cost of living crisis.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

Businesses in Stockport will have benefitted from the Government's reversal of the National Insurance rise, saving SMEs approximately £4,200 on average, the cut to fuel duty for 12 months and raising the Employment Allowance to £5,000.

The Energy Bill Relief and Energy Bill Discount Schemes will protect SMEs from high energy costs over the winter. The Autumn Statement announced £13.6 billion of support for businesses over the next five years, reducing the burden of business rates for SMEs.

The Government is providing financial support – 173 SMEs in Stockport have received Start Up loans to the value of £1,648,098 as at December 2022.

#### ■ **Smart Export Guarantee**

**Yasmin Qureshi:**

[\[131187\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the rates are for Smart Export Guarantee (a) generators and (b) licensees.

**Graham Stuart:**

It is for Smart Export Guarantee (SEG) licensees to determine the tariff rates they offer to eligible generators who may seek to sell their exported electricity. There are a range of different tariffs available to generators.

Further details on tariffs offered in the second year of the scheme can be found within Ofgem's Annual Report ( <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications/smart-export-guarantee-seg-annual-report-2021-22> ) or third party comparison websites such as <https://solarenergyuk.org/resource/smart-export-guarantee/> that provides current market offerings.

## ■ Taxation: Reform

**Dan Carden:**

[131290]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he had discussions at the World Economic Forum in Davos on international tax reform.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

My Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State had discussions at the World Economic Forum with a large number of businesses, some of whom commented on UK tax reforms. He did not discuss international tax reform.

## ■ Voluntary Scheme for Branded Medicines Pricing and Access: Innovation and Research

**Daniel Zeichner:**

[133601]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the Voluntary Scheme for Branded Medicines Pricing Access on (a) global R&D investment decisions and (b) access to medical innovation.

**Ms Nusrat Ghani:**

The Government is working to better understand the impacts the operation of the current Voluntary Scheme on investments in the UK and access to medicines. We are therefore in direct conversations with companies to understand these impacts. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is in close discussions with the Department of Health and Social Care, the Department responsible for the Voluntary Scheme, about the business environment for life sciences and its impact on investment and patient access.

## ■ Warm Home Discount Scheme

**Steve McCabe:**

[131121]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the potential impact of changing the eligibility criteria for the Warm Home Discount on those no longer eligible under the new criteria.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Government has expanded the Warm Home Discount scheme this year, providing £150 rebates to over 3 million households. The Government published impact assessments alongside the consultation and the final policy, which compared the option for reforming the scheme in England and Wales to continuing the previous

scheme. These can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/warm-home-discount-better-targeted-support-from-2022>.

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[133661]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many people in (a) York local authority area, (b) Yorkshire and the Humber and (c) England who received help from the Warm Home Discount Scheme in 2021-2022 have been sent a letter saying they are not entitled to the help in 2022-2023 because under the new criteria they are not considered to have high energy costs.

**Graham Stuart:**

Low-income households apply through their suppliers, who set their own application processes and eligibility criteria. Therefore the Government does not have data on how many people received a rebate in 2021/22 who are not eligible for a rebate this year.

#### ■ Warm Home Discount Scheme: Pension Credit

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[133660]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many people in (a) York Local Authority Area, (b) Yorkshire and the Humber and (c) England in receipt of Savings Credit received help from the Warm Home Discount Scheme in 2021-22.

**Graham Stuart:**

Low-income households apply through their suppliers, who set their own application processes and eligibility criteria. Therefore the Government does not have data on how many people in receipt of Pension Savings Credit received a Warm Home Discount rebate in 2021/22.

#### ■ Warm Home Discount Scheme: Social Security Benefits

**Steve McCabe:**

**[131120]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether energy efficient households in receipt of benefits are able to receive the Warm Home Discount this winter.

**Graham Stuart:**

Households that meet the eligibility criteria are able to receive the Warm Home Discount this winter.

In England and Wales, a household must either be in receipt of the Pension Credit Guarantee Credit or both in receipt of a relevant means-tested benefit and living in a property that has high costs to heat on the basis of its property characteristics. More efficient homes are less likely to meet the high costs criterion.

In Scotland, a household must either be in receipt of the Pension Credit Guarantee Credit or apply to their energy supplier and satisfy the supplier's eligibility criteria for a rebate under the Broader Group.

## ■ Warm Home Discount Scheme: State Retirement Pensions

**Judith Cummins:**

**[131289]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of extending the Warm Home Discount to all recipients of the State Pension.

**Graham Stuart:**

The primary objective of the Warm Home Discount is to tackle fuel poverty. The reforms implemented in England and Wales have improved fuel poverty targeting.

All state pension recipients automatically receive the Winter Fuel Payment and those in receipt of Pension Credit Guarantee Credit receive the Warm Home Discount.

Based on fuel poverty statistics for England, pensioner households are the least likely to be in fuel poverty.

## ■ World Economic Forum

**Dan Carden:**

**[131293]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will publish details of the meetings he had at the World Economic Forum.

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

Details of ministerial meetings with external organisations are published quarterly and can be found on GOV.UK at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/beis-ministerial-gifts-hospitality-travel-and-meetings>. Details of my Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State's meetings at the World Economic Forum will be published in due course.

## CABINET OFFICE

### ■ Cabinet Office: Aviation

**Louise Haigh:**

**[133701]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, on how many occasions he has travelled by non-scheduled flights since taking office.

**Louise Haigh:**

**[133702]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, on what date he last travelled on official business by train.

**Jeremy Quin:**

Since taking office, the Minister for the Cabinet Office has not taken any non-scheduled flights nor, to date, has travelled by train in his ministerial capacity.

**■ Civil Servants: Pay****Rachael Maskell:** [\[129919\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will make an assessment of the impact of public sector pay policy on civil service staff.

**Jeremy Quin:**

Pay below the Senior Civil Service is delegated to departments. It is for departments to decide on their pay award and how it is structured in light of their own affordability and priorities, and to negotiate with their trade unions.

The 2022/23 pay remit guidance considers economic conditions while balancing the need for sustainable public finance. The pay remit guidance is a cost control document and allows departments to seek further flexibility for a pay award above the headline range, as demonstrated by pay deals in Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs and the Ministry of Justice in previous years.

**■ Death: Statistics****Preet Kaur Gill:** [\[133706\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will publish excess deaths data broken down by religious group of the deceased in the last three years.

**Jeremy Quin:**

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

A response to the Hon. Member's Parliamentary Question of 26 January is attached.

**Attachments:**

1. UKSA Response to PQ133706 [\[PQ133706 \(1\).pdf\]](#)

**■ Government Departments: Languages****Catherine West:** [\[133760\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 26 January 2023 to Question 129915 on Government Departments: Languages, when the cross-Government skills platform will be established.

**Jeremy Quin:**

Subject to Cabinet Office and HM Treasury approvals, the new online skills platform will be rolled out in three phases from February 2024. The first phase to be rolled out will include the front-end of the online platform and launch the skills collection tool.

**■ Heatstroke: Death****Jim Shannon:** [\[133592\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people have died of heat stroke in the UK in the last ten years.

**Jeremy Quin:**

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



A response to the Hon. Member's Parliamentary Question of 26 January is attached.

**Attachments:**

1. UKSA Response to PQ133592 [[PQ133592 .pdf](#)]

■ **MyCSP: Standards**

**Alexander Stafford:** [[130054](#)]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will publish the performance statistics for MyCSP in the last financial year.

**Jeremy Quin:**

An overview of MyCSP's performance is provided in the Civil Superannuation accounts, which are published annually. The annual accounts for 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 were published on 27 January 2022. These can be found on the Government's website at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-superannuation-annual-account-2020-to-2021>

The annual accounts for 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 will be published on 26 February 2022.

■ **Nadhim Zahawi: Taxation**

**Dan Carden:** [[130012](#)]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Prime Minister was aware that HMRC were investigating the tax affairs of the Right Hon. Member for Stratford-on-Avon when he appointed him to the Cabinet.

**Marsha De Cordova:** [[130042](#)]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Prime Minister plans to investigate the tax affairs of the Right hon. Member for Stratford-on-Avon.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The Prime Minister asked the Independent Adviser to investigate this matter, establish the facts and provide advice on compliance with the Ministerial Code. The Independent Adviser's report has subsequently been published on GOV.UK and sets out the circumstances and facts.

■ **Secretaries of State: Taxation**

**Dan Carden:** [[130093](#)]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if the Prime Minister will make it his policy to prohibit people under investigation by HM Revenue and Customs from sitting in his Cabinet.

**Bell Ribeiro-Addy:**

[\[133669\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Prime Minister received advice on prospective Cabinet members' financial and tax affairs when considering Cabinet appointments.

**Jeremy Quin:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answers given by the Prime Minister at Prime Minister's Questions on 25 January 2023, Official Report, Columns 1001 – 1012.

## CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

### ■ Church of England: Buildings

**Mr Ben Bradshaw:**

[\[119878\]](#)

To ask the Member for South West Bedfordshire, representing the Church Commissioners, what the cost of legal support to the Mission, Pastoral and Church Property Committee for their consideration of pastoral reorganisation schemes was in each of the last five years.

**Andrew Selous:**

The National Church institutions (NCIs), of which the Church Commissioners are one of the institutional bodies, are supported by the central legal office of the NCIs, which is available to all departments, boards and committees to give advice when it is needed. This is an in-house service. No time sheets are kept of how many hours are spent on specific projects or for particular NCI departments and so it is not possible to provide the information requested.

**Mr Ben Bradshaw:**

[\[119879\]](#)

To ask the Member for South West Bedfordshire, representing the Church Commissioners, what the cost of legal support provided by (a) dioceses and (b) the Church Commissioners to incumbents and PCCs of parishes affected by pastoral reorganisation making a representation at an oral hearing of the Mission, Pastoral and Church Property Committee was in each of the last five years.

**Andrew Selous:**

Dioceses are required to retain the services of a Diocesan Registrar who will provide free advice to incumbents and PCCs on Mission and Pastoral Measure processes as part of their contract with the diocese. Information is not held centrally about the financial cost or take up of that advice

The Church Commissioners have not provided legal support to incumbents or PCCs attending hearings of the Mission, Pastoral and Church Property Committee over the last 5 years. The Church Commissioners are not able to provide legal advice to PCCs, incumbents or Diocesan Boards of Finance.

**■ Church of England: LGBT+ People****Bell Ribeiro-Addy:****[126814]**

To ask the Member for South West Bedfordshire, representing the Church Commissioners, in the context of the Church of England's Living in Love and Faith process and the forthcoming General Synod, whether the Commissioners have made assessment of the potential impact of the Church of England's exemptions from the Equality Act 2010 on LGBT+ people.

**Andrew Selous:**

The National Church Institutions have made no such assessment. The exceptions in the Equality Act are for all religious organisations rather than for the Church of England specifically. It is unlikely that any of the exceptions will be engaged by Living in Love and Faith and therefore no assessment has been carried out.

**Mr Ben Bradshaw:****[126904]**

To ask the Member for South West Bedfordshire, representing the Church Commissioners, in the context of the Church of England's Living in Love and Faith process and the forthcoming General Synod, whether the Commissioners have made assessment of the potential impact of the Church of England's exemptions from the Equality Act 2010 on LGBT+ people.

**Andrew Selous:**

The National Church Institutions have made no such assessment. The exceptions in the Equality Act are for all religious organisations rather than for the Church of England specifically. It is unlikely that any of the exceptions will be engaged by Living in Love and Faith and therefore no assessment has been carried out.

**Dan Carden:****[127887]**

To ask the Member for South West Bedfordshire, representing the Church Commissioners, what progress has been made on the proposals that the bishops have put to General Synod on the outcomes of the Living in Love and Faith process for debate next month; and if he will make a statement.

**Andrew Selous:**

I refer the Hon Member to the answers I gave in the House in response to an urgent question, on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2023, Hansard column 878:

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-01-24/debates/46921D78-FB26-44A3-81F1-013530CC7C6D/EqualMarriageChurchOfEngland>

**Bell Ribeiro-Addy:****[130092]**

To ask the Member for South West Bedfordshire, representing the Church Commissioners, with reference to the Living in Love and Faith consultation, what discussions he has had with senior Church leaders on the Bishops' proposal to be put to General Synod on the outcomes of that consultation.

**Andrew Selous:**

I have held discussions with the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London as part of my briefing on the House of Bishops' response. As Second Church Estates Commissioner it is my intention to attend the General Synod debate on Living in Love and Faith, and to convey to the Synod the views that have been presented to me in Parliament.

■ **Churches: Hereford and Lichfield****Mark Pritchard:**[\[123894\]](#)

To ask the Member for South West Bedfordshire, representing the Church Commissioners, what support the Church Commissioners are giving to churches in the dioceses of Hereford and Lichfield to help protect the written and oral history and heritage of churches.

**Andrew Selous:**

There are no specific written or oral history heritage projects supported by the Church Commissioners in the dioceses of Hereford and Lichfield. However the Cathedral and Church Buildings Division of the Archbishops' Council is in regular contact with parishes across the region to support them in the care of their buildings and local community heritage assets. More general advice is available from the ChurchCare website: <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare> which gives information about grants, building management and best practice.

Across England the Church of England manages 12,500 listed buildings out of a total of 16,000 churches. Many of these are considered to be nationally important buildings and are maintained by the generosity and goodwill of local volunteers and donors.

The Church Commissioners are providing £11million in funding for 2023-25 to support a new "Buildings for Mission" programme to provide support, through dioceses, to local parishes with the challenges they face in maintaining their church buildings

The Church is grateful to the Government for its support for cathedrals and major churches during the pandemic when the Culture Recovery Fund made over £60.6m available to 582 parishes and cathedrals. The Church advocates for the continuation of the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme, worth up to £42m a year, until a suitable alternative can be found. The National Church Institutions are working closely with Government, heritage partners and philanthropic funders, and the National Lottery Heritage Fund in response to its recent strategic review and has continuing dialogue with Government about the financial needs involved in maintaining such important places of worship.

The Church awaits the response of the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to the recommendations made by the Government's independent review led by Bernard Taylor into the sustainability of Church buildings, which was published in

2017: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/english-churches-and-cathedrals-sustainability-review>

## ■ Churches: Rural Areas

**Jim Shannon:**

**[129780]**

To ask the Member for South West Bedfordshire, representing the Church Commissioners, what discussions he has had with relevant funding bodies on funding for smaller churches, including those in rural villages.

**Andrew Selous:**

Officials from the National Church Institutions are seeking a meeting with the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to discuss the 2017 independent Taylor report on the sustainability of Church Buildings. Despite being commissioned by the Government, the Government has yet to respond.

The Church Commissioners are providing £11million in funding for 2023-25 to support a new “Buildings for Mission” programme to provide support, through dioceses, to local parishes with the challenges they face in maintaining their church buildings.

National grant funding is no longer ring-fenced for religious buildings despite the largest number of listed buildings in the country being from that classification. While grant funding is also available from national and local charities, this can only go so far. The Church of England is grateful to the great many congregations and local philanthropists who continue, despite current financial difficulties, to support the work of the Church.

Recent reports from the National Churches Trust have shown that every £1 invested in a church building returns £16 to the community in other services and facilities. If the Church can spend less time on repairing buildings, an even greater focus could be given to supporting the communities it serves. The evidence for this can be found in the 2021 House of Good report, available at: [House of Good 2021](#)

## ■ Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla

**Jim Shannon:**

**[126648]**

To ask the Member for South West Bedfordshire, representing the Church Commissioners, if he will hold discussions with senior church leaders on encouraging church leaders to hold celebrations to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III.

**Andrew Selous:**

Churches across the country will be organising events to celebrate the coronation. Many will mark the occasion by ringing a special peal of bells and encouraging new ringers to help. The Central Council of Bell Ringers is able to provide advice and support to towers of ringers who want to join in and ‘Ring for the King’: [Ring for the King – Ringing for the King’s Coronation](#)

The Royal School of Church Music are also encouraging choirs to join their 'Sing for the King' project. More information is available for directors of music, organists and clergy from the RSCM here: [Sing for the King! | RSCM](#)

Buckingham Palace has announced a series of events and festivities over several days, in which churches and community groups will take part. Many parishes are likely to be hosting a service of thanksgiving, alongside participating in the 'Big Help Out', and other local celebrations. Guidance and resources will be sent to all dioceses and parishes in the coming weeks.

## ■ Religious Freedom

**Jim Shannon:**

**[129832]**

To ask the Member for South West Bedfordshire, representing the Church Commissioners, whether the Church is taking steps to promote freedom of religion and belief in (a) Hong Kong and (b) globally.

**Andrew Selous:**

Freedom of Religion and Belief was discussed at the 2022 Lambeth Conference of global Anglican bishops, where many first-hand accounts of the context in different countries were shared. Bishops and officials of the National Church Institutions are working closely with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and the Prime Minister's Special Representative, to equip civil servants, Government ministers, bishops and churches to respond effectively as possible to violations of freedom of religion, and in follow up to the Bishop of Truro's report.

Freedom of religion was one of the founding principles of Hong Kong, which has led to a high diversity of faith communities and of those with no faith. The Church of England remains concerned about the treatment of these communities and is monitoring the situation closely.

The Church remains involved in providing welcome and support to those arriving here from Hong Kong under the British National Overseas passport scheme. One local example from Leeds diocese can be seen here:

<https://www.leeds.anglican.org/news/hong-kong-arrivals-welcomed-and-baptised-leeds-church>

## DEFENCE

## ■ Afghanistan: Armed Conflict

**John Healey:**

**[128603]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 8 September 2021 to Question 41712, how many round trip evacuation flights by the Royal Air Force as part of Operation Pitting were conducted by (a) C-17, (b) Voyager, (c) A400M, (d) C-130 J and (e) other aircraft types to and from locations other than Hamid Karzai International Airport.

**James Heappey:**

The following table provides a breakdown of flights by the RAF (to and from) locations excluding Hamid Karzai International Airport (HKIA) conducted as part of Op PITTING (14 - 28 August 2021).

AIRCRAFT	NUMBER OF ROUND-TRIP FLIGHTS TO & FROM LOCATIONS (EXCLUDING HKIA) IN SUPPORT OF OP PITTING [14 AUGUST - 28 AUGUST]
A400M	35
C17	61
C130J	8
Voyager	39
Other aircraft types	0

These flights operated between locations within the broader Middle East.

I wish to make a small correction to the record. In my response to 41712 I stated that the number of round trip flights [to and from] Hamid Karzai International Airport (HKIA) conducted by C17 was 46. It has come to my attention that 45 round-trips flights were conducted by C17.

**■ Afghanistan: Refugees****Lloyd Russell-Moyle:**[\[129949\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether an applicant for Leave Outside The Rules for the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy scheme is permitted to make a simultaneous claim to the Afghan Citizen Resettlement Scheme.

**James Heappey:**

Leave Outside the Rules was the previous way of applying for Additional Family Members (AFM) under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP). AFM are now included within the ARAP immigration rules.

ARAP eligibility entitles individuals to apply for AFM under ARAP only, not the Afghan Citizen Relocation Scheme. This makes it highly unlikely that principals would consider AFM and ACRS simultaneously.

**Dan Jarvis:**[\[131173\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 10 January to Question 113300 on Afghanistan: Refugees, what is the breakdown of the 12,000 individuals relocated under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy scheme to the UK by each month since June 2013.

**James Heappey:**

The Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) scheme was launched on 1 April 2021 and as such, the data requested can only be provided from April 2021 onwards. This can be found in the table below:

MONTH	TOTAL ARAP RELOCATIONS TO THE UK
April 2021	9
May 2021	13
June 2021	115
July 2021	894
August 2021	5,947
September 2021	42
October 2021	163
November 2021	374
December 2021	269
January 2022	399
February 2022	444
March 2022	242
April 2022	241
May 2022	429
June 2022	201
July 2022	416
August 2022	414
September 2022	649
October 2022	394
November 2022	403
December 2022	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,059</b>



These relocation figures include eligible principals, their dependants who are eligible by default and additional family members (AFM) who qualify to be relocated to the UK under ARAP.

We estimate that a very small number of the AFM figures captured in the above statistics will have been relocated via other HM Government resettlement schemes. Due to data constraints, we are currently unable to provide this breakdown.

## ■ Challenger Tanks

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

[\[133547\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Challenger 2 tanks will be bought to a state of high-readiness in the next 24 months.

**Alex Chalk:**

As announced by the Secretary of State on 16 January 2023, a squadron of 14 Challenger 2 Main Battle Tanks will be brought to higher readiness in place of the squadron sent to Ukraine.

The Army continually reviews the readiness of its equipment; however, it would be inappropriate to comment further due to the potential impact on security and operational effectiveness.

## ■ Cyprus: Military Bases

**Mr Mark Francois:**

[\[133549\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department (a) owns and (b) leases any properties in the so-called Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

**James Heappey:**

The Ministry of Defence does not own or lease any properties in the north of Cyprus.

## ■ Indo-Pacific Region: Military Attachés

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

[\[132329\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many UK defence attaches are stationed in which Indo-Pacific countries.

**James Heappey:**

The Department has a resident Defence Attaché in the following 18 Indo-Pacific countries:

Australia	Bangladesh	Brunei	China	Fiji
India	Indonesia	Japan	Malaysia	Nepal
New Zealand	Pakistan	Philippines	Republic of Korea	Singapore
Sri Lanka	Thailand	Vietnam		

**■ Military Aircraft: Crew**

**John Healey:** [\[131126\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the (a) establishment and (b) numbers of (i) pilots, (ii) weapon systems officers and (iii) weapon systems operators in squadron XXIV was on 1 December 2022.

**John Healey:** [\[131128\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the (a) establishment and (b) numbers of (i) pilots, (ii) weapon systems officers and (iii) weapon systems operators in squadron 54 was on 1 December 2022.

**John Healey:** [\[131129\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the (a) establishment and (b) numbers of (i) pilots, (ii) weapon systems officers and (iii) weapon systems operators in squadron 29 was on 1 December 2022.

**James Heappey:**

I am withholding the information requested as its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces.

**John Healey:** [\[131127\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the (a) establishment and (b) numbers of (i) pilots, (ii) weapon systems officers and (iii) weapon systems operators in squadron 28 was on 1 December 2022.

**James Heappey:**

I refer the right hon. Member to the answer I gave to him on 24 January 2023 to Question 126543.

**Attachments:**

1. Military Aircraft Crew [\[UIN 126543.docx\]](#)

**Richard Foord:** [\[132628\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what is the longest period of time an RAF pilot has taken to complete their flight training from commencement.

**James Heappey:**

I have interpreted your question to relate to Typhoon pilots. The longest period for an individual to complete their flying training from starting Elementary Flying Training to completing their training in the Military Flying Training System was six years and three months. This does not include the time in the Typhoon Operational Conversion Unit. The time taken by individuals to complete their flying training can be subject to several impacting variables, such as personal aptitude and weather. The current average time taken to complete this training is significantly lower.

**Richard Foord:**

[\[132629\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many full complements of the ground crew the RAF currently has available.

**James Heappey:**

I have interpreted ground crew as Royal Air Force (RAF) personnel in Trade Group 1, which includes Aircraft Maintenance Avionic, Aircraft Maintenance Mechanic and Weapons Technicians.

As of 1 October 2022, the total number of personnel was 5,860 (rounded to the nearest 10).

This data covers trained RAF Regular personnel only and excludes RAF Reservists.

## ■ Ministry of Defence Police

**Dave Doogan:**

[\[133689\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the utility of the Ministry of Defence Police in protecting his Department's assets and sites.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

The MOD Police (MDP) Statement of Requirement establishes the strategic requirement for the MDP. It defines the specialist policing capabilities that are required to counter the main crime and security risks faced by the MOD. It provides context for the tasking and resourcing of MDP services and describes the governance framework that directs and assures the force.

Independent assurance is provided by the MDP Police Committee to ensure the MDP is exercising its policing powers and authority lawfully, impartially and meeting the standards required of a UK police force.

## ■ Ministry of Defence: Racial Discrimination

**Sir John Hayes:**

[\[129732\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department provides (a) mandatory or (b) voluntary (i) lectures, (ii) reading lists and (iii) other training on Critical Race Theory for employees in his Department.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

Defence stands shoulder to shoulder with those who seek to fight racism and injustice, and there is no place for unacceptable behaviour in Defence.

Defence regularly reviews its training packages and internal resources to ensure they are fit for purpose. Defence does not currently provide any official mandatory or voluntary lectures, reading lists, or other training on Critical Race Theory.

**■ NATO**

**Dave Doogan:** [\[133688\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will provide a list of all NATO Centres of Excellence sponsored by the UK.

**James Heappey:**

The United Kingdom is a sponsoring nation for the following NATO Centres of Excellence (COE):

- Combined Joint Operations from the Sea COE
- Cooperative Cyber Defence COE
- Defence Against Terrorism COE
- Energy Security COE
- Joint Airpower Competence COE
- Joint Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Defence COE
- Military Engineering COE
- NATO Military Medicine COE
- NATO Strategic Communications COE
- NATO Space COE

**■ RAF Halton**

**John Healey:** [\[131125\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether accommodation at RAF Halton is occupied by service personnel.

**Alex Chalk:**

Yes. RAF Halton is occupied by Service personnel living in Single Living Accommodation and Service Family Accommodation.

**■ Typhoon Aircraft**

**Richard Foord:** [\[132626\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many pilots fully trained to fly Typhoon aircraft are employed in the Royal Air Force.

**James Heappey:**

I am withholding the information requested as its disclosure would, or would be likely to prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces.

## ■ Ukraine: Ammunition

**John Healey:**

[\[131123\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many 120mm shells he plans to give to Ukraine.

**James Heapey:**

The Armed Forces of Ukraine will be provided with thousands of rounds of ammunition to make best use of the Challenger 2 Main Battle Tanks donated by the UK. For security reasons, we will not confirm the exact amount of ammunition supplied.

## ■ Ukraine: Challenger Tanks

**Mr Virendra Sharma:**

[\[131194\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the impact of the donation of Challenger 2 tanks to Ukraine on defence capability; and how this will be reflected in the Integrated Review.

**James Heapey:**

The Government is committed to providing whatever support it can to Ukraine. We are ensuring that the UK and our security interests are protected and supporting our many Allies and Partners, especially Ukraine. Sending Challenger 2 tanks to Ukraine represents a step change in our support as a calibrated response to Russia's indiscriminate violence against civilians in Ukraine. There will be no impact on the Challenger 3 programme and the procurement of 148 Challenger 3 for the British Army.

Each day Defence is using lessons learned from ongoing conflicts and events over the last year to adapt its strategic thinking and adapt our approach. Any specific policy changes required related to defence capability will be determined once the update to the Integrated Review and the update to the Defence Command Paper have concluded.

## ■ Ukraine: International Assistance

**Judith Cummins:**

[\[903345\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department is taking to support NATO allies to respond to the invasion of Ukraine.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

The UK has provided substantial support to our NATO Allies. We surged our enhanced Forward Presence in Estonia with an additional Battlegroup and enhanced the capabilities of the permanent Battlegroup for the long-term. We deployed an Aviation Task Force to Lithuania, are contributing to NATO air activity across Europe, supporting air-to-air refuelling and bolstered our presence in Poland.

**■ Ukraine: Military Aid****John Healey:**[\[132284\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what regiments have been involved in Operation Interflex.

**James Heappey:**

Since Operation Interflex began in June 2022, personnel from across the Army have been deployed in support of the training of Ukrainian recruits in the UK. The regiments involved include:

- 7 Regimental Royal Logistic Corps
- 3 rd Battalion The Rifles
- 5 th Battalion The Rifles
- The Light Dragoons
- The Scots Guards
- The Irish Guards
- 1 st Battalion The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment
- The Royal Lancers
- 1 st Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment
- 1 st Battalion The Mercian Regiment
- The Welsh Guards
- 3 rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland
- The Ranger Regiment

The Royal Marines and Royal Air Force Regiment have also deployed personnel to Operation Interflex.

**Mr Kevan Jones:**[\[132298\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether all support offered to Ukraine to date has been met from the Treasury Reserve Fund and not his Department's budget.

**James Heappey:**

To date £2.3 billion has been provided to support Ukraine. In line with current HM Government policy on supporting Ukraine, this has been provided by the Treasury from their reserves, and none from the Departmental budget.

**Dan Jarvis:**[\[133639\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department is being fully reimbursed from the reserves held by the Treasury for (a) capital and (b) revenue expenditure to assist the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

**James Heappey:**

The Department can confirm that assistance provided to the Ukraine Armed Forces is reimbursed by the Treasury. This is in line with current HM Government policy on supporting Ukraine.

■ **Ukraine: Tanks****Sarah Olney:**[\[903351\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what discussions he has had with his counterparts in the EU on supplying tanks to Ukraine.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

The UK has led the way providing NATO Main Battle Tanks to Ukraine. Earlier this month I announced our donation of a squadron of Challengers, before co-hosting supportive allies in Estonia and attending the Ramstein conference where I met with my new German counterpart. Since then Germany, Poland, Spain, Canada, Norway, Portugal, Finland and the Netherlands have confirmed they will send Leopard tanks to Ukraine.

We are also ensuring the Ukrainians receive logistical support and training to use them effectively, with the first crews already training in the UK.

■ **USA: Armed Forces****Kenny MacAskill:**[\[131435\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 24 January 2023 to Question 126822, if he will provide further details of the multiple locations at which the personnel grouped together for administrative purposes are based.

**James Heappey:**

I am withholding the information requested as its disclosure could place the security of those personnel at risk.

**DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ **BBC Radio: Local Broadcasting****Rachael Maskell:**[\[131253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of the Local BBC Radio sharing proposal changes.

**Rachael Maskell:**[\[131254\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will have discussions with BBC Local Radio on maintaining current programming commitments.

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[131255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions she has had with BBC on the potential impact of the BBC funding the license fee exemption for elderly people on levels of BBC Local Radio services.

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[131256\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the merits of BBC Local Radio for people who use their services.

**Julia Lopez:**

The Government recognises the strength of feeling about the importance of BBC Local Radio. These services help bring communities together, and play a vital role in delivering news, sports coverage and other content that is locally relevant.

While it is up to the BBC to decide how it delivers its services, the Government is clear that the BBC must make sure it continues to provide distinctive and genuinely local radio services, with content that reflects and represents people and communities from all corners of the UK.

The Government remains disappointed that the BBC is planning to reduce parts of its local radio output, and Ministers expressed their concerns to the Chair of the BBC Board and the Director General when they met towards the end of last year.

The Government understands that the BBC have made a recent announcement adjusting their previous proposal, and we will seek to understand what this means in practice for its audiences.

The Government expects Ofcom to ensure the BBC is robustly held to account in delivering its public service duties.

We recognise the value of free TV licences for over-75s and believe they should be funded by the BBC. The BBC must look at how it uses its substantial licence fee income to support older people, and deliver its public service duties.

## ■ Broadband

**Mike Amesbury:**

[\[130023\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether her Department is taking steps to help ensure that companies that are given contracts for high-speed internet installation deliver on the promised broadband speeds.

**Julia Lopez:**

The Project Gigabit (Gigabit Infrastructure Subsidy) contracts and the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme require suppliers to deliver gigabit-capable infrastructure as part of the specification. The full requirements are set out in the terms and conditions for both interventions.



## ■ **Broadband: Rural Areas**

**Mike Amesbury:**

[\[130022\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment her Department has made of the need to accelerate the roll-out of high speed internet in rural communities.

**Julia Lopez:**

Over 73% of premises in the UK can now access gigabit-capable broadband, which is a huge leap from January 2019, when coverage was just 6%. The competitive and pro-growth regulatory environment we have created is enabling suppliers to expand their networks to reach more homes and businesses, and we are making excellent progress with Project Gigabit, rolling out fast, reliable broadband to rural and hard-to-reach parts of the UK.

We are awarding a series of contracts to suppliers to deliver gigabit-capable connectivity to areas that the market will not go to without subsidy. We have already awarded six contracts and in total, we have made almost £1 billion of funding available through our live contracts and procurements, to cover up to 681,500 premises. We have also recently increased the maximum value of vouchers through the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme, to support suppliers to connect premises in particularly hard-to-reach areas.

## ■ **Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Disease Control**

**Daisy Cooper:**

[\[132542\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether her Department has purchased mobile UV virus irradiation units.

**Julia Lopez:**

DCMS has purchased no mobile UV virus irradiation units.

## ■ **Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Holiday Leave**

**Chris Stephens:**

[R] [\[132461\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether her Department has notified staff to (a) tell or (b) remind them that they can sell annual leave in the last four months.

**Julia Lopez:**

DCMS staff are not able to sell annual leave.

## ■ **Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Minimum Wage**

**Chris Stephens:**

[R] [\[129890\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how many and what proportion of employees in their Department are paid at the rate of the National Minimum Wage.

**Julia Lopez:**

The total number of civil servants in DCMS, our executive agency BDUK and arms length bodies who employ civil servants (National Archive and Charity Commission) who are paid at the National Minimum Wage rate per hour is 0.

Within DCMS, the lowest full time equivalent salary in DCMS is £23,066, which equates to £11.94 per hour, and which is above the current National Living Wage rate of £9.50 per hour and the new rate of £10.42 from April 23.

**■ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Public Appointments****Rachael Maskell:**[\[131252\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment has she made of the effectiveness of the scrutiny processes for public appointments within her Department.

**Stuart Andrew:**

The Department's public appointments processes are run in accordance with the Governance Code for Public Appointments and are regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. DCMS's most significant appointments are also subject to a pre-appointment scrutiny hearing held by the DCMS Select Committee.

**■ Football: Regulation****Dan Carden:**[\[132507\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will take steps to (a) introduce an Independent Regulator of English Football and (b) strengthen rules on ownership of football clubs.

**Stuart Andrew:**

We will publish a White Paper in the next couple of weeks that sets out a detailed plan on how football will be reformed through regulation, including rules around football club ownership.

**■ Gambling****Liz Twist:**[\[131304\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether she has made an assessment of the potential merits of including a complete ban on gambling marketing communications for consumers who have self-excluded or registered with GAMSTOP within forthcoming regulatory changes to the Gambling Act 2005.

**Paul Scully:**

As a condition of their Gambling Commission licences, all operators must offer self-exclusion procedures for customers, with online operators also required to take part in the GAMSTOP multi-operator self-exclusion scheme. As part of the self-exclusion process, licensees must take all reasonable steps to prevent marketing materials being sent to any self-excluded individual, including removing their details from any

marketing database within two days of receiving notice of self-exclusion. If a customer has registered with GAMSTOP, all operators are expected to remove them from marketing lists. Operators who fail to comply with self-exclusion requirements are subject to enforcement action from the Gambling Commission.

## ■ **Gambling: Internet**

**Ben Lake:**

[\[131319\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment her Department has made on the potential role of open banking technology in helping to tackle problem online gambling.

**Paul Scully:**

The government is exploring how technology and data can be harnessed in a number of areas to better prevent harmful gambling online. We are reviewing the Gambling Act 2005 and will publish our white paper in the coming weeks.

## ■ **Horse Racing: Betting**

**Scott Benton:**

[\[129985\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if her Department will bring forward the date of its review into the Horserace Betting Levy.

**Scott Benton:**

[\[129986\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of (a) extending the Horserace Betting Levy to apply to bets on races taking place outside racing in Great Britain and (b) charging industry operators a levy based on their annual turnover.

**Scott Benton:**

[\[129987\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department is taking to promote British thoroughbred horse (a) racing and (b) breeding internationally.

**Paul Scully:**

The Government recognises the significant contribution that racing makes to British sporting culture and its particular importance to the British rural economy.

In April 2017, we made significant reforms to the Horserace Betting Levy by fixing the Levy rate at 10% and extending the scope of the Horserace Betting Levy to include offshore online bookmakers for the first time. These reforms resulted in Levy income to support the racing industry totalling £83 million in 2018/19. In 2018/19 the Levy returned £83 million and in 2019/20 the Levy returned £97 million to racing. Even with the suspension of racing for a period due to covid the Levy returned £82 million in 2021/22 and then £97 million in 2021/22.

The Government is committed to review the Horserace Betting Levy by 2024. The department engages regularly with racing stakeholders including the British

Horseracing Authority and we will consider carefully any information they provide. The Government will continue to work with the industry and the Levy Board to make sure the benefits of the Horserace Betting Levy are maximised.

The Sports Economy team within the Department for International Trade (DIT) are actively engaging with the British horse racing industry to discuss their target markets internationally and how they can be supported in these regions. DIT is also working closely with the industry on the best way of attracting international investors into the British thoroughbred market and opportunities in the form of trade missions surrounding major international meetings with a strong UK presence.

British horseracing and breeding is promoted as part of the GREAT Britain & Northern Ireland campaign, showcasing the best of the UK in over 164 countries across the globe. This recognises the cultural and economic importance of horse racing to the UK and the role it plays as a soft power asset for the country internationally.

**Andrew Bridgen:**

[\[131186\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether her Department has had discussions with the (a) British Horseracing Authority and (b) Gambling Commission on the impact of (i) affordability checks and (ii) personal data requirements on the horse racing levy.

**Paul Scully:**

In preparing the gambling white paper, the government is giving full consideration to the impact of proposals, including on the Horserace Betting Levy, and ministers and officials have held regular meetings with both the British Horseracing Authority and the Gambling Commission. The white paper which we will publish in the coming weeks, and any subsequent consultations, will include the necessary assessments of impacts. Government has also committed to review the Horserace Betting Levy by 2024 to ensure the sport is suitably funded for the future.

## ■ Leisure and Swimming Pools: Government Assistance

**Catherine West:**

[\[132429\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether she has had recent discussions with (a) public and (b) private leisure centre and swimming pool operators on the support required by that sector.

**Catherine West:**

[\[132433\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will publish the membership of her Department's working group for key partners in the leisure centre and swimming pools industry.

**Stuart Andrew:**

I hosted a roundtable on Tuesday 24 January to hear directly from leisure and swimming pool operators in the public and private sector on how the challenges they face. This was attended by a range of organisations, National Governing Bodies and

local authority representations. I have regularly met with the National Sector Partner Group, and their membership organisations, to discuss issues affecting the leisure and physical activity sector.

## ■ Social Media: Abuse

**Stephen Farry:**

[\[128731\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will make an assessment of the potential impact of the Online Safety Bill on levels of abuse from anonymous unverified social media accounts.

**Paul Scully:**

Under the Online Safety Bill, services that host user-generated content will need to remove or limit the spread of illegal content online, including illegal anonymous abuse. Companies will need to mitigate the risk arising from the use of anonymous profiles to facilitate illegal activity on their services.

In addition, adult users of the largest services will have the option to verify their identity, filter out unverified users, and prevent unverified users from interacting with any content which they upload, generate or share. Users will also be better able to report abuse and should expect to receive an appropriate response from the platform.

An assessment of the potential impacts of the Bill, including the mechanisms through which it is expected to result in reduced harm, was published in the Online Safety Bill impact assessment on 17 March 2022.

## ■ Sport Winter Survival Package

**James Wild:**

[\[130058\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 19 December 2022 to Question 107201, if he will list the value of the loans made to each of those 15 sports.

**Stuart Andrew:**

The Sport Survival Package distributed a total of £264.8 million funding (loan and grant funding) to over 1,685 organisations across 15 sports to ensure their survival throughout the pandemic.

£218,271,393 was provided through loans to the sports listed below:

- Athletics - £1,200,000
- Basketball - £794,246
- Cycling - £1,387,000
- Football - £13,310,666
- Horse Racing - £21,520,000
- Ice Hockey - £1,601,600
- Motorsport - £1,075,000

- Rugby League - £24,232,661
- Rugby Union - £138,850,220
- Tennis - £14,300,00

## EDUCATION

### ■ Mathematics: Teachers

**Matt Western:**

[129869]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many maths teachers were employed in Warwick and Leamington constituency as of 23 January 2023.

**Matt Western:**

[129870]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the ratio of maths teachers is to students in Warwick and Leamington constituency.

**Nick Gibb:**

Information on the school workforce in England, including the number of subject teachers in state funded secondary schools, is collected each November as part of the annual School Workforce Census. Information is published in the 'School Workforce in England' statistical publication, available at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-workforce-in-england>.

### ■ Schools: Mental Health Services

**Rachael Maskell:**

[129925]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether her Department has made an assessment of the impact on the wellbeing of children in schools where mental health professionals are deployed in comparison to schools where mental health support is led by teachers who are not professionals in mental health; and whether she is taking steps to increase the number of early intervention services for children in schools experiencing mental health difficulties.

**Claire Coutinho:**

Teachers are not mental health professionals and should not be expected to diagnose or treat mental health conditions. However, schools can play a vital role in preventing the progression and escalation of ill mental health by providing safe, calm, supportive environments in which individual needs are noticed, explored, and responded to, with appropriate targeted academic, pastoral, or specialist support.

To help schools to take informed decisions on what support to provide in those circumstances, the department is funding all schools and colleges in England to train senior mental health leads who can put in place whole school approaches to mental health and wellbeing. This will include making sure that processes have been put in place for identifying students, or specific groups, who may need additional mental health support. More than 10,000 schools and colleges have received senior mental

health lead training grants so far, which includes more than 6 in 10 state-funded secondary schools. A further £10 million provided this year means up to two thirds of state schools and colleges can benefit by April 2023.

The department also recognises that early intervention is critical to prevent the progression and escalation of mental health issues. For this reason, we are introducing Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs) in schools and colleges. These teams offer support to children experiencing common mental health issues and facilitate smoother access to external specialist support, such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. MHSTs now cover 26% of pupils in England, a year earlier than originally planned. This will increase to 399 teams, covering around 35% of pupils by April 2023, with over 500 planned to be up and running by 2024. Further information is available here: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/mental-health/cyp/trailblazers/>.

The department expects the final report of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) funded independent early evaluation of MHST trailblazers to be published soon. This evaluation examined the development, implementation, and early progress of MHSTs in the programme's first 25 'Trailblazer' sites. The Department for Health and Social Care have commissioned further NIHR funded independent evaluation to understand how MHSTs are working in schools and the effectiveness of approaches being taken.

## ■ Schools: Safety

**Paul Maynard:**

**[130118]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will make an estimate of the number of children who have been supported by the SAFE Taskforce since 2021; and if she will make an assessment of the impact of those Taskforces on (a) pupils' attendance, (b) exclusion rates and (c) pupils' attitudes to education.

**Claire Coutinho:**

Since commencing, in December 2021, the SAFE ('Support, Attend, Fulfil, Exceed') taskforces have established a local partnership led by schools, completed a comprehensive strategic needs assessment and begun delivery including interventions to support secondary school transition.

The department does not yet hold data on the number of young people who have been supported by the SAFE taskforces, but the taskforces will be collecting data on the pupils receiving support on a termly basis, as part of the independent evaluation.

RAND Europe, in consortium with FFT Datalab and University of Westminster, have been commissioned by the Youth Endowment Fund to conduct the evaluation of the SAFE programme. The programme evaluation, due to be completed by summer 2026, will include an impact evaluation element, along with a process and cost evaluation strand. The department expects the impact assessment to consider the impact of the programme on pupils' post-16 outcomes, school attendance and behaviour, and involvement in serious youth violence.



## ■ Students: Cost of Living

**Ben Lake:** [\[128697\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to provide English students with additional maintenance support in response to the rising cost of living.

**Ben Lake:** [\[128699\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether her Department plans to make further assessments of the adequacy in the rise in maintenance loans in the context of rising levels of inflation.

**Robert Halfon:**

Education is a devolved matter, and the response outlines the information for England only.

The government reviews living costs support on an annual basis and has continued to increase maximum loans and grants for living and other costs each year. 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 students who need additional help. 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 to make it clear that universities can draw on this funding to boost their own hardship funds and support students in need. We welcome the fact that many Universities have allocated additional money to hardship, scholarship and bursary funds to support students. Universities will have detail available about these funds on their websites.

In the 2022/23 academic year, there has been an increase of 2.3%, and there will be a further increase of 2.8% for the 2023/24 academic year. Decisions on student finance have had to be taken alongside other spending priorities to ensure the system remains financially sustainable and the costs of higher education are shared fairly between students and taxpayers, not all of whom have benefited from going to university. 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.

Loans for living costs are a contribution towards students' living costs while attending university. The highest levels of support are targeted at students who need it the most, such as students from low-income families.

To help with the cost of living 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 2022, passed on 25 October 2022, includes the



provision to require landlords to pass benefits they receive from energy price support, as appropriate, onto end users. Further details of the requirements under this act are set out in the legislation.

A Treasury-led review is being undertaken to consider how to support households with energy bills after April 2023.

Any student who has concerns should speak to their university about securing additional support.

**Ben Lake:**

**[128698]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions she has had with the Welsh Government regarding the impact of the rising cost of living on students from England studying in Wales.

**Robert Halfon:**

The department reviews living costs support on an annual basis and has continued to increase maximum loans and grants for living and other costs each year, with a 2.3% increase for the current academic year, 2022/23, and a further 2.8% increase for 2023/24. This would apply to all English domiciled students, including those which are studying at a university in Wales. Decisions on student finance have had to be taken alongside other spending priorities to ensure the system remains financially sustainable and the costs of higher education are shared fairly between students and taxpayers, not all of whom have benefited from going to university.

Loans for living costs are a contribution towards students' 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.

The government believes that income-contingent student loans are a fair and sensible way of financing higher education. It is only right that those who benefit from the system should make a fair contribution to its costs.

The department recognises the additional cost of living pressures that have arisen this year which have impacted students. However, education is a devolved matter, so additional financial support with cost-of-living pressures for students in Wales will be the responsibility of the devolved government.

All households, including those in Wales, 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 2022, passed on 25 October 2022, includes the provision to require landlords to pass benefits they receive from energy price support, as appropriate, onto end users. Further details of the requirements under this Act are set out in the legislation.

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

## ■ Students: Loans

**Matt Western:** [\[127872\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of all students in London received the minimum student maintenance loan for each year since 2012 for which figures are available.

**Matt Western:** [\[127873\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of all students outside London received the minimum student maintenance loan for every year since 2012 for which figures are available.

**Matt Western:** [\[127874\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of all students in London received the maximum student maintenance loan for each year since 2012 for which figures are available.

**Matt Western:** [\[127875\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of students received the maximum student maintenance loan outside of London in each year since 2012.

**Matt Western:** [\[127876\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the average student maintenance loan granted to students in London was in each year since 2012.

**Matt Western:** [\[127877\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the average student maintenance loan granted to students outside of London was in each year since 2012.

### **Robert Halfon:**

This data is not routinely held by the Department, the Student Loans Company (SLC) have provided the figures below. The data supplied outlines the number and proportion of students who received the minimum or maximum student maintenance loan whilst studying in or outside London by academic year, and the average maintenance loan whilst studying in or outside London by academic year.

The proportion of all students in London who received the minimum student maintenance loan for each year since 2012 for which figures are available:

ACADEMIC YEAR	NUMBER	PROPORTION
2012/13	32,383	25.6%
2013/14	36,670	25.5%
2014/15	33,023	23.9%
2015/16	36,559	26.3%

ACADEMIC YEAR	NUMBER	PROPORTION
2016/17	34,223	24.9%
2017/18	34,863	25.2%
2018/19	33,390	24.3%
2019/20	30,867	22.4%
2020/21	32,487	20.5%
2021/22	36,998	21.3%

The proportion of all students outside London who received the minimum student maintenance loan for every year since 2012 for which figures are available:

ACADEMIC YEAR	NUMBER	PROPORTION
2012/13	233,055	35.6%
2013/14	228,633	34.2%
2014/15	224,613	33.3%
2015/16	232,187	33.2%
2016/17	247,639	34.6%
2017/18	257,625	35.7%
2018/19	263,452	37.1%
2019/20	260,458	37.0%
2020/21	204,987	27.8%
2021/22	287,686	38.6%

The proportion of all students in London who received the maximum student maintenance loan for every year since 2012 for which figures are available:

ACADEMIC YEAR	NUMBER	PROPORTION
2012/13	84,897	67.1%
2013/14	95,854	66.7%
2014/15	92,211	66.8%
2015/16	90,259	64.9%

ACADEMIC YEAR	NUMBER	PROPORTION
2016/17	86,033	62.6%
2017/18	82,623	59.7%
2018/19	79,365	57.8%
2019/20	82,182	59.6%
2020/21	98,120	61.9%
2021/22	108,121	62.3%

The number of and what proportion of students received the maximum student maintenance loan outside of London in each year since 2012:

ACADEMIC YEAR	NUMBER	PROPORTION
2012/13	370,426	56.6%
2013/14	377,570	56.4%
2014/15	377,480	55.9%
2015/16	388,025	55.5%
2016/17	354,804	49.6%
2017/18	319,998	44.4%
2018/19	279,364	39.4%
2019/20	267,581	38.0%
2020/21	278,396	37.8%
2021/22	279,497	37.5%

The average student maintenance loan granted to students in London in each year since 2012:

ACADEMIC YEAR	AVERAGE AWARD (£)
2012/13	6,025
2013/14	6,166
2014/15	6,291
2015/16	6,548

ACADEMIC YEAR	AVERAGE AWARD (£)
2016/17	7,252
2017/18	8,051
2018/19	8,824
2019/20	9,461
2020/21	9,998
2021/22	10,262

The average student maintenance loan granted to students outside of London in each year since 2012:

ACADEMIC YEAR	AVERAGE AWARD (£)
2012/13	4,194
2013/14	4,268
2014/15	4,388
2015/16	4,540
2016/17	4,967
2017/18	5,472
2018/19	5,951
2019/20	6,329
2020/21	6,568
2021/22	6,696

The data in the tables above only includes full-time undergraduate students, as the minimum or maximum maintenance loan amounts differ for part-time undergraduate students.

The above figures are for students who are living elsewhere from their parental home only. For students living at their parental home, the amount of loan awarded is the same, whether in London or outside London.

For students starting study in 2016/17, an enhanced Maintenance Loan replaced the Maintenance Grant. If a customer is in receipt of a Maintenance Grant (pre 2016/17), the loan is reduced by 50p for every £1 of grant. When calculating the Level of

Award, 50% of any Maintenance Grant was added to the remaining loan amount for the purposes of this report.

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.

## ■ Supply Teachers

**Bridget Phillipson:**

**[133599]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate she has made of the cost to the public purse of employing teachers supplied by recruitment agencies since 2017.

**Nick Gibb:**

Between 2017 and 2021 (the latest available data), a total of £3.73 billion was spent on teaching staff supplied by recruitment agencies. This includes £1.98 billion spent by Local Authority maintained schools between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2022, and £1.75 billion by academies and academy trusts between 1 September 2016 and 31 August 2021.

## ■ Teachers: Sick Leave

**Bridget Phillipson:**

**[133598]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will make an estimate of the number of teachers who took sickness absence of more than 14 days in each year since 2014-15, broken down by local authority.

**Nick Gibb:**

The number of teachers who took sickness absence of more than 14 days in each year since 2014/15, by Local Authority, is not available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

**Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:**

**[133781]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many mental health sick days were taken by (a) primary and (b) secondary school teachers in each academic year since 2010.

**Nick Gibb:**

The number of teacher working days recorded as sickness absence as a result of mental ill health is unavailable.

The number and rates of teacher sickness absence is published in the 'School Workforce in England' statistical publication, which can be found here: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-tables/permalink/b73b4302-b89f-4295-8b34-08dafb06f66e>.

## ■ Teachers: Termination of Employment

**Bridget Phillipson:**

[133600]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will make an estimate of the number of full time equivalent leavers from the teaching profession in state-funded schools by subject in each local authority area between 2010-11 and 2020-21.

**Nick Gibb:**

Information on the number of leavers from the teaching profession in state-funded schools in England is published in the 'School Workforce in England' statistical publication, which can be found here: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-tables/permalink/ab66a050-ebc5-48e5-8b88-08dafb06f66e>.

In the year to November 2021, the full time equivalent of 36,262 qualified teachers left the state-funded sector in England, while 43,981 qualified teachers joined. The requested figures by subject and local authority are not available.

Since 2010, the number of teachers in all state-funded schools in England has increased by 24,172 to 465,526, which is a 5% increase.

## ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

## ■ Agriculture: Water

**Geraint Davies:**

[131112]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, for what reason the Water Quality and Availability agriculture target under the Environment Act 2021 does not include pesticides.

**Mark Spencer:**

We have created an agriculture target that addresses the three biggest contributors of harm to the water environment from agriculture; nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment.

We already have measures in place whereby the Environment Agency (EA) monitors pesticide concentrations resulting from agricultural pollution. The EA assesses the effects of over 350 pesticides from farming practices in surface and groundwater. This data is available at [data.gov.uk](https://data.gov.uk).

EA monitoring tells us the risks posed by pesticides are being effectively managed already. The EA are required to monitor and report on pesticides, including those no longer approved for use, and the relevant environmental standards have not been exceeded at any EA monitoring points.

## ■ Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010

**Stella Creasy:**

[\[133604\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010 fall within the scope of Clause 1 of the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill.

**Rebecca Pow:**

As EU-derived subordinate legislation, the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010 fall within the scope of the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill. Defra is in the process of analysing its retained EU law and determining what should be preserved as assimilated domestic law, as well as what should be revoked, replaced or amended.

In reviewing retained EU law, Defra's aim is to ensure that environmental law, including air quality law, is fit for purpose and able to drive improved outcomes, whilst also ensuring regulators can deliver efficiently. This will ensure the UK regulatory framework is appropriate and tailored to the UK.

Any changes to environmental regulation will take into account our goals set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan and the Environmental Improvement Plan, as well as our international commitments.

## ■ Animal Welfare

**James Daly:**

[\[130019\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether her Department is taking steps to ensure that healthy animals are not euthanised by vets prior to consultation with the owner.

**Rebecca Pow:**

In 2021, we worked closely with the veterinary profession to provide greater assurance that alternatives to euthanasia are explored before a healthy dog is put down. Following these discussions, the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RVCS) agreed to incorporate the principle of scanning a microchip before such euthanasia into the guidance that underpins their Code of Professional Conduct. This applies to all veterinary surgeons practising in the United Kingdom.

## ■ Cats: Tagging

**James Daly:**

[\[130018\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to ensure microchips in cats are scanned when found following a road traffic collision; and if she will make a statement.



**James Daly:**

**[130020]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to inform local authorities on best practice guidance on scanning microchips of deceased cats found on the roadside.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The Government has committed to introducing compulsory cat microchipping and this will increase the likelihood that cats injured or killed on roads can be reunited with their keeper.

It is established good practice for local authorities to scan any cat found by the roadside so that the owner can be informed. Highways England has clear guidelines for contractors to follow when they find a deceased cat.

■ **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Equality**

**Chris Stephens:**

**[R] [128654]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she is taking to ensure her Department complies with section 2.1.6 of the Civil Service Management Code; and whether that monitoring data gathered is shared with union representatives.

**Mark Spencer:**

Defra Group complies with section 2.1.6 of the Civil Service Management Code and regularly monitors EDI data, as regards all protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

This Data is captured via self-declaration via Shared Serves Platform. This data is utilised to monitor all aspects of employee lifecycle, including recruitment, retention, in year award / recognition, performance ratings, L&D / Talent and promotions to ensure equal access of opportunity to all. Furthermore, Equality impact Assessments are conducted at the point of policy creation and revision in order to assess impact and effectiveness of internal policies and action plans across protected characteristics.

All monitoring data collated and analysed by the department is shared with the trade unions representing staff covered by the Departmental Trade Union framework (the core department and Executive Agencies), Natural England and the Environment Agency. Workforce data is published annually via Defra Annual Report.

Please note, that 2.1.6 of the Civil Service Management Code (CSMC) **does not** place an obligation on departments to share this information with their representative trade unions.

We have made good progress in recent years in diversifying the Civil Service. The percentage of civil servants from an ethnic minority background is at 15.0% and the percentage of those who declare themselves disabled is at 14.0%. Staff who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or other (LGBO) is 6.1% and the proportion of female civil servants stands at 54.5%. These rates are all at their highest recorded levels.

However, we know there is still progress to be made in ensuring we are representative of the citizens we serve across all our grades.

The new Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2022-2025 recognises our success and builds on this good work to encourage a broader range of people into the Civil Service to give depth to our understanding of contemporary society in the United Kingdom. It provides the necessary framing for diversity and inclusion activity in the Civil Service as part of our wider workforce strategy, and through that, how the Civil Service delivers for its people, the Government and our citizens.

A link to the Civil Service statistics can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/civil-service-statistics>

■ **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Minimum Wage**

**Chris Stephens:**

[R] [\[129892\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many and what proportion of employees in their Department are paid at the rate of the National Minimum Wage.

**Mark Spencer:**

This Government is committed to paying people a decent living wage, which is being addressed through the statutory National Living Wage. In April 2022, the Government increased the National Living Wage to £9.50 per hour. This will rise to £10.42 an hour from 1 April 2023, an increase of 9.7%.

By 2024, the Government has committed that the National Living Wage will reach 66% of median UK earnings.

The Government will always award contracts on the basis of the best value for money for the taxpayer.

Departments must ensure that they apply the legislative increase to the National Living Wage and National Minimum Wage.

The total number of civil servants in the Department for the Environment, Food and rural Affairs paid at or below the National Minimum Wage rate per hour was zero and at the National Living Wage rate per hour or below was zero as at January 25th 2023.

■ **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Waste**

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[119016\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to her Department's Greening Government Commitments for 2021-25, how many tonnes of food waste were produced from her Departmental estate in Financial Year (a) 2021-22 and (b) 2022-23 up to 31 December 2022.

**Rebecca Pow:**

In line with the Greening Government Commitments (GGC), Defra has committed to measure and report on food waste, for estates with over 50 full-time equivalent staff and/or over 500m2 floor area offering a food service.

The requested information for 2021-2022 will be published in the GGC Annual Report for 2021-2022, due later this year. The data for April 1st 2022 to December 31st 2022 will be published in the Annual Report covering 2022-2023.

GGC annual reporting is delayed due to Covid-19 impacts, but the Government remains committed to reducing the environmental impact of its estate and operations.

Defra includes sustainability clauses in its contracts around food quality, food miles and reducing waste.

It is also worth noting that food waste is a function of the number of staff we have and how many are using our offices.

**Eggs****Carla Lockhart:**[\[132537\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she is taking to help supported (a) sustainability and (b) profitability for British egg farmers.

**Mark Spencer:**

The UK egg industry operates in an open market and the value of egg commodities, including the farm gate egg price, is established by those in the supply chain

We recognise the challenges that the agricultural industry, including the egg sector, is currently facing due to the rise of input costs as a result of the war in Ukraine. The Government has put in place a number of measures to support supply chains. These include cuts to VAT and fuel duty and support through the Energy Bill Relief Scheme. Defra has also recently announced improvements to the Avian Influenza compensation scheme and granted a concession to the rules for the labelling of free-range eggs from hens that have been housed longer than the 16-week period for which an automatic derogation applies.

I hosted an egg industry roundtable on 6 December 2022. This involved representatives from across the UK egg supply chain. The roundtable focused on the various challenges that the sector is currently facing, including profitability and sustainability. The meeting was productive with a clear willingness from all parties to address issues affecting the supply chain.

Defra continues to work closely with the egg sector and to monitor the egg market through the UK Agriculture Market Monitoring Group (UKAMMG).

## ■ Environment: Crime

**Darren Jones:** [\[131352\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of introducing legislative proposals to make ecocide a crime.

**Trudy Harrison:**

Ecocide is not a crime recognised under the International Criminal Court's Rome Statute.

Through the Environment Act 2021 we have legislated to make the UK a world leader in environmental protection. This includes publishing a new Environmental Improvement Plan and setting new legally binding targets for England to drive action by successive governments to protect and enhance our natural world.

## ■ Fires: Regulation

**Darren Jones:** [\[131331\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether she has made an assessment of the potential merits of bringing forward legislation to introduce additional regulations on bonfires to help address the environmental risks posed by those fires.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Domestic bonfires are not illegal but local authorities discourage the burning of garden waste that can cause considerable localised air pollution, potentially causing both a nuisance and health impacts to the local community and surrounding biodiversity. Local authorities are responsible for investigating smoke from bonfires brought to their attention under Section 79 of the Environmental Protection Act, 1990. For a bonfire to count as a statutory nuisance it must unreasonably and substantially interfere with the use or enjoyment of a home or other premises, injure health or be likely to injure health.

If they agree that a statutory nuisance is happening, has happened or will happen in the future, councils must serve an abatement notice (usually on the person responsible). This could result in an unlimited fine if the recipient does not follow the rules of the abatement notice. It could also result in prosecution and an additional fine if found guilty in a Magistrates Court.

At this present time, we are not planning any new measures restricting bonfires. Government guidance on the rules about garden bonfires is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/garden-bonfires-rules>.

Additionally, to improve awareness among householders, Defra have created [a practical guide titled 'Smoke Control Areas: Do you know the rules?'](#) and we encourage local authorities to distribute these. This advises householders that they should not burn treated wood such as fence panels as this can emit harmful fumes and toxic pollutants. It also advises that they should be considerate towards their

neighbours when lighting bonfires and should always take care not to cause a smoke nuisance. Further materials encouraging people to burn better and reduce harmful emissions can be found at <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/library/burnbetter/>.

## ■ Food: Northern Ireland

**Carla Lockhart:**

[132532]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to his Department's correspondence to the Permanent Secretary at Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in Northern Ireland, dated 28 December 2022, what estimate she has made of the projected cost of building proposed sanitary and phytosanitary facilities as outlined in that correspondence.

**Mark Spencer:**

My Department will prepare a business case for the construction of SPS inspection facilities in Northern Ireland in due course. This will draw on the business case previously prepared by the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA). When prepared, I will provide an update to the House. The latest information available to as costs borne by DAERA are set out in my answer to the Rt Hon member for Lagan Valley of 28 November to PQ 92116.

## ■ Members: Correspondence

**Gerald Jones:**

[131271]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when she plans to provide a substantive response to the correspondence of 5 November 2022 from the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney, reference MC2022/24200.

**Rebecca Pow:**

A reply will be sent to the hon. Member in due course.

## ■ Spirit Drinks Regulations 2008

**Stella Creasy:**

[133620]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the Retained EU Law Bill, whether she plans to (a) revoke, (b) retain or (c) replace the Spirit Drinks Regulations 2008.

**Mark Spencer:**

Defra is in the process of analysing and assessing its retained EU law stock to determine what should be preserved as part of domestic law, and what should be repealed, or amended. This work will determine how we use the powers in the Bill, including in relation to the Spirit Drinks Regulations 2008.

**■ Thames Water****Bell Ribeiro-Addy:** [\[130074\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate her Department has made of the number of vulnerable people living in areas serviced by Thames Water who have been left without access to water for more than 24 hours in the last five years.

**Bell Ribeiro-Addy:** [\[130075\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate her Department made of the number of older people living in areas serviced by Thames Water who have been left without access to water for more than 24 hours in the last five years.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Under the Security and Emergency Measures Direction (SEMD), companies have to provide an annual self-assessment of whether their emergency plans include prompt identification and support of vulnerable customers, including transient vulnerabilities and customers who are not on the Priority Service Register. Assurance and enforcement of SEMD requirements is undertaken by the Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI). However, neither DWI or Defra collects data on the number of vulnerable people in each water region.

All water companies have priority service registers, which customers voluntarily sign up to. The Priority Services Register is a free support service that makes sure extra help is available to people in vulnerable situations. The number of customers signed up to Thames Water's priority service register has increased from 60,020 in 2017-18 to 284,379 in 2021-22.

**Bell Ribeiro-Addy:** [\[130076\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the number of leaks and pipe bursts reported by Thames Water in (a) Streatham constituency, (c) London and (c) England in the last five years.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The most recent leakage data water companies reported is for the financial year ending March 2021. The reported data is at water company level. Streatham is served by Thames Water, who have reduced their leakage by 10.2% during 2021-22 in line with their performance commitments made to Ofwat.

The Government has set clear expectations that water companies should reduce bursts by 12% and cut their leakage by 16% by 2025 and 50% by 2050. Industry wide leakage has reduced by 11% since 2017-18.

**Bell Ribeiro-Addy:** [\[130077\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions she has had with OFWAT on number of leaks, pipe bursts and sewage leaks reported by Thames Water in the past five years.

**Rebecca Pow:**

My officials and I regularly discuss with Ofwat a number of issues across the water sector including the subjects raised in your question and the performance of individual companies.

Our Strategic Policy Statement for Ofwat (SPS) published in 2022, and replacing the previous statement from 2017, sets out our expectations for water company action to renew and replace the water network. It outlines that Ofwat will promote good asset management and challenge companies to better understand the health of their assets and adopt a strategic and long-term approach.

In December I met with Ofwat to discuss its [Annual Water Company Performance Report 2021-22](#), and had a subsequent meeting with Ofwat and Thames to discuss its performance, including leakage, mains repair, supply interruptions, sewer collapse and sewer flooding.

Ofwat have required all companies to produce an action plan to address their performance issues and I have been clear that I will be monitoring progress closely.

**■ Water Supply: Repairs and Maintenance****Jim Shannon:**[\[129781\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions she has had with representatives of water companies on steps to make members of the public aware of the timing of water works.

**Rebecca Pow:**

This is a devolved issue and the information provided relates to England only.

Repairing and replacing leaking pipes is critical to maintaining a clean, safe and reliable supply of drinking water to homes and businesses.

It is for companies to decide how to maintain their infrastructure. Information on companies' works is normally available on companies' website, including details of the work and expected timescales.

However, water companies in England, along with all utility companies, are required to apply for a permit from the relevant highway authority before planned works can begin, and within 2 hours of being on site for emergency works. This allows the authority to coordinate all works and minimise disruption to the public.

Information on live and planned works is now streamed real-time through the DfT's Street Manager digital service.

**■ Water: Conservation****Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[132378\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many applications for the Water Management grant have been made since that scheme launched in November 2021.

**Mark Spencer:**

Online Applications (Stage 1):

The Water Management Scheme was open to Online Applications between 14/11/2021 to 12/01/2022.

During the application window 249 Online Applications (OA) were received.

Full Applications (Stage 2):

Projects successful at Online Application stage were invited to Full Application stage.

The deadline for Full Applications under the FTF Water Management scheme was on 30/11/2022. We received 106 Full Applications.

**Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[132382\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will publish the regional locations of applications for the Water Management grant which have been approved since that scheme launched in November 2021.

**Mark Spencer:**

The deadline for Full applications under the FTF Water Management scheme was on 30/11/2022. Most of these projects are currently in the appraisal stages. We have approved 9 projects to date, 3 are in the contracting stage and 6 have been contracted. Table 3 below shows approved projects by region.

*Table 3: Approved Applications by Region*

REGION	APPROVED PROJECTS
East Midlands	2
East of England	3
London	0
North East	0
North West	0
South East	1
South West	0
West Midlands	2
Yorkshire and The Humber	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>



**Dr Matthew Offord:**

[\[132387\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what is the average amount awarded per application to the Water Management Grant launched in November 2021.

**Mark Spencer:**

To date we have contracted with 6 projects under the FTF Water Management scheme with a combined grant award of £1m. The average amount awarded per project being £170k.

## ■ **Water: Pollution**

**Sarah Jones:**

[\[129983\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will take steps with Ofwat to help ensure that water companies deliver year-on-year reductions in the number of pollution incidents with a target of zero serious incidents by 2030.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Our Strategic Policy Statement (SPS) for Ofwat sets clear priorities for the water sector in England. This includes an expectation that Ofwat will challenge water companies to demonstrate how they will achieve zero serious pollution incidents by 2030 and we will continue to work with the regulator to ensure this happens.

The Environment Act 2021 gave Ofwat increased powers to modify water company licence conditions to improve water companies' performance. This means Ofwat can modify company licenses.

## ■ **Wheat**

**Dr Matthew Offord:**

[\[132373\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what volume of wheat was harvested in England in each of the last ten years.

**Mark Spencer:**

Statistical estimates of the volumes of wheat harvested in England in each of the last ten years are shown in the table below.

**Wheat harvested in England (tonnes)**

<b>2013</b>	11,111,153
<b>2014</b>	15,389,019
<b>2015</b>	15,184,643
<b>2016</b>	13,240,514
<b>2017</b>	13,722,124

<b>2013</b>	11,111,153
<b>2018</b>	12,673,896
<b>2019</b>	15,036,897
<b>2020</b>	8,672,425
<b>2021</b>	12,863,299
<b>2022 <sup>(a)</sup></b>	14,267,077

Data notes:

(a) In all years' production is typically standardised to 14.5% moisture content for cereals apart from 2022. In 2022 the hot and dry season resulted in lower moisture content therefore, only production with moisture content above 14.5% have been adjusted.

Results are based on final results from the Cereal and Oilseed Rape Production Survey, a representative sample of cereal and oilseed rape growers across English regions and farm sizes.

All results from the Cereal and Oilseed Rape Production Survey can be found here [Crop statistics \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk/crop-statistics).

## FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

### ■ Asia-Pacific Region: Development Aid

**Catherine West:**

**[117749]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what proportion of non-Official Development Assistance departmental spending has been committed to the Asia-Pacific region in each year since 2010.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

In 2021-22 the FCDO allocated £6.5million of its non-ODA programme allocation to the Asia-Pacific region, which is 9.2% of the FCDO's total non-ODA programme allocation. In 2022-23, the FCDO allocated £1million to Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), £1.5million to Indo Pacific, and £3.4million to individual posts in the region. This totals £5.9million non-ODA programme allocation to the Asia-Pacific region, which is 8.6% of the FCDO's total non-ODA programme allocation. These figures exclude spend through the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund, the FCDO's arm's length bodies and international subscriptions. The FCDO does not hold accurate non-ODA programme spend or allocation data at a regional level prior to 2021-22. For operating expenditure I refer the hon member to my answer to PQ 122198.

## ■ Bangladesh: Development Aid

**Apsana Begum:**

[\[130111\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent support his Department has provided to the Bangladeshi Government on (a) climate change, (b) air pollution and (c) flooding.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

A core UK priority is to support Bangladesh, as one of the world's most climate vulnerable countries. At COP26, we announced a six year £120 million Climate and Environment Programme in Bangladesh to support Bangladesh's ambitions to accelerate adaption and expand renewable energy. The programme will increase access to climate finance and support improvements in pollution reduction and solid waste management. The UK has supported public awareness raising on air pollution levels, and piloted approaches to improved management of hazardous waste. The UK provided over £1.6 million of humanitarian support for the floods in Bangladesh in May and June last year. This funding will provide water, shelter, livelihoods opportunities, and improved nutrition for people affected in Sylhet.

## ■ Bangladesh: Health Services

**Apsana Begum:**

[\[130113\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether his Department is taking steps to support the delivery of publicly-owned health care in Bangladesh.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

The UK's health programmes in Bangladesh aims to address the fundamental challenges in Bangladesh's public healthcare provision. The FCDO's £84 million 'Better Health in Bangladesh Programme' provides financial and technical assistance to the Government of Bangladesh's national health sector programme. Our support helps empower women and girls through better sexual and reproductive health and rights, and over the last four years, we have helped deliver over 89,000 babies safely, provided 987,892 family planning users with contraceptives, reached 1.5 million under five children with nutrition services, and screened over 630,000 women for cervical cancer. We also support the Government of Bangladesh to include health in the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) on Climate Change, and tackling antimicrobial resistance (AMR). We will maintain our strong partnership with Bangladesh's Ministry of Health and its departments to deliver our commitment on ending preventable deaths, through need-based and responsive technical assistance support.

## ■ Bangladesh: Rohingya

**Apsana Begum:**

[\[130112\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether the Government is taking steps to increase humanitarian support for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

The UK has been a leading donor to the Rohingya response in Bangladesh, providing £345 million since 2017. This funding provides life-saving assistance through food, shelter, water and sanitation, healthcare and protection to Rohingya refugees and host communities. Although our ODA bilateral funding has reduced due to the fiscal situation, the UK remains committed to working with the UN and the Government of Bangladesh to provide support to the Rohingya whilst they remain in Bangladesh, as well as continuing to push for a long-term solution enabling their return to Myanmar on a safe, voluntary and dignified basis, when the conditions there allow.

■ **Brazil: Indigenous Peoples****Fabian Hamilton:**[\[133558\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has had recent discussions with his Brazilian counterpart on reports of hunger, sickness and death in the Yanomami indigenous population in the north of that country.

**David Rutley:**

We have taken note of reports, including by the BBC, of hunger, sickness and death within the Yanomami indigenous population. It is encouraging that the Brazilian Government has declared a medical emergency to help speed the necessary response to this concerning humanitarian situation. During her visit to Brazil in early January, the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Therese Coffey MP met with the newly appointed Brazilian Minister for Indigenous Peoples, Sonia Guajajara, and discussed the important role of indigenous communities in protecting the environment and the concerning security situation faced by local communities in the Amazon. The UK regularly engages with Government, indigenous leadership and civil society in Brazil to promote and defend the human rights of all individuals.

■ **Colombia: Demonstrations****Ellie Reeves:**[\[129973\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has had discussions with his Colombian counterpart on reports that Colombian police carried out sexual and gender-based violence during protests in that country between April and June 2021..

**David Rutley:**

Colombia is a UK Human Rights Priority Country and UK Ministers regularly raise human rights issues with the Colombian Government. On 11 January, I [Minister Rutley] met with the Colombian Vice President to discuss the UK's ongoing support for the Colombian peace process and other security challenges. We look to the Colombian authorities to investigate fully any excessive use of force and take appropriate action against those responsible. Through the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF), the UK will continue to support the Police Innovations for

Stabilisation in Colombia Programme (SCIP) which is helping to transform the Colombian National Police and develop strategies for tackling and preventing gender-based violence.

## ■ Colombia: Politics and Government

**Colum Eastwood:**

[\[132582\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will make an assessment of the potential implications for his Department's policies of the proposed frequency of meetings by Colombia's National Security Guarantees Commission.

**David Rutley:**

Supporting the Colombian Government in its commitment to secure a broad and lasting peace will remain an important priority of this Government. To date, we have spent over £74 million through the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) to support the implementation of the peace agreement in Colombia and improve stability and security. The National Commission for Security Guarantees, which includes representatives from the Colombian Government, Civil Society, supervisory bodies and UN representatives, is a vital instrument of the Peace Agreement to develop a public policy for dismantling illegal armed groups. As pen holder at the United Nations Security Council, the UK will continue to work closely with the UN Verification Mission and the UN representatives that advise this body.

**Ellie Reeves:**

[\[903382\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps he is taking to support the implementation of the 2016 Peace Agreement in Colombia.

**David Rutley:**

Supporting the Colombian Government in its commitment to secure a broad and lasting peace, including as pen-holder in the United Nations Security Council, will remain an important priority of this Government. I made this point at the UN Security Council on 11 January 2023, when I also met the Colombian Vice President, Francia Márquez, to discuss our commitment to supporting the peace process in Colombia.

## ■ Developing Countries: Climate Change

**Tulip Siddiq:**

[\[129860\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent steps he has taken to help support developing countries (a) affected by and (b) tackle climate change.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

As COP President, the UK worked with all Parties towards delivering on the Glasgow Climate Pact and raising the highest possible ambition to keep 1.5 in reach. Our Presidency year drove action and ambition with our global partners with over 90% of world GDP now covered by net zero commitments. In addition, the UK's International

Climate Finance (ICF) supports developing countries to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change. The UK is delivering on our commitment to double ICF to £11.6 billion between 2021/22 and 2025/26, seeking balance between adaptation and mitigation funding. ICF Results Publication 2022 [DRAFT] - Official Sensitive ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)); helping over 95 million people cope with the effects of climate change, providing 58 million people with improved access to clean energy and reducing or avoiding 68 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions.

## ■ Developing Countries: Debts

**Catherine West:**

[131280]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with (a) the Chancellor of the Exchequer, (b) the US Government and (c) global financial institutions on the level of Chinese debt in the global south.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

China is an important source of aid, finance and investment for many countries. The UK played a leading role in establishing the G20 Common Framework for Debt Treatments that, for the first time, brought China into a coordinated platform to address growing debt burdens. We advocate for timely treatments by China and other G20 countries to address issues of debt distress. We are also working with partners such as the G7, which includes the US, to ensure low and middle income countries have an alternative to strategic dependence on China or any other country. Through British Investment Partnerships, the UK is providing honest, reliable investment that creates jobs, boosts economic growth and draws countries closer to major free-market democracies.

## ■ Development Aid: Disability

**Sarah Champion:**

[903383]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what proportion of Official Development Assistance will be spent on projects specifically targeted at supporting people with disabilities in (a) this and (b) the next financial year.

**Mr Andrew Mitchell:**

We now have more than a third of all development programmes containing disability inclusive activities. We will update parliament on the spending allocations for the next financial year in due course.

## ■ Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Minimum Wage

**Chris Stephens:**

[R] [129897]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many and what proportion of employees in their Department are paid at the rate of the National Minimum Wage.

**David Rutley:**

As at 1 January 2023 all Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) UK based staff are paid a minimum Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) salary that exceeds the requirements of the National Minimum Wage.

**Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Overseas Workers****Dr Liam Fox:**[\[132282\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what proportion of staff directly employed by his Department are located overseas.

**Dr Liam Fox:**[\[132283\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what proportion of staff directly employed by his Department are located in the UK.

**David Rutley:**

This information is published in the FCDO Annual Report and Accounts, the 2021-22 report can be found on gov.uk. I refer the Honourable Member to pages 17(9) and 149(141) of the report  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1095304/FCDO\\_Annual\\_Report\\_2021\\_2022\\_Accessible\\_290722.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1095304/FCDO_Annual_Report_2021_2022_Accessible_290722.pdf)

**Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Written Questions****Emily Thornberry:**[\[133570\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, when he plans to answer Questions 118921 and 119029 on Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Electronic Purchasing Card Solution, tabled on 9 January 2023.

**Emily Thornberry:**[\[133571\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, when he plans to answer Questions 123885, 123886, 123887 and 123889 on Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Electronic Purchasing Card Solution, tabled on 16 January 2023 for answer by 19 January..

**David Rutley:**

Responses to PQs 118921, 123886 and 123889 were sent on 26th January 2023.  
Reponses to PQs 119029, 123885 and 123887 were sent on 30th January 2023.

**Iran: Tankers****Fabian Hamilton:**[\[133556\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implication for his policies of reports that the Panamanian Maritime Authority had put the country at risk of another international sanction for supposedly reporting false or misleading information in response to criticisms about oil tankers from Iran, in particular vessels sailing under the Panamanian flag that were carrying Iranian crude oil.



**David Rutley:**

We have taken note of reports, including by BBC Monitoring, alleging that Panamanian-flagged vessels have been carrying Iranian crude oil and helping Iran to avoid sanctions. The Panama Maritime Authority (AMP) has stated that it has withdrawn the flag of 678 ships from its registry since 2019, in compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and in line with Panama's efforts to combat terrorist financing and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

■ **Iraq: Kurds****Alexander Stafford:**[\[130041\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of bilateral relations between the UK and the Kurdistan Region in Iraq.

**David Rutley:**

The UK remains committed to strong relations with the Kurdistan Regional Government and Federal Government of Iraq and we want to see a strong and successful Kurdistan region within a thriving Iraq. We have a close and strategic partnership with the Kurdish Regional Government who continue to be a close ally in the fight against Daesh. In April 2022, the Prime Minister of the Kurdish Region of Iraq, Masrour Barzani, came to the UK on an official visit, meeting with the Prime Minister, Foreign Secretary and other Cabinet Ministers.

**Alexander Stafford:**[\[130043\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the relationship between the Federal Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Region.

**David Rutley:**

I refer the honourable member to my (Minister David Rutley) reply of 3 December 2022 to his question 103053. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-12-05/103053>.

■ **Myanmar: Mining****Catherine West:**[\[131308\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether the Government has taken steps with international allies to help prevent the Myanmar military from receiving proceeds generated by the Myanmar mining industry.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

Myanmar's extractive sector is highly exploitative of both natural resources and the people who work within it. Unregulated mining and logging has led to land degradation, water pollution, deforestation and forced displacement. It is also a vital source of revenue for the military. Since the military coup in Myanmar, the UK has led international efforts to reduce the military's access to revenue, arms and equipment. To prevent the military from profiting off natural resource extraction, we have



sanctioned Myanmar Economic Holdings Limited (MEHL) and Myanmar Economic Corporation (MEC), the two largest military owned conglomerates, who are involved in mining and other extractive industries. We have also sanctioned Myanmar Gems Enterprise (MGE), Myanmar Pearl Enterprise (MPE) and Myanmar Timber Enterprise (MTE), the main state-owned entities responsible for the mining of precious stones and timber. We have also strengthened our Overseas Business Risk Guidance, to warn companies of the risks associated with Myanmar's extractive sector. We will continue to do all we can to cut the military's access to revenue, through both sanctions and non-sanctions measures.

## ■ **Palestinians: Civil Society and Human Rights**

**Kim Johnson:**

[\[130008\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to support Palestinian (a) civil society and (b) human rights organisations in (i) Israel and (ii) the Palestinian Territories.

**David Rutley:**

Civil society organisations play an important role in upholding human rights and democracy, and they must be able to operate freely in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs). Officials at the British Embassy in Tel Aviv continue to call upon the Government of Israel to fully respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of human rights defenders and organisations and to allow them to freely operate in Israel and OPTs. The Minister for the Middle East, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, reinforced this message during his visit to Israel and the OPTs on 10-13 January.

## ■ **Palestinians: West Bank**

**Kim Johnson:**

[\[130004\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Israeli counterpart on the evictions of Palestinians in Masafer Yatta.

**Kim Johnson:**

[\[130005\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the legality of the evictions of Palestinians from Masafer Yatta.

**Kim Johnson:**

[\[130007\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether his Department assesses the legality of (a) official and (b) unofficial Israeli settlements in the Palestinian Territories under international law.

**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. We are clear that Israeli outposts in the West Bank are also illegal under international humanitarian law

and should be removed entirely. 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 his visit to the Occupied Palestinian Territories on 12 and 13 January.

## ■ **Peru: Demonstrations**

**Fabian Hamilton:**

[\[129745\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Peruvian counterpart on reports of violence and vandalism following protests in that country on 19 January.

**David Rutley:**

The UK Ambassador and members of his team in Lima hold regular discussions with the Peruvian Government and have used these meetings to raise concerns about the violence seen in Peru following the change of government in December. Bearing in mind the deaths of protestors and injuries to both police and protestors, we have been clear how important we consider it to be that the Peruvian authorities should do all they can to protect lives. I [Minister Rutley] discussed our concerns in my recent meeting with the Peruvian Ambassador, as did our trade minister when he met with the Peruvian Minister of Finance.

## ■ **Rwanda: Human Rights**

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

[\[129752\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential impact of the death of John Williams Ntwali in Rwanda on 18 January 2023 on (a) freedom of speech, (b) press freedom and (c) human rights in that country.

**Mr Andrew Mitchell:**

We are aware of the tragic death of John Williams Ntwali. We understand that the traffic accident that led to his death is being investigated by the police and call on them to complete this investigation fully. The UK encourages Rwanda to uphold and champion Commonwealth values of freedom of speech and the press, and respect for human rights. We discuss these issues regularly with the Government of Rwanda.

## ■ **South Africa: Joint Exercises**

**Jessica Morden:**

[\[131143\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the consequences for his policies of the South African government's decision to undertake naval exercises with Russian and Chinese forces.

**Mr Andrew Mitchell:**

The UK is aware of reports that in February 2023, South Africa will undertake a joint naval exercise with China and Russia. As part of delivering and shaping the UK

Government's response to the Ukraine conflict the UK regularly engages South African counterparts on Russia-related matters. On 19 January, I [Minister Mitchell] raised Russia's illegal actions in Ukraine with South African Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Botes. We are committed to working with international partners to mitigate the impact of Russia's actions.

## ■ UK Relations with EU: Northern Ireland

**Scott Benton:**

[\[903385\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent diplomatic steps he has taken in negotiations with the EU to help support peace in Northern Ireland.

**Leo Docherty:**

The Foreign Secretary is in regular and close contact with Vice President Sefcovic to find solutions to the Northern Ireland Protocol. Our priority is protecting the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement and political stability in Northern Ireland.

## ■ Ukraine: Military Aid

**Fabian Hamilton:**

[\[133548\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Colombian counterpart the US's request to send Ukraine a number of Soviet-era weapons acquired by Colombia.

**David Rutley:**

UK ministers and senior officials regularly discuss a wide range of issues with Colombian counterparts, including questions relating to security and to Ukraine.

**Fabian Hamilton:**

[\[133550\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his policies of comments by the Mexican President on the reasons for which Germany decided to send tanks to Ukraine.

**David Rutley:**

As the Foreign Secretary and the Prime Minister underlined on 26 January, Germany's decision has sent a powerful message that Russia cannot and will not win. Our shared determination to support Ukraine and secure a lasting peace for Ukrainians will not falter. The comments by Mexican President Lopez Obrador have no impact on the UK's policy towards Russia's illegal war in Ukraine or Germany's welcome decision to send tanks to Ukraine.

## ■ Ukraine: War Crimes

**Peter Grant:**

[\[903387\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent steps he has taken with his international counterparts to help support the (a)

Ukrainian government and (b) International Criminal Court with (i) investigations and (ii) prosecutions of alleged war crimes in Ukraine.

**Leo Docherty:**

The UK has provided a £2.5 million package to support Ukraine's domestic investigations and an additional £1 million of funding for the International Criminal Court (ICC). My Rt Hon Friend, the Deputy Prime Minister will host an International Conference in March in support of the ICC investigation. The UK is committed to securing accountability for atrocities committed in Ukraine.

■ **West Bank: Farms**

**Kim Johnson:**

[\[130006\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Israeli counterpart on the provision of military support by that country to (a) outposts and (b) farms built in the West Bank by settlers without formal Government authorisation.

**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. We are also clear that Israeli outposts in the West Bank are illegal under international humanitarian law and should be removed entirely. 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 his visit to the Occupied Palestinian Territories on 12 and 13 January.

■ **Zimbabwe: Visits Abroad**

**Ruth Jones:**

[\[126807\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether there are plans for a ministerial visit to Zimbabwe.

**Mr Andrew Mitchell:**

Plans for ministerial visits to Zimbabwe are kept under review. The last UK minister to visit Zimbabwe was Harriett Baldwin MP in February 2018 as Minister for Africa.

## HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ **Accident and Emergency Departments**

**Tony Lloyd:**

[\[119916\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will list the (a) hospital trusts and (b) individual hospitals that lost their accident and emergency departments but have subsequently had them reinstated as a result of Government action in the last 10

years; and if he will publish the criteria used to determine when a hospital should have its accident and emergency department reinstated after closure.

**Will Quince:**

*[Holding answer 18 January 2023]:* This information is not held in the format requested.

**Wes Streeting:**

[\[126740\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 12 January 2023 to Question 117709 on Accident and Emergency Departments, what information NHS England holds on which NHS (a) Trusts and (b) Integrated Care Boards have declared a (i) critical incident and (ii) Operational Pressures Escalation Level 4 status since 21 December 2022.

**Will Quince:**

*[Holding answer 25 January 2023]:* NHS England holds National Health Service operational management information on Operational Pressures Escalation Levels (OPEL) status and critical incidents for NHS trusts and integrated care boards. Information on OPEL status is not validated or routinely published and is a once daily snapshot and therefore subject to change.

■ **Air Ambulance Services**

**Carla Lockhart:**

[\[132540\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to help improve the capacity of air ambulance provision in the UK.

**Will Quince:**

The Government has provided significant support to the air ambulance sector. In 2019, the Department of Health and Social Care launched a three-year capital grant programme which allocated £10 million to 9 air ambulance charities across England. A total of £6 million of COVID-19 emergency funding was made available to all 21 air ambulance charities across the UK in 2020, assisting the continuity of air ambulance response during the pandemic. This is alongside direct support from NHS ambulance trusts, who may provide staffing and equipment depending on local arrangements.

Air ambulance services are charitable organisations and not directly funded by the NHS. Air Ambulances UK, the sector's independent professional body, share our view that this is the most appropriate funding model.

■ **Ambulance Services: Emergency Calls**

**Marsha De Cordova:**

[\[132563\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of NHS Control Room posts are unfilled.

**Marsha De Cordova:**

[\[132564\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of NHS Control Room posts in London are unfilled.

**Will Quince:**

The data is not held in the format requested.

## ■ Ambulance Services: Standards

**Marsha De Cordova:**

[\[132552\]](#)

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

**Will Quince:**

A range of measures are in place to reduce ambulance response times. The NHS winter resilience plan will increase NHS bed capacity by the equivalent of at least 7,000 general and acute beds, helping reduce pressure in A&E so that ambulances can get swiftly back out on the road.

An additional £250 million has been made available to enable the NHS to buy up beds in the community to safely discharge thousands of patients from hospital, and capital for discharge lounges and ambulance hubs. This will improve flow through hospitals and reducing waits to handover ambulance patients. This is on top of the £500 million already invested last year.

NHS England has allocated £150 million of additional system funding for ambulance service pressures in 2022/23, alongside £20 million of capital funding to upgrade the ambulance fleet in each year to 2024/25.

As announced in the Autumn Statement, the government is investing an additional £3.3 billion in each of 2023-24 and 2024-25 to enable rapid action to improve urgent and emergency, elective, and primary care performance towards pre-pandemic levels. The NHS will soon set out detailed recovery plans to deliver faster ambulance response times.

## ■ Cancer: Medical Treatments

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[122167\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has made an assessment of the availability of funding for establishing cancer treatment hubs in (a) York and (b) England.

**Helen Whately:**

No assessment has been made.

NHS England has set a target for systems to increase cancer treatment capacity by 13% in order to support the diagnosis and treatment of patients on the cancer waiting list. Specific funding has been allocated to support treatment and pandemic recovery

including £2.3 billion to improve diagnostic care and £1.5 billion through the Targeted Investment Fund to support our wider elective recovery plan.

### ■ **Cancer: Radiotherapy**

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[122165\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to reduce waiting times for radiotherapy treatment in (a) York and (b) the UK.

**Helen Whately:**

Since 2016, around £162 million of central investment has been made to replace or upgrade around 100 radiotherapy machines. This investment was in addition to the investment that NHS Trusts make to maintain their infrastructure.

The Leeds radiotherapy centre and the radiotherapy centre at Castle Hill, near Hull, along with Sheffield Teaching Hospitals, feed into the Yorkshire and Humber Radiotherapy Operational Delivery Network which has supported initiatives to address waiting times.

### ■ **Care Homes: Energy**

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[132456\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the impact of the increase in energy prices on care homes' running costs; and if he will take steps to provide support to care homes with their energy costs.

**Helen Whately:**

The recent Energy Bill Relief Scheme review assessed the impact of energy costs on non-domestic customers, including care homes. On 9 January the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced the outcome of the review and future support for non-domestic customers in the form of a new Energy Bill Discount Scheme (EBDS). Under this scheme, eligible non-domestic consumers in Great Britain and Northern Ireland – including care homes – will receive a per-unit discount to their energy bills, subject to a maximum discount for twelve months from 1 April 2023.

Additionally, the Government will make available up to £2.8 billion this year and £4.7 billion next year to support adult social care and discharge, including with cost pressures – equivalent to 200,000 additional care packages and the biggest funding increase in history.

### ■ **Care Workers: Migrant Workers**

**Andy McDonald:**

[\[129839\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has had discussions with the Secretary of State for the Home Department on the potential merits of allowing disabled people who directly employ their own care workers to sponsor care workers from abroad.



**Helen Whately:**

*[Holding answer 26 January 2023]:* The Secretary of State has not had specific discussions with the Home Secretary regarding this issue.

Personal assistants are not eligible for the Health and Care Visa, because Home Office rules require an employing organisation, not a private individual or household, to act as the visa sponsor for any care workers recruited from abroad.

The two departments have an ongoing dialogue about ways to improve the accessibility of the immigration system for the care sector.

**■ Carers: Cost of Living**

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[132520\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what support his Department has provided to unpaid carers throughout the cost of living crisis.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[132521\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has made an assessment of the effect of the increase in the cost of living on unpaid carers.

**Helen Whately:**

*[Holding answer 30 January 2023]:* The Government has carried out an assessment of the distributional impact of the rising cost of living across household groups including, while not limited to, unpaid carers.

The Government understands that people are worried about the cost-of-living challenges ahead and has announced further support for the next financial year designed to target the most vulnerable households. This cost of living support is worth £26 billion in 2023/24, in addition to benefits uprating, which is worth £11 billion to working age households and people with disabilities.

This support for 2023/24, is on top of the £37 billion of support for the cost of living already in place to support households in 2022/23, in addition to the Energy Price Guarantee.

**■ Darent Valley Hospital: Doctors and Nurses**

**Gareth Johnson:** [\[132343\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many (a) doctors and (b) nurses are employed by Darent Valley hospital group.

**Will Quince:**

Darent Valley Hospital is a part of the Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust. It is not possible to report the number of staff that work at any particular site within a hospital trust but as at October 2022, there were 525 full-time equivalent (FTE) doctors and 1,112 FTE nurse at Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust.



## ■ Department of Health and Social Care: Annual Reports

**Wes Streeting:** [\[122484\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when his Department plans to publish its annual reports and accounts for the 2021-22 financial year.

**Will Quince:**

*[Holding answer 20 January 2023]:* The Department's Annual Report and Accounts for 2021/22 is due to be laid by HM Treasury before Parliament on or before 31 January 2023.

## ■ Department of Health and Social Care: Management Consultants

**Wes Streeting:** [\[121086\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much his Department spent on management consultants in 2021-22.

**Will Quince:**

*[Holding answer 18 January 2023]:* The information requested is currently being audited and will be published in the Department's Annual Report and Accounts for 2021/22 shortly.

## ■ Department of Health and Social Care: Staff

**Wes Streeting:** [\[126742\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 23 December 2022 on Question 102941, how many full time equivalent Departmental staff work in any capacity on the disposal of Personal Protective Equipment.

**Will Quince:**

*[Holding answer 25 January 2023]:* The information is not held in the requested format. Officials working on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) are engaged in policy development and delivery, associated, analysis, finance and reporting among other functions. Overseeing the disposal of PPE is just one part of the work these officials carry out.

## ■ Drugs: Licensing

**Chris Green:** [\[129960\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of medicines appraised by NICE since 1 January 2017 were medicines that have already been appraised by NICE for another indication.

**Will Quince:**

Between 1 January 2017 and 31 December 2022, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence published technology appraisal guidance on 156 new active substances in their first indication and 120 on extensions to marketing authorisations that added a significant new therapeutic indication.

**■ Elective Recovery Taskforce****Dan Carden:** [\[128703\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish the (a) agendas and (b) minutes of the meetings of the Elective Recovery Taskforce.

**Will Quince:**

*[Holding answer 25 January 2023]:* The Department has no plans to publish the agendas and minutes of the meetings of the Elective Recovery Taskforce.

**■ Emergency Calls and NHS 111: Staff****Wes Streeting:** [\[126741\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference his Department's policy paper entitled Our plan for patients, published on 22 September 2022, how many (a) 111 and (b) 999 call handlers were employed by the NHS in England as of 19 December 2022.

**Will Quince:**

*[Holding answer 25 January 2023]:* While NHS England collects information on the number of call handlers working in NHS 111 and 999 services, this information has not been centrally validated.

**■ Emergency Calls: NHS 111****Marsha De Cordova:** [\[132561\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many and what proportion of calls to 999 were referred to 111 in December 2022.

**Marsha De Cordova:** [\[132562\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has provided recent guidance to 999 call handlers on (a) triage standards and (b) redirecting calls to 111 in emergency cases.

**Will Quince:**

Data on the proportion of calls to 999 that were referred to 111 in December 2022 is not available. NHS England's Integrated Urgent Care Aggregate data collection includes data on the number of calls transferred from 999 to 111, however the latest month for which this data is available is November 2022.

The Department has provided no such guidance. The triage and response to 999 calls is an operational matter for the National Health Service.

**■ Emergency Calls: Staff****Marsha De Cordova:** [\[132567\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the retention rate was for NHS call handlers in 2022.

**Marsha De Cordova:**

[\[132568\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the 2022 retention rate was for NHS Call Handler posts in London.

**Will Quince:**

The data is not held in the format requested.

## ■ **Epilepsy: Cannabis**

**Hilary Benn:**

[\[131151\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of Bedrocan cannabis medicines for children suffering from epilepsy.

**Will Quince:**

Clinical guidelines from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) state, there is insufficient evidence of safety and effectiveness to support a population-wide practice recommendation for the use of unlicensed cannabis-based products, including Bedrocan products, for the treatment of adults and children with severe treatment-resistant epilepsy. NICE also made recommendations for further research to inform future decisions on the routine prescribing and funding of unlicensed cannabis-based medicines on the National Health Service.

The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) has issued two calls for research proposals and a highlight notice on medicinal cannabis. Manufacturers, including those for Bedrocan products, are responsible for generating evidence to support the use of these products and to seek regulatory approval. The Government encourages manufacturers to do so and offers scientific and research advice from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency and the NIHR.

## ■ **Health Professions: Disciplinary Proceedings**

**Philip Davies:**

[\[129776\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what happens to the disciplinary records of (a) doctors and (b) nurses when they change (i) gender and (ii) name.

**Maria Caulfield:**

Healthcare workers are issued with a unique staff number when they are first appointed into a National Health Service position. This number is one of the main identifiers for personnel records and does not change during their term of employment. This is regardless as to whether the employee changes their gender and/or name.

Employers are required to retain information about their employees in accordance with employment, gender recognition and data protection laws and must follow good human resources practice, this includes any information that might be held about an individual's disciplinary record.

**■ Health Services: Carers**

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[132523\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the average waiting time for NHS (a) assessments and (b) treatments for unpaid carers.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[132524\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to reduce the waiting times for NHS treatments for unpaid carers.

**Will Quince:**

The NHS has published a delivery plan setting out a clear vision for how the NHS will recover and expand elective services over the next three years.

To support this recovery, the government plans to spend more than £8 billion from 2022-23 to 2024-25, in addition to the £2 billion Elective Recovery Fund and £700 million Targeted Investment Fund already made available to systems last financial year (2021/2022), to help drive up and protect elective activity. Taken together, this funding could deliver the equivalent of around nine million more checks and procedures, making it easier to get an appointment and increasing flexibility for patients, including unpaid carers.

Prioritisation for which patients are seen first is based on clinical decision making. The NHS will triage patients waiting for elective care, including surgeries, through three key stages. Firstly, through clinical prioritisation, ensuring the order in which patients are seen reflects clinical judgement on need. Secondly, by targeting support to reduce the number of people waiting the longest. Thirdly, increasing the number of cancer referrals.

Unpaid carers play a vital role in our communities, and we all owe them a debt of gratitude.

**■ Hospitals: Construction**

**Daisy Cooper:** [\[117837\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent discussions he has held with construction companies on the New Hospitals Programme.

**Daisy Cooper:** [\[117838\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has had recent discussions with construction company bid teams on the New Hospital Programme.

**Will Quince:**

The New Hospital Programme team regularly engages with the construction industry to support the Government commitment to deliver 40 hospitals by 2030. A commercial pipeline and supplier guide were published in Spring 2022 to help suppliers to better understand the New Hospital Programme's long-term demand and

prepare themselves to respond to future opportunities. On 13 December 2022, the New Hospital Programme held an Industry Day which brought together over 500 delegates from health and construction sectors to engage with the New Hospital Programme to support development of enduring national capacity and capability in healthcare infrastructure delivery.

My Rt hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has not had any recent meetings with construction companies regarding the New Hospital Programme.

## ■ Hospitals: Repairs and Maintenance

**Wes Streeting:**

[\[127842\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much money from the public purse was spent on the maintenance of NHS hospitals in each of the last five years.

**Will Quince:**

*[Holding answer 26 January 2023]:* The National Health Service publishes the annual Estates Returns Information Collection (ERIC), which includes detailed information on maintenance costs. Individual NHS trusts are responsible for providing the data for the ERIC and ensuring the accuracy of their returns.

The following table shows the spending on hospital maintenance of each financial year since 2017/18 to 2021/22.

FINANCIAL YEAR	ESTATES AND PROPERTY MAINTENANCE (£ MILLION)	INVESTMENT TO REDUCE BACKLOG MAINTENANCE (£ MILLION)
2021/22	£1,013	£1,406
2020/21	£987	£895
2019/20	£887	£516
2018/19	£909	£434
2017/18	£890	£404

## ■ Human Papillomavirus: Vaccination

**Steve McCabe:**

[\[131130\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of eligible children have received the first dose of their HPV vaccine in Birmingham, Selly Oak constituency in the each of the last five years.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The United Kingdom Health Security Agency (UKHSA) publish the Human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination coverage in adolescent females and males in England and report on an annual basis.

The UKHSA data is collected at Local Authority level and not by parliamentary constituency.

HPV Dose 1 vaccination coverage for Year 9 pupils in Birmingham Local Authority for academic years (September to August) 2017-18 to 2021-22.

SCHOOL YEAR	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Females vaccinated with Dose 1 in Year 9	5897 of 7162 children (82.3%)	6105 of 7563 children (80.7%)	6086 of 7366 children (82.6%)	5593 of 7499 children (74.6%)	5751 of 7760 children (74.1%)
Males vaccinated with Dose 1 in Year 9*	n/a	n/a	n/a	5421 of 7896 children (68.7%)	5497 of 8148 children (68.0%)

\*Males first became eligible for HPV dose 1 in Year 8 from September 2019.

This latest data for the academic year 2021 to 2022 was published on 20 December and can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/human-papillomavirus-hpv-vaccine-coverage-estimates-in-england-2021-to-2022>

## ■ Intensive Care

**Rachael Maskell:****[132440]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department is taking steps to strengthen the Guidelines for the Provision of intensive Care Services.

**Will Quince:**

No such steps are being taken by the Department. Guidance for the delivery of intensive care services is a matter for NHS England and relevant professional bodies.

## ■ Intensive Care: Health Professions

**Rachael Maskell:****[132434]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential impact of trauma on staff working in Intensive Therapy Units; and what steps he is taking to reduce that impact on staff.

**Will Quince:**

No such specific assessment has been made by the Department.

It is a priority to support the mental health and wellbeing of all National Health Service staff as they continue to work in challenging circumstances. The NHS People Plan, published in July 2020, has a strong focus on NHS staff health and wellbeing. This includes providing ongoing physical and mental health support, including targeting psychological support and treatment for those most affected; retaining staff who have come back into the NHS to help provide additional capacity; and strengthening the role for occupational health to move from a reactive service delivery model to a more integrated, preventative partner.

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[132436\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the vacancy level is for (a) nurses, (b) post-registration trained nurses in critical care nursing, (c) consultants, (d) registrars, (e) physios and (f) other health professional in Intensive Therapy Units.

**Will Quince:**

The data is not held in the format requested.

## ■ Lung Cancer

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[118930\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of trends in the rates of lung cancer in the last five years.

**Helen Whately:**

No specific assessment has been made.

The National Cancer Registration and Analysis Service, part of NHS Digital, collects data on all cancers diagnosed in England. The following figures are taken from the data tables of the National Statistics release of Cancer Registration Statistics, England 2020, published on 20 October 2022.

The number of new diagnoses of lung cancer in England for the five most recent years:

DIAGNOSIS YEAR	NUMBER OF MALES	NUMBER OF FEMALES	TOTAL
2016	21,044	18,318	39,362
2017	20,677	19,006	39,683
2018	20,708	19,078	39,786
2019	20,897	19,419	40,316
2020	19,161	18,076	37,237

## ■ Lung Cancer: Screening

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[131191\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the recommendations of the UK National Screening Committee, if he will introduce a targeted lung cancer screening programme.

**Helen Whately:**

The Department acknowledges the UK National Screening Committee recommendation (from their meeting in June 2022) for a national targeted lung cancer screening programme and is considering this with NHS England.

## ■ Malnutrition: Children

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[127814\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many (a) babies and (b) children have been admitted to hospital with malnutrition in each of the last 12 months for which data is available.

**Neil O'Brien:**

NHS Digital has provided a count of finished hospital admissions [1] for primary [2] and primary or secondary diagnosis [3] of 'malnutrition' for patients aged under one year old and 1-17 years old in England in each month between December 2021 - November 2022, (provisional data April-November 2022). This information is provided in the table below.

### ACTIVITY IN ENGLISH NHS HOSPITALS AND ENGLISH NHS COMMISSIONED ACTIVITY IN THE INDEPENDENT SECTOR

Year	Month	Primary Diagnosis		Primary or Secondary diagnosis	
		Under 1 yrs	1 - 17 yrs	Under 1 yrs	1 - 17 yrs
2021	December	-	4	1	36
2022	January	-	4	1	18
2022	February	1	3	1	26
2022	March	-	2	-	18
2022	April	-	3	-	19
2022	May	-	3	2	27
2022	June	1	4	3	17
2022	July	1	5	2	24
2022	August	2	5	2	25



#### ACTIVITY IN ENGLISH NHS HOSPITALS AND ENGLISH NHS COMMISSIONED ACTIVITY IN THE INDEPENDENT SECTOR

2022	September	-	1	1	29
2022	October	-	8	-	21
2022	November	-	3	-	18

Source: Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), NHS Digital

Some health conditions can lead to malnutrition in some children. This includes eating disorders, although malnutrition itself is not an eating disorder. Through the NHS Long-Term Plan, investment in children and young people's community eating disorder services has risen every year since 2016, with an extra £54 million per year from 2022/23. This extra funding will enhance the capacity of children and young people's community eating disorder teams across the country.

#### Notes

[1] A finished admission episode (FAE) is the first period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. FAEs are counted against the year or month in which the admission episode finishes. Admissions do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the period.

[2] The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 20 diagnosis fields in the Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) data set and provides the main reason why the patient was admitted to hospital.

[3] The number of episodes where this diagnosis was recorded in any of the 20 primary and secondary diagnosis fields in a Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) record. Each episode is only counted once, even if the diagnosis is recorded in more than one diagnosis field of the record.

### ■ Maternity Services: Infant Foods

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[131243]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to launch a baby and infant feeding programme.

**Neil O'Brien:**

There are no current plans to launch a baby and infant feeding programme. NHS England continues to support providers to achieve UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative accreditation, and infant feeding is integral to early years public health services. The Family Hubs and Start for Life funding package includes £50m to invest in infant feeding services for participating local authorities. The Department has also commissioned an infant feeding survey to assess the impact of actions on infant feeding.

**■ Medical Records: Data Protection**

**Chi Onwurah:** [\[129802\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 23 December 2022 to Question 111586, on Medical Records: Data Protection, in which specific circumstances personal health data can be used for purposes beyond individual care and treatment; what is the legal basis for any such disclosure; and whether his Department informs the affected patients.

**Chi Onwurah:** [\[129803\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 23 December 2022 to Question 111586, on Medical Records: Data Protection, how many legal gateways there are which set aside the common law duty of confidence.

**Will Quince:**

*[Holding answer 26 January 2023]:* Health and care organisations must ensure there is a lawful basis for sharing confidential patient information from a person's medical records for purposes beyond their individual care and treatment. This will generally mean that the person has provided their consent; there is a statutory or other legal requirement to disclose information; or there is an overriding public interest justification.

When using personal data, health and care organisations must comply with UK General Data Protection Regulation (UKGDPR) requirements and are guided by the eight Caldicott principles which state that confidential patient information should only be used when it is lawful, necessary and there is a clear purpose for doing so.

There are a limited number of legal gateways that set aside the common law duty of confidentiality, such as the powers of NHS Digital under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to require or request data- for example for purposes directed by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care. In addition, where it can be demonstrated that it is impracticable to obtain patient consent or work with anonymised data, the Health Service (Control of Patient Information) Regulations 2002 permit personal information to be used for cancer registries, communicable diseases and other threats to public health and enable the approval of the use of confidential patient information for other 'medical purpose's such as research, clinical audit and service planning by the Health Research Authority (HRA), for research, or the Secretary of State, for other medical purposes. Before approving such applications, the HRA and Secretary of State must be advised by the Confidentiality Advisory Group, an independent body which considers all applications, balancing patient and public interest with appropriate use of confidential patient information without consent.

Both the UKGDPR and Caldicott principles include specific principles related to transparency and it is the responsibility of each health and care organisation to make a range of information materials readily available to patients and members of the

public about what, why, how, when and where confidential patient information might be shared.

## ■ **Mental Health Services: Young People**

**Mark Fletcher:**

**[131458]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to take steps to ensure that his Department's Major Conditions Strategy will (a) adequately take into account the views and experiences of the 14,000 young people who responded to the Long-term Mental Health Strategy consultation and (b) achieve the ambitions set out in the Green Paper on Transforming children and young people's mental health provision, Cm 9523, published in December 2017.

**Maria Caulfield:**

We received over 5,000 submissions to our mental health and wellbeing call for evidence, and we appreciate the engagement work many stakeholders carried out with children, young people and adults with lived experience, and more broadly, to inform their responses to the call for evidence. We have analysed the responses to the call for evidence, and we will consider them as part of the process for developing the Major Conditions Strategy.

We remain committed to delivering the Green Paper on Transforming children and young people's mental health provision and we have made progress.

Mental health support teams now cover 26% of pupils, a year earlier than originally planned.

NHS England piloted a four week waiting time standard and has consulted on the definition and introduction of a range of waiting time standards, including that children, young people and their families/carers presenting to community-based mental health services, should start to receive care within four weeks from referral.

The Department for Education has committed to offer all state schools and colleges a grant to train a senior mental health lead by 2025, and over 10,000 schools and colleges have taken up the training offer so far.

## ■ **Multiple Sclerosis: Health Services**

**Stephanie Peacock:**

**[133741]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he made of the potential merits of including multiple sclerosis within the Major Conditions Strategy.

**Stephanie Peacock:**

**[133742]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish the criteria used to determine the conditions included in the Major Conditions Strategy.

**Helen Whately:**

Cancers, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease, dementia, mental ill health and musculoskeletal conditions are the six conditions that contribute the most to mortality and morbidity.

Focusing on the conditions that contribute most to mortality and morbidity will allow us to focus our efforts on the key actions needed to achieve our manifesto commitment of gaining five extra years of Healthy Life Expectancy by 2035. The insights we generate through the strategy will have applications beyond those conditions which are expressly included in the scope.

■ **NHS 111****Thangam Debbonaire:**[\[131227\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that 111 advice line has adequate capacity to provide a timely service, including for members of the public calling when they are not able to access other parts of the NHS.

**Will Quince:**

The National Health Service is building the capacity of NHS111 to give patients the help they need, including arranging clinical advice direct from healthcare professionals, making urgent appointments at a range of health services, or offering a timed slot at a local accident and emergency where appropriate.

NHS England has invested an additional £50 million in funding for NHS111 in 2022/23 to increase capacity and NHS111 call handling performance is also being improved through the implementation of regional call management, enabling better integration between providers, and ensuring total NHS 111 capacity is being used effectively.

■ **NHS Trusts: Consultants****Wes Streeting:**[\[122487\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much was spent by NHS trusts on recruitment consultants in each of the last five years.

**Will Quince:**

*[Holding answer 20 January 2023]:* I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 26 January 2023 to Question 121087. Although National Health Service trusts are required to disclose the expenditure on consultancy, this does not separately record expenditure on recruitment consultancy.

■ **NHS: Per Capita Costs****Gareth Johnson:**[\[132342\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much the NHS spent per head in Dartford constituency in (a) 2020-21 and (b) 2021-22.

**Will Quince:**

The lowest geographical level at which National Health Service spend was reported in 2020/21 and 2021/22 financial year was by clinical commissioning group (CCG).

Kent and Medway CCG covered the Dartford constituency. Their spend per head is set out in the table below.

FINANCIAL YEAR	SPEND PER HEAD
2020-21	£1,675
2021-22	£1,860

**NHS: Staff****Wes Streeting:**[\[127844\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an estimate of the number of NHS staff who have emigrated to work in Australia in each of the last five years.

**Will Quince:**

*[Holding answer 26 January 2023]:* There are no plans to make an estimate.

**Jim Shannon:**[\[129783\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions he has had with the Royal College of Nursing on anxiety and depression in NHS workers; and what steps he is taking to provide mental health support to NHS staff.

**Will Quince:**

The Secretary of State and I have regular discussions with the Royal College of Nursing, including about how to improve the experience of nurses working in the National Health Service.

In line with the NHS People Plan, published in July 2020, there is a strong focus within the NHS on staff health and wellbeing. This includes providing ongoing physical and mental health support including targeting psychological support and treatment for those most affected, retaining staff who have come back into the NHS to help provide additional capacity and strengthening the role for occupational health to move from a reactive service delivery model to a more integrated, preventative partner.

**Palantir: Contracts****Tulip Siddiq:**[\[117985\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department plans to issue contracts for the management of NHS health data to Palantir.

**Will Quince:**

The procurement of solutions or services for the management of National Health Service health data by the Department and NHS England is subject to open competition, in line with Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Such procurement processes are open to all suppliers. The Department holds no current contracts with Palantir and has no contract award processes underway with this supplier. NHS England holds a contract with Palantir for the Foundry platform and will shortly be launching a procurement process open to all suppliers for a new Federated Data Platform to replace that system.

**■ Processed Cereal-based Foods and Baby Foods for Infants and Young Children (England) Regulations 2003****Stella Creasy:**[\[133619\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Retained EU Law Bill, whether he plans to (a) revoke, (b) retain or (c) replace the Processed Cereal-based Foods and Baby Foods for Infants and Young Children (England) Regulations 2003.

**Neil O'Brien:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 8 December 2022 to Question [105306](#).

**■ School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme****Ian Byrne:**[\[132591\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what food standards are applied to fruit and vegetables sourced for children through the School Fruit and Vegetables Scheme; and whether he will make an assessment of the potential merits of requiring that food supplied through the scheme meets fair-trade standards.

**Neil O'Brien:**

Suppliers of fruit and vegetables to the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme are required to adhere to all elements of United Kingdom law. They are required to supply produce which meets Government fresh fruit and vegetable marketing standards and the standards set for the Red Tractor food assurance scheme for UK sourced foods, or Globalgap, the international equivalent for fruit and vegetables sourced from outside the UK.

An assessment of relevant accreditation programmes such as Fairtrade is undertaken as part of the procurement process to source the fruit, vegetables and related services for the Scheme. The current supply frameworks will run until the end of July 2024, and the merits of using a range of potential accreditations, including Fairtrade, will be considered as part of the next procurement.

## ■ Surgery: Waiting Lists

### Wes Streeting:

[\[132503\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many NHS operations were cancelled due to staff shortages in each of the last five years.

### Will Quince:

The data is not collected in the format requested.

## ■ Unispace Global: Contracts

### Nick Smith:

[\[120948\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether Unispace Global Ltd fulfilled its contractual obligations on all PPE contracts it was awarded prior to its novation to Sante Global LLP.

### Will Quince:

*[Holding answer 18 January 2023]:* The Department contract with Unispace Global Ltd for gloves was not fulfilled prior to that contract being novated to Sante Global LLP. However, in July 2021, a settlement was reached and the contract has now performed.

### Nick Smith:

[\[120953\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when the PPE contracts awarded to Unispace Global Ltd were novated to Unispace Health LLP, now Sante Global LLP.

### Will Quince:

*[Holding answer 18 January 2023]:* On 16 December 2020, contracts under Unispace were novated to Sante Global LLP, whom at the time were Unispace Health Products LLP, by a deed of novation made between the Department, Unispace and Sante Global LLP.

## ■ Vaccination

### Jim Shannon:

[\[131166\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the Government has considered introducing an accelerated regulatory and approval pathway for new vaccines and immunisations, particularly for diseases where an effective vaccine does not yet exist.

### Will Quince:

There are no current plans to introduce alternative accelerated approval pathways specific to vaccines and immunisations. At present, where accelerated approval of a vaccine is necessary, a medicine can be assessed for temporary authorisation under Regulation 174. This permits the supply of vaccine batches based on the safety, quality and efficacy data submitted by the applicant to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). This authorisation is not a marketing

authorisation and only applies to supply within the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Apart from Regulation 174, there are other regulatory routes in place for new medicines and vaccines. These regulatory routes may include (Conditional) Marketing Authorizations as well as Innovative Licensing and Access Pathway and Access Consortium approval procedures.

The Conditional Marketing Authorisation (CMA) route is particularly suited to vaccines for prevention of serious infectious diseases where no vaccine exists currently. This route allows for the possibility of authorisation earlier in the development pathway, before confirmatory data are available. New vaccines would be eligible for the accelerated, 150 day, assessment procedure.

## HOME OFFICE

### ■ Afghanistan: Refugees

**Tulip Siddiq:**

**[129863]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what data Department holds on the number of referrals the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has made under Pathway 2 of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme; and how many resettlement decisions have been made as a result of those referrals.

**Robert Jenrick:**

Data on UNHCR referrals is not currently available to release.

As of the 24 November 2022, we have granted Indefinite Leave to Remain to 6,314 individuals under ACRS. We are unable, at this time, to provide a breakdown of ACRS Pathway the grant of leave was made under. More information on the number of grants of Indefinite Leave to Remain issued to Afghans resettling under the ARAP or ACRS can be viewed at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghan-resettlement-programme-operational-data/afghan-resettlement-programme-operational-data>

### ■ Airports: Armed Forces

**Beth Winter:**

**[130100]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the cost implications of using the armed forces during recent strike action taken at airports; and if she will provide details of the costs to her Department.

**Robert Jenrick:**

The Home Office's priority is to deliver a safe and secure border and we will never compromise on this including during any period of Industrial Action.

The Home Office carefully considered many elements, including cost implications of using the armed forces, as we prepared our response to the industrial action being taken by PCS members. Together with the other contingencies we deployed, the



deployment of armed forces personnel enabled all UK ports to remain open with minimal disruption, during the action taken in December. As the action by PCS is ongoing, it would not be appropriate for us to provide details on the costs to the Department.

■ **Asylum: Hove**

**Ian Byrne:**

[\[132555\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to recent reports of the abduction of unaccompanied children from a Home Office residence in Hove, what arrangements for custody and responsibility her Department made with that local authority when it procured hotels to house asylum seekers in that area.

**Robert Jenrick:**

The rise in dangerous small boats crossings means there are significant challenges on providing local authority care places for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC). Out of necessity and with the best interests of the child in mind, we have had no alternative but to temporarily use hotels to give some unaccompanied children a roof over their heads whilst local authority accommodation is found. The safety and wellbeing of those in our care is our primary concern.

The Home Office engaged with the local authority before UASC were housed in the hotel, but operational pressures resulted in a reduced period of notice prior to their moving into the site.

We take our safeguarding responsibilities extremely seriously, and we have robust procedures in place to ensure all children are accommodated as safely as possible whilst in hotels. The movements of UASC in and out of hotels are monitored and recorded and they are accompanied by support workers when attending organised activities and social excursions off-site, or where specific vulnerabilities are identified.

We have no power to detain unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in these hotels and we know some do go missing. Many of those who have gone missing are subsequently traced and located. It is not true to say that unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are being kidnapped or abducted from these hotels.

Ending the use of hotels for UASC is an absolute priority and we will continue to work around the clock with councils to increase the number of care placements available.

To achieve that goal we are providing local authorities with children's services £15,000 for every eligible young person they take into their care from a Home Office-run hotel dedicated to UASC or the Kent Reception and Safe Care Service by the end of February 2023.

**Ian Byrne:**

[\[132556\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to recent reports of the abduction of unaccompanied children from a Home Office residence in Hove, what training was provided to security staff contracted by her Department to manage the security of those children.

**Robert Jenrick:**

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, extremely seriously. The wellbeing of children is our number one priority and our accommodation providers are required to ensure accommodation is safe and in line with contractual requirements.

It is also not true to say that unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are being kidnapped from Home Office hotels. Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are not detained and are free to leave the accommodation. They may choose to leave for a number of reasons, such as visiting family.

Local authorities have a statutory duty to protect all children, regardless of where they go missing from. This can be from home or from a care setting as a looked-after child.

Home Office Safeguarding Hub works closely with accommodation providers to ensure early identification of vulnerabilities, where issues are not disclosed by customers, and onward referral to the statutory agencies of health, police, and social services. Asylum seekers have full access to the advisory services provided by Migrant Help who are available to contact 24/7. Contracted security staff within UASC hotels complete comprehensive training.

**■ Fire and Rescue Services: Cancer****Marsha De Cordova:**[\[130024\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department is taking steps to help protect firefighters from cancer caused by contaminants in fires.

**Chris Philp:**

The health and safety of firefighters is of great importance. It is for individual fire and rescue authorities, as employers with responsibility for health and wellbeing, to ensure that firefighters receive the appropriate equipment and training they need to safely respond to the wide range of incidents which they attend.

Nationally, the "Fire and Rescue National Framework" directs that all Fire and Rescue Authorities should have a people strategy which covers "health and safety, wellbeing, disabilities, and support (including mental health and physical support)".

The Home Office will review the recently published studies to fully understand their methodology.

**■ Fraud****Emily Thornberry:**[\[129740\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on how many occasions individuals contacted Action Fraud to report that third parties had unsuccessfully tried to use their stolen identities to obtain goods, services or money using credit arrangements or loans in (a) 2019-20, (b) 2020-21 and (c) 2021-22; and how many of those incidents were recorded as crimes in each financial year.

**Emily Thornberry:**

**[129741]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on how many occasions in (a) 2019-20, (b) 2020-21 and (c) 2021-22 individuals contacted Action Fraud to report that third parties had unsuccessfully tried to defraud them using advance fee payment or consumer retail scams; and whether those incidents were recorded as crimes.

**Emily Thornberry:**

**[129742]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on how many occasions individuals contacted Action Fraud to report that third parties had unsuccessfully tried to access their bank accounts or obtain their banking details in (a) 2019-20, (b) 2020-21 and (c) 2021-22; and how many of those incidents were recorded as crimes in each financial year.

**Emily Thornberry:**

**[129743]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on how many occasions individuals contacted Action Fraud to report that third parties had unsuccessfully tried to defraud them using denial of service extortion or other hacking scams in (a) 2019-20, (b) 2020-21 and (c) 2021-22; and how many of those incidents were recorded as crimes in each financial year.

**Tom Tugendhat:**

The Home Office collects data on the number of fraud and computer misuse cases reported to Action Fraud that have been recorded as crimes by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB). Information on the number of reports of fraud that were not subsequently recorded as crimes is not held.

Action Fraud reports of fraud and computer misuse offence are published by the ONS quarterly in the Crime in England and Wales tables, which can be found at this link: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/crimeinenglandandwalesappendixtables>

Table A5 presents these offences by type of fraud committed.

## ■ Home Office: Equality

**Chris Stephens:**

**[R] [133749]**

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

**Chris Philp:**

I refer the Hon. Member to my response on 30 January 2023 to question 128662.

The response can be found here: [Written questions and answers - Written questions, answers and statements - UK Parliament](#)

## ■ Home Office: Racial Discrimination

**Sir John Hayes:**

[\[129724\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department provides (a) mandatory or (b) voluntary (i) lectures, (ii) reading lists and (iii) other training on Critical Race Theory for employees in her Department.

**Chris Philp:**

The Home Office does not provide mandatory, voluntary, lectures, reading lists or other training on Critical Race Theory for its employees.

## ■ Home Office: Written Questions

**Dan Carden:**

[\[130094\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to answer Question 121112, tabled on 11 January for answer on 16 January.

**Robert Jenrick:**

I refer the Hon. Member to the my answer to Question UIN 121112 on 30 January 2023.

## ■ Passports: Applications

**Dan Carden:**

[\[121112\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of passport applications were not processed within 10 weeks in each calendar month of 2022.

**Robert Jenrick:**

Since April 2021, His Majesty's Passport Office has advised people to allow up to 10 weeks when applying for their passport using the standard service in the UK.

Of the standard UK applications resulting in a printed passport in the week ending 15 January 2023, 99.2% had been processed within ten weeks. HM Passport Office processed over one million more applications in 2022 than in any previous year.

Published processing times for overseas applications vary, starting from 11 weeks.

The total volume of printed passports for each calendar month in 2022 where the application was not processed within ten weeks, is shown in the table below:

MONTH	TOTAL PRINTED	TOTAL PRINTED WITHIN 10 WEEKS	VOLUME OVER 10 WEEKS*	% OVER 10 WEEKS
Jan-22	387,869	378,639	9,230	2.4%
Feb-22	639,388	632,044	7,344	1.1%
Mar-22	858,037	851,133	6,904	0.8%
Apr-22	904,634	890,190	14,444	1.6%

MONTH	TOTAL PRINTED	TOTAL PRINTED WITHIN 10 WEEKS	VOLUME OVER 10 WEEKS*	% OVER 10 WEEKS
May-22	975,367	944,307	31,060	3.2%
Jun-22	862,946	798,531	64,415	7.5%
Jul-22	696,054	603,996	92,058	13.2%
Aug-22	572,517	485,465	87,052	15.2%
Sep-22	498,579	453,971	44,608	8.9%
Oct-22	443,409	418,415	24,994	5.6%
Nov-22	472,237	454,496	17,741	3.8%
Dec-22	272,520	263,307	9,213	3.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,583,557</b>	<b>7,174,494</b>	<b>409,063</b>	<b>5.39%</b>

\* Data for priority services is recorded as performance against the respective service level only (1 day for Premium, 7 days for Fast Track), with the end-to-end processing time not being held in a reportable format. Passports printed under a priority service are therefore excluded.

#### ■ Police: Disciplinary Proceedings

**Philip Davies:**

[\[129777\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what happens to the disciplinary records of police officers when they change (i) gender and (ii) name.

**Chris Philp:**

The maintenance of officers' disciplinary records are not determined in legislation and would be an operational matter for police forces.

#### ■ Police: Equality

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[129921\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to record grievances raised by police staff related to each protected characteristic; and what steps she is taking to reduce the number of grievances related to a protected characteristic.

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[129922\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how her Department monitors grievances raised to Association Of Police And Crime Commissioners; and whether her Department provides mandatory training to Police and Crime Commissioners on dealing with grievances related to a protected characteristic.

**Chris Philp:**

The Home Office does not collect or monitor data on grievances within police forces. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspects police forces on their treatment of their workforce, including handling of grievances. It last published findings on grievances following its 2018/19 PEEL inspections

The Home Office does however publish annual statistics on police misconduct. The latest statistics were published on 12 January 2023 and are available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-misconduct-statistics>

The Home Office does not collect or monitor data on grievances dealt with by the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners. The Home Office does not provide, nor does it have responsibility for providing, such training to Police and Crime Commissioners.

**■ Police: Pay****Rachael Maskell:****[129920]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the adequacy of pay for police service staff.

**Chris Philp:**

It is the role of the independent Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) to consider and make recommendations to the Government on the appropriate level of pay and allowances for police officers. The PRRB gathers and invites parties to submit evidence to inform its decisions. This includes both written and oral evidence from the Government, police employers and police staff associations.

The Government has no statutory role in determining the pay and conditions for police staff, which are agreed locally by Chief Constables in consultation with trade unions.

**■ Police: Vetting****Holly Lynch:****[132418]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the The National Police Chiefs Council's letter to Chief Constables requiring all pre-2006 officers to be vetted against national databases, dated 20 January 2023, what estimate she has made of the number of officers who will need to be vetted in line with that letter; and how many of those officers will require vetting by the Cabinet Office in all categories of vetting.

**Chris Philp:**

The National Police Chiefs' Council have asked all police forces to check their officers and staff against the police national database (PND) to identify any intelligence or allegations that need further investigation.

This will help identify anyone who has slipped through the net before vetting standards were toughened, and ensure those who are unfit to serve can be rooted

out. Further details of the NPCC's commission can be found on their website:

<https://news.npcc.police.uk/releases/all-police-staff-records-to-be-checked-for-allegations-and-intelligence-by-march>

## ■ Refugees: Afghanistan

**Tulip Siddiq:**

[129862]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of enabling people coming to the UK under (a) Pathway 1 and (b) Pathway 3 of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme to apply for family reunion.

**Robert Jenrick:**

In line with our existing policy on resettlement, those resettled under the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) may be able to be accompanied by their immediate family members.

The government's family reunion policy is intended to allow those recognised as refugees or granted humanitarian protection in the UK to sponsor family members, provided they formed part of a family unit prior to the refugee sponsor's departure to seek protection.

Only those referred by UNHCR under pathway 2 of the ACRS will have refugee status and will, therefore, be able to access the refugee family reunion route.

For those evacuated from Afghanistan under the ACRS without their immediate family members, further information will be made available in due course about options for reuniting with them.

Those already in the UK without refugee status under ACRS Pathway 1, wishing to bring family members other than immediate family members would need to apply through the regular family visa route under Appendix FM of the Immigration rules.

The Government remains committed to providing protection for vulnerable and at-risk people fleeing Afghanistan. However, the situation is very complex and presents significant challenges, including how those who are eligible for resettlement in the UK can leave the country. This includes the eligible immediate family members of those being resettled under the ACRS.

## ■ Visas: Families

**Wera Hobhouse:**

[132420]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the mean average UKVI Family Visa application processing time is.

**Robert Jenrick:**

An applicant applying for a family visa at entry clearance should get a decision within 24 weeks.

[Visa decision waiting times: applications outside the UK - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/visa-waiting-times)

An applicant applying in the UK to extend a family visa (spouse or partner on a 5-year route to settlement) should get a decision within 8 weeks.

[Visa decision waiting times: applications inside the UK - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/visa-decision-waiting-times-applications-inside-the-uk)

An applicant applying in the UK for settlement should get a decision within 6 months.

[Visa decision waiting times: applications inside the UK - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/visa-decision-waiting-times-applications-inside-the-uk)

Mean average processing times do not form part of any current transparency data for Spouse/Partner applications and are not published.

The transparency data does, however, include a range of processing data and the latest data can be found at: [Migration transparency data - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/migration-transparency-data).

## ■ Visas: Temporary Employment

**Stephen Kinnock:** [133608]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications for an International Agreement visa (Temporary Work) were (a) received and (b) approved in (i) 2020, (ii) 2021 and (iii) 2022.

**Stephen Kinnock:** [133609]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of applications for an International Agreement visa (Temporary Work) were from nationals of (a) EU member states and (b) non-EU member states in (i) 2020, (ii) 2021 and (iii) 2022; and how many and what proportion of those applications were approved in each year.

**Stephen Kinnock:** [133610]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the total amount received by her Department from (a) application fees and (b) health surcharge payments in relation to applications for an International Agreement visa (Temporary Work) was in (i) 2020, (ii) 2021 and (iii) 2022.

**Robert Jenrick:**

The Home Office publishes data on visas in the ['Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release'](#). Data on the number of entry clearance visa applications and outcomes of applications for 'International Agreement (Temporary Worker)' visas, by nationality, are published in tables Vis\_D01 and Vis\_D02, respectively, of the [entry clearance visas applications and outcomes detailed dataset](#).

The latest data relates up to, and including, the third quarter (July to September) of 2022.

The Home Office does not routinely publish data on fees from International Agreement visa applications. It also does not publish immigration health surcharges broken down by visa routes.



**HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION****■ Parliament: Security****Mr Gregory Campbell:**[\[131131\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for Broxbourne, representing the House of Commons Commission, on how many days Members of Parliament who have not taken their seats in Parliament used their parliamentary passes to access the Estate in the last twelve months.

**Sir Charles Walker:**

This data is only kept for seven days. Seven MPs have not taken their seats. The data held at the time of the search showed that two had accessed the estate during the 7-day period covered, each on one occasion.

**INTERNATIONAL TRADE****■ Department for International Trade: Disease Control****Daisy Cooper:**[\[131395\]](#)

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

**Nigel Huddleston:**

The Department has not purchased any mobile UV virus irradiation units.

**■ Overseas Trade: Nepal****Navendu Mishra:**[\[131440\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether she is taking steps to increase trade between the UK and Nepal.

**Greg Hands:**

The Government is committed to driving mutual prosperity between the UK and Nepal, enabling UK businesses to take full advantage of Nepal's high growth sectors such as renewable energy, education and retail. Officials have worked with colleagues in country to remove barriers to trade, such as the recent lifting of import restrictions on luxury goods, and the removal of a lock-in period for foreign funds investing in Nepal. In January the Department for International Trade supported a Clean Growth and Infrastructure event in Kathmandu for industry and Government, focusing on improving standards and regulations for the sector.

**■ Overseas Trade: Somalia****Tulip Siddiq:**[\[129858\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps she is taking to increase trade between Somalia and the UK.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

My Department will introduce the UK's Developing Countries Trading Scheme (DCTS) in early 2023, which will facilitate Somalia's integration into global supply chains through reformed rules of origin and allow 99% of goods exported from Somalia duty-free access to UK markets.

The Department for International Trade's Export Support Service also provides specialist overseas support to small-and-medium-sized UK businesses looking to export and grow in Africa, including Somalia.

**Trade Agreements****Dan Carden:**[\[131297\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether she had discussions at the World Economic Forum on restoration of the WTO rules-based trade regime.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

The Secretary of State had important discussions at the World Economic Forum on strengthening the multilateral trading system, including by achieving a fully functioning World Trade Organization (WTO) dispute settlement system. These included bilateral meetings with the US, European Commission and other allies, a meeting with the WTO Director General, attendance at the Coalition of Trade Ministers on Climate, and a WTO mini-ministerial.

**JUSTICE****Criminal Justice Board****Ellie Reeves:**[\[132506\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what was the cost to the public purse of each Criminal Justice Board in 2022.

**Mike Freer:**

The Criminal Justice Board did not meet in 2022, but Ministers regularly attended meetings to discuss criminal justice issues, such as the Rape Review Steering Committee. There was therefore no cost to the public purse. The next Criminal Justice Board meeting will be in the coming months.

**Energy: Meters****Dr Alan Whitehead:**[\[131105\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many court orders have been granted allowing energy companies to forcibly install prepayment meters in homes since (a) the start of January 2023 and (b) the week commencing 16 January 2023.

**Mike Freer:**

Between 1 January and 25 January 2023, 26,430 warrants requested by energy suppliers were granted, uncontested by customers/occupiers. For the week

commencing 16 January 2023, 6,556 uncontested warrants requested by energy suppliers were granted. In granting any one or more application(s), the Justice of the Peace must be satisfied by evidence given on oath by the energy supplier or their representative that the statutory requirements have been met, that the supplier and the agent comply with the requirements of Ofgem, and occupiers have been informed of their right to a hearing.

These figures represent all warrants to enforce rights of entry, including those relating to safety, as warrants specifically for the purpose of installing a prepayment meter cannot be isolated from the data. The figures do not distinguish between residential or business premises either.

These data are management information and are not subject to the same level of checks as official statistics. The data provided is the most recent available and for that reason might differ slightly from any previously published information. Recent data are especially vulnerable to quality checking and so may be subject to change.

#### ■ Legal Aid Agency: Solicitors

**Afzal Khan:**

[\[133705\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many solicitors were on the Legal Aid Agency's January 2023 criminal duty rota who had not been present on the Legal Aid Agency's criminal duty rotas in the previous 12 months.

**Mike Freer:**

Of the 4023 members included in the Legal Aid Agency's (LAA) [Duty Solicitor Rota](#) commencing on 3 January 2023, there were approximately 86 members who had not been present on rotas which had commenced in the previous 12 months. This figure is based on a comparison of published member lists, which are compiled using data captured in duty solicitor application forms.

The LAA frequently reviews market capacity to make sure there is adequate provision of legal aid, in all categories of law, throughout England and Wales. The LAA moves quickly, where issues arise, to secure additional provision and to ensure demand for legal aid services is met across the country.

The LAA is satisfied that there continues to be sufficient duty solicitor coverage across all duty schemes. Provision under the duty scheme is demand led and so there may be variations in numbers across each local rota or other fluctuations in numbers depending on prevailing market conditions, and other factors such as the internal management and updating of contract schedules.

#### ■ Prison and Probation Service: Contracts

**Steve Reed:**

[\[133623\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of terminated commercial contracts within the HMP Prison and Probation Service in each of the last five years.

**Damian Hinds:**

The information requested could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

■ **Prison Officers: Resignations**

**Ellie Reeves:**

[\[129971\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether his Department holds information on (a) the reasons for and (b) subsequent employment taken up by prison officers leaving the prison service.

**Damian Hinds:**

In answer to part (a): The quarterly HM Prison & Probation workforce quarterly publication covers staffing information, including leavers by reason by grade.

In response to part (b) this information is not recorded.

■ **Prison Officers: State Retirement Pensions**

**Grahame Morris:**

[\[133638\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether he has had recent discussions with (a) the Chancellor of the Exchequer and (b) the Minister for the Cabinet Office on the potential merits of lowering the pension age of prison officers to 60.

**Damian Hinds:**

We highly value our hardworking prison staff and offer access to medical professionals and an employee assistance programme to ensure continued physical and mental wellbeing. I am committed to listening to and working with officers, staff and trade unions on a range of issues, and I continue to meet with the Prison Officer's Association and other unions to discuss a range of issues. At this time no discussions have taken place with honourable colleagues from Treasury or Cabinet Office on prison officer pension age.

■ **Prisons: Energy Supply**

**Greg Smith:**

[\[130055\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 20 January 2022 to Question 125503 on Prisons: Energy Supply, what is the total cost of works already started and fully committed to by (a) UK Power Networks and (b) other electrical supply contractors to install additional power to the (i) HMP Grendon and (ii) HMP Springhill site areas; and how much and what proportion of that existing cost is for use by (A) existing prisons and (B) planned prisons which do not have planning permission.

**Damian Hinds:**

The total cost of necessary power upgrades has not been finalised. This is because the final cost is dependent on the route taken, which is subject to the relevant Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) securing the necessary consents and wayleaves and any stipulations made by the Local Authority in relation to works.

Works already started are to support a necessary uplift in energy capacity at the existing prison (HMP Springhill) only. The existing power demand at HMP Springhill is already currently over capacity, therefore that site requires a power upgrade irrespective of the proposed expansion. No works already started relate to the proposed new prison currently undergoing planning.

The total commitment to date to UK Power Networks for this upgrade is £840,000 (including VAT).

## ■ Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation

**Pat McFadden:**

[\[131139\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether the Government is taking steps to prevent the use of strategic lawsuits against public participation by sanctioned individuals.

**Mike Freer:**

The Government remains committed to introducing targeted anti-SLAPP legislation to stop Russian oligarchs from tarnishing our legal system, whilst ensuring access to justice. Reforms will include a statutory definition of SLAPPs, an early dismissal mechanism, and costs protection for SLAPPs cases. We intend to legislate as soon as parliamentary time allows.

## LEADER OF THE HOUSE

### ■ Members: Codes of Practice

**Thangam Debbonaire:**

[\[133602\]](#)

To ask the Leader of the House, when an updated version of the Code of Conduct for Members of Parliament and Guide to the Rules will be published.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

Following a debate on 12th December 2022, the House approved a revised Code of Conduct for Members of Parliament and Guide to the Rules, with effect from 1st March 2023. The publication of these documents is a matter for the House, rather than the Government.

## LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

### ■ Antisemitism

**Dean Russell:**

[\[130089\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps his Department is taking to help tackle anti-Semitism.

**Lee Rowley:**

Antisemitism has absolutely no place in our society, which is why we are taking a strong, cross Government approach to tackling it in all its forms. The UK became the

first country to adopt the Definition of Antisemitism; we support the work of Lord Mann, the Government's Independent Adviser on Antisemitism, and we provide funding to the Holocaust Education Trust. I would also refer my Hon. Friend to the answer to Question UIN [117512](#) which gives further detail on the steps taken to tackle this issue.

■ **Buildings: Warwick and Leamington**

**Matt Western:** [\[129871\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how many buildings within Warwick and Leamington constituency have been found to contain expanded polystyrene insulation.

**Matt Western:** [\[129872\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how many buildings in the UK have been reported to have expanded polystyrene insulation (EPS).

**Lee Rowley:**

The department is collecting this information with respect to external wall systems for high-rise (over 18m in height) residential buildings in England via local authorities and housing associations. This is part of an ongoing data collection that will enable us to build a picture of external wall systems in use (including their insulation) on high rise residential buildings. We will publish appropriate summary information from the data collection in due course.

■ **Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities: Minimum Wage**

**Chris Stephens:** [R] [\[129893\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how many and what proportion of employees in their Department are paid at the rate of the National Minimum Wage.

**Dehenna Davison:**

In line with precedent, the Department will not release data concerning five or fewer employees.

■ **Homelessness: Grants**

**Paula Barker:** [\[131366\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what recent discussions his Department has had with the Local Government Association on the (a) effectiveness and (b) adequacy of the Homeless Prevention Grant.

**Paula Barker:** [\[131367\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether his Department has (a) consulted and (b) had discussions with key stakeholders in the homelessness sector since September 2022 on potential rises in demand for homelessness services.

**Paula Barker:**

[\[131371\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for the Home Department on homeless asylum seekers and refugees.

**Paula Barker:**

[\[131374\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what progress he has made on ending rough sleeping.

**Paula Barker:**

[\[131375\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, when his Department most recently had discussions with the Mayor of London on (a) homelessness and (b) rough sleeping in London.

**Felicity Buchan:**

The technical consultation on the Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG) funding arrangement closed last year. A summary of which can be found [here](#). Local authorities in England have been allocated a total of £654 million HPG for 2023-24 and 2024-25.

We have made good progress towards our goal to end rough sleeping, with rough sleeping levels falling 49% since 2017, according to the annual snapshot which can be found [here](#). As has been the case with successive administrations, details of internal meetings are not normally disclosed. Ministerial meetings with external organisations are published on gov.uk.

## ■ Housing: Construction

**Julian Knight:**

[\[129970\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps his Department is taking to support local authorities on building housing on brownfield sites.

**Lucy Frazer:**

This Government is strongly committed to making the most of brownfield land, in line with our policies in the National Planning Policy Framework which sets out that planning policies and decisions should give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements.

We have introduced a number of other measures to support local authorities to prioritise brownfield development including uplifting local housing need in the top 20 most populated cities to make the most of brownfield land and existing infrastructure, and successfully required every local authority to publish a register of local brownfield land suitable for housing. We have also revised Permitted Development and Use Class rules so that more homes can be created and commercial buildings can change easily between uses, helping make best use of existing buildings.

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill will further empower local leaders to regenerate towns and cities by strengthening and adding to existing measures, for

example, changes to compulsory purchase powers and the Infrastructure Levy which will further support brownfield redevelopment. We have also committed to launching a review into identifying further measures that would prioritise the use of brownfield land.

To support our policies, we are providing significant financial support for the take-up and completion of brownfield redevelopment. We have set up the £4.3 billion Housing Infrastructure Fund and the £550 million Brownfield Housing Fund. The £180 million Brownfield Land Release Fund supports local authorities to release smaller brownfield sites for housing and will be made available between 2022/23 - 2024/25. In addition, we expect to launch the £1.5 billion Brownfield, Infrastructure and Land fund in the near future.

### ■ Infrastructure: York Central

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[133657\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will publish the shortlist of potential development partners for the York Central Infrastructure Project; and when he plans to announce the preferred bidder.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[133658\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what the estimated total cost is of the York Central Infrastructure Project; and how much funding has been secured as of 26 January 2023.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The department has allocated £77.1 million in housing investment grant funding to the York Central project. The successful bidder will be announced in due course.

### ■ Levelling Up Fund

**Claire Hanna:** [\[133801\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will publish a list of all projects that applied to Round Two of the Levelling Up Fund.

**Dehenna Davison:**

I refer the Hon. Member to my answer to Question UIN [129836](#) on 26 January 2023.

### ■ MV Empire Windrush

**Bell Ribeiro-Addy:** [\[130071\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether his Department plans to allocate (a) funds and (b) other resources for celebrations to mark the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the MV Empire Windrush in Britain.

**Lee Rowley:**

The 75th anniversary of the arrival of MV Empire Windrush at the Port of Tilbury marks an important moment in our nation's shared history. £750,000 in grant funding will be provided by government for the Windrush Day Grant Scheme to celebrate



Windrush 75. Community groups and local authorities in England and Northern Ireland can apply for up to £50,000 for events and activities that mark the annual Windrush Day on 22 June.

As of today, Government has dedicated £3.75 million in funding towards the Windrush legacy. This includes £2.75 million across five years of the Windrush Day Grant Scheme, and £1 million allocated to the National Windrush Monument.

## ■ Pedestrian Areas: Accidents

**Tulip Siddiq:**

**[129855]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps his Department is taking with local councils to reduce accidents on pavements caused by wet weather.

**Lee Rowley:**

The Department for Transport has worked with the UK Roads Leadership Group (UKRLG) in producing the document 'Asset Management Guidance for Footways and Cycle Routes: Pavement Design and Maintenance' – this is available to all local authorities and can be found on the [UKRLG website](#)

It is for local councils to make appropriate assessments of risk and to organise their capital spend to fund mitigations.

## ■ Refugees: Ukraine

**Paula Barker:**

**[131372]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, when he last met with the Local Government Association to discuss support for Ukrainian refugees.

**Paula Barker:**

**[131373]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of support given to local authorities to support Ukrainian refugees.

**Felicity Buchan:**

The Homes for Ukraine scheme relies on cooperation between Government, local government, the voluntary sector, and faith / Ukrainian representative organisations. We engage with local government and other partners through several different conversations and working groups to date. This has included Ministerial roundtables attended by local government representatives, official led working group meetings, and ongoing bilateral engagement with local authority Chief Executives and senior representatives.

Further, I refer the Hon. Member to the written statement ( [HCWS447](#) ) made by my Rt. Hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, on 14 December 2022.

**■ Regional Planning and Development: Carbon Emissions****Helen Morgan:** [131386]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether he is taking steps to ensure his Department's levelling up agenda is compatible with the Government's net zero targets.

**Lee Rowley:**

Yes. The Government's commitment to Net Zero will affect almost all aspects of the economy.

**■ Temporary Accommodation****Paula Barker:** [131368]

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment his Department has made of trends in the levels of demand for temporary accommodation since September 2022.

**Felicity Buchan:**

The latest statutory homelessness statistics for April to June 2022 can be found [here](#). This includes data on the number of households in temporary accommodation in England.

**NORTHERN IRELAND****■ UK Internal Trade: Northern Ireland****Peter Kyle:** [133687]

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what assessment he has made of the potential impact of the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill on the free flow of goods between Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

Some retained EU law in the scope of the sunset is required to continue to operate UKG's international obligations, including the Trade and Co-operation Agreement, the Withdrawal Agreement, and the Northern Ireland Protocol.

The Government will take the necessary action to safeguard the substance of any retained EU law and legal effects required to operate international obligations within domestic law.

The primary objectives of the Bill are to: end the special status of retained EU law on the UK statute book; and enable the Government to more easily amend, revoke and replace retained EU law.

**TRANSPORT**■ **A12: Suffolk****Dr Dan Poulter:**[\[132314\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of the capacity of the A12 to accommodate the additional construction traffic associated with the construction of Sizewell C nuclear power station.

**Mr Richard Holden:**

My officials have regular discussions with Suffolk County Council to discuss the A12, East of Ipswich Major Road Network scheme. Part of these discussions have included consideration of the role of the A12 in the construction of Sizewell C nuclear power station. It is for Suffolk County Council, as normal practice for a Local Highways Authority, to work with developers to understand and mitigate impacts on their road network from any up coming developments.

In addition, National Highways has worked with the promoter of Sizewell C and Suffolk County Council on the expected traffic impacts to the A12 during construction and operation of the power station.

A Statement of Common Ground between the promoter and National Highways was agreed as part of the planning process for Sizewell C and is available on the Planning Inspectorate's website.

**Dr Dan Poulter:**[\[132315\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has had recent discussions with the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on the capacity of the A12 to accommodate the additional construction traffic associated with the construction of Sizewell C nuclear power station.

**Mr Richard Holden:**

As I believe I stated to the House in November, the current Secretaries of State for Transport and for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy have not held discussions about the traffic impact of Sizewell C. However, National Highways worked with the promoter of Sizewell C and Suffolk County Council on traffic impacts to the A12 during construction and operation of the power station.

A Statement of Common Ground between the promoter and National Highways was agreed as part of the planning process for Sizewell C and is available on the Planning Inspectorate's website.

■ **Aviation****Angus Brendan MacNeil:**[\[132308\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when will the Government have a 3D air navigation system in place, in line with other G20 countries, given the UK's departure from European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Department is considering all options in relation to the loss of access to the European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service (EGNOS). The priority remains to identify a system that retains the benefits and functionality that EGNOS provided, while offering benefits across transport and other sectors with critical national infrastructure

To meet this ambition the DfT is funding via the UK Space Agency a project led by Inmarsat, a UK satellite communications company, to use one of its spacecraft to demonstrate the capabilities of a UK Satellite-Based Augmentation System. In addition, the Department is conducting further research to assess requirements following loss of access to EGNOS. The Inmarsat trial and accompanying research will inform the Department's considerations on next steps for this work.

**Bicycles: Repairs and Maintenance****Dr Rupa Huq:**[\[131325\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of restarting the Fix Your Bike voucher scheme.

**Dr Rupa Huq:**[\[131326\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of bringing forward legislative proposals to provide (a) universal affordable access to bicycles and (b) grants for e-bike purchase.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Department for Transport is currently monitoring and evaluating the impacts of the Fix Your Bike voucher scheme. The Department and Active Travel England will continue to work closely with the cycling industry to take forward any recommendations resulting from the evaluation.

There are no plans to bring forward additional legislative proposals. The Government already supports affordable access to cycles through the Cycle to Work scheme. Active Travel England continues to fund local authority-led cycle loan and share schemes, and is implementing an e-cycle programme to provide e-cycle loan opportunities.

**Bridges: Newcastle upon Tyne****Chi Onwurah:**[\[132395\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department plans to steps to repair and improve the condition of the Swing Bridge in Newcastle Upon Tyne.

**Mr Richard Holden:**

The Port of Tyne owns the Swing Bridge and has responsibility for its continued operation and maintenance. Any improvements, repairs, or other developments to the bridge are the responsibility of the Port and for them to decide.

## ■ **Bus Services: Disability**

**Stephanie Peacock:**

[\[133731\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent progress his Department has made on installing audio-visual announcements in buses.

**Stephanie Peacock:**

[\[133733\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether her Department takes steps to ensure that audio-visual announcements on buses are available for those who require them and not turned down or off.

**Mr Richard Holden:**

There has been progress in increasing the number of vehicles on which audible and visible information is provided. Since 2016/17, the percentage of buses using an Audio-Visual information system to provide route, direction, next stop and diversion information to passengers has almost doubled, from 18% to 34% in 2020/21 across Great Britain. However, there is a large variation in usage by region.

At present there is no legal requirement for operators to provide audible and visible information or to maintain volume levels at a particular level. However, we plan to require the provision of audible and visible information on local bus and coach services across Great Britain, and intend to introduce the Accessible Information Regulations shortly. The Regulations will incorporate requirements to ensure that audible information can be heard by passengers.

## ■ **Cycling: Lighting**

**Dr Rupa Huq:**

[\[131322\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of providing free bicycle lights to cyclists under the age of 18 in England.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Department has no plans to examine this proposal.

## ■ **Department for Transport: Holiday Leave**

**Chris Stephens:**

[\[R\] \[132466\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department has notified staff to (a) tell or (b) remind them that they can sell annual leave in the last four months.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Department for Transport offers staff the opportunity to sell leave once a year. The last opportunity was between November to December 2022.

The Department released communications to staff through the staff intranet during November, reminding staff that the benefit window was opening, giving information regarding the buy/sell leave policy and reminding staff when the window was closing. Emails were also sent to all staff email addresses as a reminder of the employee benefit annual window.

## ■ **Doncaster Sheffield Airport: Closures**

**Emma Hardy:**

[\[130115\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has made an assessment of the effect of the closure of Doncaster-Sheffield airport on the ability of people living in the region to visit friends and family abroad.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Government remains very disappointed that Peel Group took the decision to close Doncaster-Sheffield Airport. This was a commercial decision made by the owners of the airport.

The department recognises that this has affected the passengers who used the airport and those businesses, organisations and people who worked at the airport and within the supply chain. Many of the routes which operated from Doncaster-Sheffield Airport have moved to nearby airports such as Leeds-Bradford, Manchester and East Midlands.

## ■ **Driverless Vehicles**

**Tulip Siddiq:**

[\[131336\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether it his policy to bring forward legislative proposals for the implementation of self-driving vehicles by 2025.

**Jesse Norman:**

Government intends to introduce legislation as soon as parliamentary time allows.

**Tulip Siddiq:**

[\[131337\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to facilitate the (a) development and (b) deployment of self-driving vehicles in the UK.

**Jesse Norman:**

The UK Code of Practice for trialling self-driving vehicles on public roads is recognised as one of the most open in the world. Government is working to consider whether updates to the Code of Practice are needed to support advanced trials.

Since 2015, the Centre for Connected and Autonomous Vehicles has enabled joint public and private investment of over £400 million into connected and self-driving vehicle innovation and has supported over 90 collaborative projects, involving over 200 organisations. These projects include £200m to establish a globally unique testing infrastructure.

In August 2022 the government published ‘*Connected & Automated Mobility 2025: Realising the benefits of self-driving vehicles in the UK*’, setting out its work to enable the deployment of self-driving vehicles in the UK by 2025. This includes bringing forward proposals for a comprehensive regulatory, legislative and safety framework.

Over the next three years, government will provide a further £100m of funding for Connected and Automated Mobility technology research and innovation, with £66m aimed at progressing from technology development towards commercial deployment,

and £34m to support research into connected and self-driving vehicle safety assurance and preparation within the motoring agencies to carry out their new roles.

■ **Driving Licences: Lost Property**

**Wera Hobhouse:**

[\[132421\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many and what proportion of drivers licenses the DVLA has lost in each year since 2018.

**Mr Richard Holden:**

The information requested is not recorded.

■ **Driving Licences: Ukraine**

**Sir Alan Campbell:**

[\[131155\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress has been made on an exchange agreement to allow holders of a Ukrainian licence to drive both manual and automatic vehicles in the UK.

**Mr Richard Holden:**

The current driving licence exchange agreement with Ukraine allows the licence holder to drive both manual and automatic vehicles, providing the Ukrainian driving licence was issued following a test taken after 28 December 2021.

The law only allows drivers who took a test in Ukraine before 28 December 2021 to be granted entitlement to drive automatic cars when the GB licence is issued. This is because the Ukrainian driver licensing authority does not retain information to confirm whether a test was taken in a manual or automatic vehicle before this date. This restriction also applies to licence exchange agreements with other countries where the licence issuing authority does not retain information about the type of vehicle in which a test was taken.

However, the Department for Transport appreciates the unique circumstances that Ukrainians who have come to the UK find themselves in. The Department for Transport is exploring options to enable this group to use their Ukrainian driving licences for longer and minimise the administrative burden they face and will keep this House and the Ukrainian community in the UK updated on this work.

■ **Electric Vehicles: Hydrogen**

**Gareth Johnson:**

[\[132344\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to support the development of hydrogen transport technology.

**Jesse Norman:**

Many of the Department's research, development, and demonstration funding programmes support the development of hydrogen for transport. This includes the £206 million UK Shipping Office for Reducing Emissions, the £165 million Advanced

Fuels Fund as part of the Jet Zero programme, the pioneering £212 million Zero Emission Road Freight Demonstrator, and the £7.6 million First of a Kind fund in rail.

The Department's investment of £23 million to a dedicated Hydrogen Transport Hub on Tees Valley will be used to explore how hydrogen works across transport in conjunction with regions energy system and local businesses. The Government is also supporting the development of skills and announced funding to enable this, working with the Tees Valley Combined Authority to upskill the local workforce.

#### ■ **Merchant Shipping (Anti-fouling Systems) Regulations 2009**

**Stella Creasy:**

[\[133622\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Retained EU Law Bill, whether he plans to (a) revoke, (b) retain or (c) replace the Merchant Shipping (Anti-Fouling Systems) Regulations 2009.

**Mr Richard Holden:**

The Department is currently reviewing all transport related Retained EU Law. We will set out our approach to individual pieces of Retained EU Law, including the Merchant Shipping (Anti-Fouling Systems) Regulations 2009, in due course.

#### ■ **Railway Stations: Access**

**Marsha De Cordova:**

[\[132551\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when his Department plans to publish the list of stations that have been selected for Access for All Control Period 7 funding, 2024-29.

**Huw Merriman:**

The Department is currently assessing over 300 stations nominated for Access for All funding beyond 2024. I hope to be in a position to announce successful projects later this year.

#### ■ **Railways: Concessions**

**Chris Law:**

[\[131279\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant on the Answer of 24 January 2023 to Question 126690 on Railways: Concessions, what consultation (a) his Department, (b) the Rail Delivery Group and (c) the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee has had with (i) disabled people and (ii) disabled persons organisations as part of its eligibility criteria review for the Disabled Persons Railcard.

**Huw Merriman:**

The Department's statutory advisor, the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC), has provided expert advice as part of the review. DPTAC takes account of the broad views and experiences of all disabled people when engaging on policy and develops its advice through engagement with organisations representing disabled people. In addition, the Rail Delivery Group has undertaken targeted research with disabled people to inform the review.



## ■ Railways: Midlands and North of England

**Louise Haigh:**

[133699]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 26 January 2023 to Question 129878, if he will estimate the length of track in kilometres on which trains could travel at 140 miles per hour broken down by rolling stock performance specification.

**Huw Merriman:**

Network Rail have yet to conduct that level of performance analysis. In line with normal project development, this work will be carried out to support the business cases required for the investment needed to implement the higher line speeds.

## ■ Travel: Standards

**Wera Hobhouse:**

[132419]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether Travel England will release data gathered from councils across England which conducted self-assessments on their active travel performance.

**Jesse Norman:**

Active Travel England (ATE) completed its first ever assessment of local authorities' active travel capability in autumn 2022. Every local transport authority assessed themselves and assigned themselves a rating. These ratings were then moderated by ATE officials to give each authority an assigned capability level.

ATE plans to publish a report shortly, which will summarise the moderated ratings, how the self-assessment process was developed, and how it will be utilised in future funding rounds.

## TREASURY

## ■ Alcoholic Drinks: Excise Duties

**Dan Carden:**

[R] [131307]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate his Department has made of the level expected revenue from alcohol duty in 2023-24 following the decision to the extend the freeze on alcohol duty from 1 February to 1 August 2023.

**James Cartlidge:**

The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) forecast for alcohol duty receipts for the tax year 2023-2024 can be found at the following link:

[https://obr.uk/docs/dlm\\_uploads/CCS0822661240-002\\_SECURE\\_OBR\\_EFO\\_November\\_2022\\_WEB\\_ACCESSIBLE.pdf](https://obr.uk/docs/dlm_uploads/CCS0822661240-002_SECURE_OBR_EFO_November_2022_WEB_ACCESSIBLE.pdf).

To note, these estimates were published in November 2022 and do not account for the impact of the 19 December announcement, which confirmed the timings of the next alcohol duty decision to provide businesses with certainty.

As I said in my statement on 19 December, the Chancellor has reserved his decision on future duty rates for Spring Budget 2023 and the impact on expected revenues for 2023-24 will depend on the outcome of his decision. This will be costed by the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) and published at the Spring Budget in the usual way.

## ■ Care Homes: Tax Allowances

**Alex Sobel:**

**[129984]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of making care home expenses tax deductible.

**Victoria Atkins:**

This Government believes we need to have a social care system to give every person the dignity and security that they deserve. This is why we committed to improving social care in our manifesto.

At the Autumn statement, in November, the Government made available up to £2.8 billion in 2023-2024 and £4.7 billion in 2024-2025 to support adult social care and get people out of hospital on time and into appropriate care settings.

This includes £1 billion of new grant funding in 2023-2024 and £1.7 billion in 2024-2025, £1.3 billion in 2023-2024 and £1.9 billion in 2024-2025 savings from delaying the rollout of charging reform and further flexibility for local authorities on council tax.

Successive Governments have held the longstanding principle that personal expenditure is not deductible against income tax.

## ■ Corporation Tax

**Priti Patel:**

**[129766]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will publish the most recent version of the agreement on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Base Erosion and Profit Shifting framework.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The UK is a member of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)/Group of Twenty (G20) Inclusive Framework on Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS), which is collaborating on 15 actions to address tax avoidance.

The OECD sets out the 15 BEPS actions at <https://www.oecd.org/tax/beps/beps-actions/>.

The recent focus of developments in international tax has been the Two-Pillar Solution to address the tax challenges arising from the digitalisation of the economy.

The OECD published the two-pillar agreement in 2021, so far signed by 138 countries including the UK, which can be accessed at <https://www.oecd.org/tax/beps/statement-on-a-two-pillar-solution-to-address-the-tax-challenges-arising-from-the-digitalisation-of-the-economy-october-2021.htm>.

**Priti Patel:**

[129767]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether a disputes resolution mechanism agreed as part of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's BEPS 2.0 Pillar 2 proposals would be binding upon UK courts.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is publicly consulting on tax certainty in the pillar 2 rules, covering dispute prevention and dispute resolution mechanisms, until 3 February 2023. This includes options for legal instruments to implement the dispute resolution process.

The public consultation can be accessed online at

<https://www.oecd.org/tax/beps/oecd-invites-comments-on-compliance-and-tax-certainty-aspects-of-global-minimum-tax.htm>.

**Priti Patel:**

[129817]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what additional funding will be required by (a) his Department and (b) the OECD to ensure monitoring and compliance with the proposed Pillar 2 rules of BEPS 2.0.

**Victoria Atkins:**

At Autumn Statement 2022, the Government set out that Pillar 2 will raise £2.3 billion a year by 2027-28. An estimate of HMRC operational costs to implement Pillar 2 was published in a tax information and impact note in July 2022. This can be accessed on GOV.UK at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/introduction-of-the-new-multinational-top-up-tax/multinational-top-up-tax-uk-adoption-of-organisation-for-economic-co-operation-and-development-pillar-2> The Government will publish an updated tax information and impact note at the Spring Budget.

**Priti Patel:**

[129818]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make it his policy to hold a formal public consultation before bringing forward legislative proposals to implement the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's base Erosion and Profit Shifting framework.

**Victoria Atkins:**

As part of the tax policy making process, the Government routinely holds public consultations on tax policy ahead of implementation.

Since international agreement on the BEPS project in 2015, the Government has consulted ahead of the introduction of new rules in accordance with the BEPS actions. This includes on hybrid mismatch rules, the tax deductibility on corporate interest expense and country by country reporting.

The Government has recently demonstrated its commitment to consultation. In 2022, the Government consulted on the implementation of Pillar 2 in the UK and published a response in July 2022 which can be accessed on gov.uk at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/oecd-pillar-2-consultation-on-implementation> .

In July 2022, the Government also led a technical consultation on Income Inclusion Rule draft legislation published on gov.uk at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/introduction-of-the-new-multinational-top-up-tax> .

Following consultation, the Government confirmed at Autumn Statement 2022 that it will implement the OECD Pillar 2 rules for accounting periods beginning on or after 31 December 2023.

## ■ **Football: Insolvency**

**Matt Western:**

**[129998]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many (a) Football League and (b) non-league football clubs have received winding up petitions from HMRC in the last five years; and what assessment she has made of the financial sustainability of those clubs.

**Victoria Atkins:**

HMRC take a supportive approach to dealing with customers who have tax debts and only file winding-up petitions after exhausting all other options, in order to protect taxpayers' money.

Details of how assessments of financial sustainability of customers are used to assess Time to Pay offers and consequences of non-payment can be found at GOV.UK

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-will-happen-if-you-do-not-pay-your-tax-bill>

[How to pay a debt to HMRC with a Time to Pay arrangement - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-pay-a-debt-to-hmrc-with-a-time-to-pay-arrangement)

## ■ **High Income Child Benefit Tax Charge**

**Jim Shannon:**

**[129784]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of increasing the threshold at which single-income families begin to pay the High Income Child Benefit Charge.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The High Income Child Benefit Charge (HICBC) is charged on an individual rather than a household basis, in line with other tax policy. It applies to Child Benefit recipients who have, or whose partner has, an adjusted net income (ANI) of £50,000 regardless of family makeup.

It would not be practical for HMRC to increase the threshold for single-income families only, as it would require HMRC to operate two parallel income thresholds. This would further complicate the tax system for families, would not ensure

consistency between claimants, and would entail a significant operational burden for HMRC. Tax simplification is a priority for this Government.

#### ■ **Save as You Earn: Reviews**

**Mr Jonathan Djanogly:**

[\[129744\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when the review of the Save As You Earn Bonus Rate Mechanism Review will be concluded; and if he will make a statement.

**Victoria Atkins:**

Following the announcement of a review of the Save As You Earn (SAYE) Bonus Rate Mechanism, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) are consulting with administrators of SAYE schemes and their representatives to identify options to introduce a new, simpler and more transparent mechanism. HMRC is working closely with those groups to ensure any new mechanism will be appropriate for both current and future market conditions.

HMRC will provide a further update on the review for interested groups in due course.

#### ■ **Stamp Duty Land Tax: Newcastle upon Tyne Central**

**Chi Onwurah:**

[\[132396\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 18 January 2023 to Question 120109 on Affordable Housing: North East, how many and what proportion of sold residential properties met the Stamp Duty Land Tax threshold before any relief was applied in Newcastle upon Tyne Central constituency in the period between January 2019 to January 2023.

**James Cartlidge:**

HM Revenue & Customs do not publish information on the number of residential property transactions above the nil rate threshold for Stamp Duty Land Tax by parliamentary constituency.

The number of residential transactions with a total consideration of £40,000 and above in the Newcastle upon Tyne Central parliamentary constituency is available in table 8a of the 'UK Stamp Taxes statistics':

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-stamp-tax-statistics>.

#### ■ **Tax Avoidance: Suicide**

**Dave Doogan:**

[\[133675\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will conduct a review of the potential effect of the Loan Charge on instances of the suicides in the UK.

**Dave Doogan:**

[\[133676\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the amount that will be raised by the Loan Charge.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The Loan Charge was introduced to draw a line under the historic use of disguised remuneration (DR) schemes which paid income in the form of loans via third parties, often offshore trusts.

When announced at Budget 2016, the Loan Charge formed part of a package estimated to yield more than £3.2 billion over five years. The forecast was last revised at Spring Statement 2022, with the latest estimated overall Exchequer yield of £3.4 billion for the entire package, which includes the Loan Charge.

There has already been an independent review of the Loan Charge. The Independent Loan Charge Review, led by Lord Morse, assessed the impact of the policy on affected taxpayers. The Government accepted all but one of the Review's 20 recommendations and changes resulting from the review have reduced the Exchequer yield by an estimated £620 million.

Any loss of life is a tragedy, and HMRC takes issues relating to loss of life or serious injury extremely seriously. HMRC has made ten referrals to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) in relation to individuals who have sadly taken their lives and have used DR schemes. In the eight concluded cases, the investigations found no evidence of misconduct by any HMRC officer. Individuals affected by the Loan Charge are supported by HMRC's Extra Support teams. These are teams of specialist trained advisors who, where appropriate, signpost taxpayers to specialist Voluntary and Community organisations. To further strengthen the support offered to taxpayers, HMRC and Samaritans are currently working together to deliver an 18-month project.

**■ Treasury: Holiday Leave****Chris Stephens:****[R] [132470]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his Department has notified staff to (a) tell or (b) remind them that they can sell annual leave in the last four months.

**James Cartlidge:**

HM Treasury has communicated with staff during the period of September to November 2022 to inform them that they were able to sell their annual leave.

**■ Treasury: Minimum Wage****Chris Stephens:****[129898]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many and what proportion of employees in their Department are paid at the rate of the National Minimum Wage.

**James Cartlidge:**

This Government is committed to paying people a decent living wage, which is being addressed through the statutory National Living Wage. In April 2022, the Government increased the National Living Wage to £9.50 per hour. This will rise to £10.42 an hour from 1 April 2023, an increase of 9.7%.

By 2024, the Government has committed that the National Living Wage will reach 66% of median UK earnings.

The Government will always award contracts on the basis of the best value for money for the taxpayer.

Departments must ensure that they apply the legislative increase to the National Living Wage and National Minimum Wage.

The total number of civil servants in HM Treasury paid at the National Minimum Wage rate per hour was 0 (0% of all staff) and the National Living Wage rate per hour was 0 (0% of all staff) as at December 2022. All current HM Treasury employees are paid above the rate of the National Minimum Wage.

### ■ Treasury: Public Bodies

**Peter Gibson:**

[\[133677\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the average number of staff in the (a) Financial Conduct Authority, (b) Prudential Regulation Authority, (c) Financial Ombudsman Service and (d) Financial Services Compensation Scheme attending the office in person on every day on which they worked was in the weeks commencing 9 and 16 January 2023.

**Peter Gibson:**

[\[133678\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the (a) headcount and (b) operating costs were for the (i) Financial Conduct Authority, (ii) Prudential Regulation Authority, (iii) Financial Ombudsman Service and (iv) Financial Services Compensation Scheme in the most recent period for which data are available.

**Andrew Griffith:**

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA), Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS), and Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) are operationally independent from the Government although funded by the taxpayer and/or industry levies. Detailed questions about operational matters are for those independent bodies to respond to.

These questions have been passed to the FCA, PRA, FOS and FSCS who will respond to the honourable member by letter.

## WALES

### ■ Wales Office: Disease Control

**Daisy Cooper:**

[\[131401\]](#)

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

**Dr James Davies:**

The Office of the Secretary of State for Wales has not purchased any mobile UV virus irradiation units.

■ **Wales Office: Holiday Leave****Chris Stephens:****[R]** [\[132475\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, whether his Department has notified staff to (a) tell or (b) remind them that they can sell annual leave in the last four months.

**David T C Davies:**

The Office of the Secretary of State for Wales is not an employer in its own right and our employment services are provided by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). As the Department follows MoJ employment policies, all staff have access to their Annual leave policy statement and Flexible Benefits package via the MoJ internet, which outlines details on buying and selling annual leave.

■ **Wales Office: Minimum Wage****Chris Stephens:****[R]** [\[129904\]](#)

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

**David T C Davies:**

The Office of the Secretary of State for Wales is not an employer in its own right. The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) provides employment services on our behalf. The Department currently has 49 staff in post, all of whom are paid at a rate higher than the National Minimum Wage.

**WOMEN AND EQUALITIES**■ **Equal Pay****Colleen Fletcher:**[\[131267\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what steps she is taking to help close the gender pay gap in (a) Coventry North East constituency, (b) Coventry, (c) the West Midlands and (d) England.

**Maria Caulfield:**

The national gender pay gap has fallen significantly under this government - and by approximately a quarter in the last decade. In the West Midlands specifically, the gap has gone from 19.7% in 1997, to 10.8% in 2022.

In 2017, we introduced regulations requiring large employers to publish the differences in average salaries and bonuses for men and women every year. The regulations have helped to motivate employers, and focus attention on improving equality in the workplace.



However, in order to continue making progress we need to understand the real barriers people face in the workplace, and ensure everyone is empowered to fulfil their potential. This includes ensuring that we spread opportunity throughout the country. That is why initiatives like our Women-led high-growth enterprise taskforce have a specific focus on looking outside of London.

Should you wish to look further at gender pay gap data for your area, the Office for National Statistics does provide a breakdown of their annual gender pay gap data by constituency, geographic area, and region:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandwork/nghours/datasets/annualsurveyofhoursandearningsashegenderpaygaptables>

## WORK AND PENSIONS

### ■ Access to Work Scheme

**Marsha De Cordova:**

**[133764]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many applications were made to the Access to Work Scheme in (a) England, (b) Wales and (c) Scotland in 2022.

**Tom Pursglove:**

The information requested about Access to Work applications that have been made in England, Wales and Scotland is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

However, the Access to Work statistics includes how many applications result in provision being approved from 2007/08 to 2021/22. Please see Table 3 of the Access to Work statistics.

The latest Access to Work statistics can be found here:

[Access to Work statistics - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\).](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/access-to-work-statistics)

### ■ British Nationals Abroad: Coronavirus

**Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:**

**[133695]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of adequacy of the provisions available to UK citizens unable to return from abroad during the covid-19 pandemic who incurred a loss of access to public funds.

**Guy Opperman:**

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the department put into place measures to support existing benefit recipients in exceptional cases where their absence abroad went over the period allowed under the temporary absence benefit rules and could not return to the UK due to Covid-19 travel restrictions. Once these temporary measures came to an end, the department was instructed to review cases where claimants had not yet returned to the UK.

**■ Children: Poverty****Rachael Maskell:****[131248]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will make it his policy to remove the benefit cap for large families to help tackle child poverty.

**Guy Opperman:**

The Secretary of State has reviewed the benefit cap levels and decided they should be increased in line with CPI in the year to September 2022 (10.1%) from April 2022, subject to the approval of parliament.

There are no current plans to change the benefit cap policy.

**■ Cost of Living Payments: Disability****Margaret Greenwood:****[132516]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will take steps to provide an additional Cost of Living Payment to disabled people before April 2023.

**Tom Pursglove:**

The Government announced in the Autumn Statement that it will provide a further Disability Cost of Living Payment of £150 in 2023/24 to people in receipt of certain disability benefits such as Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Disability Living Allowance (DLA). This is in addition to the £150 payment already paid during 2022.

The Disability Cost of Living Payment can be received in addition to the other Cost of Living Payments of up to £900 for households on means-tested benefits and £300 for pensioners.

Preliminary guidance on when these Cost of Living Payments will be made have been published on GOV.UK: [Cost of Living Payment 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cost-of-living-payment-2022).

**■ Cost of Living Payments: Pensioners****Jonathan Ashworth:****[133615]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many Pensioner Cost of Living Payments were outstanding as of 26 January 2023.

**Laura Trott:**

Pensioner Cost of Living Payments have been made automatically as a top-up to the Winter Fuel Payment to people the Department for Work and Pensions has identified as eligible. As of 20 December 2022, 11,600,000 Winter Fuel Payments including the Pensioner Cost of Living Payment have been made, benefitting an estimated 8,700,000 pensioner households.

The Department has published management information on the total number of Pensioner Cost of Living Payments made. The information can be found here:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cost-of-living-payment-management-information/cost-of-living-payment-management-information\(opens in a new tab\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cost-of-living-payment-management-information/cost-of-living-payment-management-information(opens in a new tab))

People who believe they are entitled to a pensioner Cost of Living Payment but have not received the payment should contact the Winter Fuel Payment Centre on 0800 731 0160. Claims can be made up to and including 31 March.

## ■ Department for Work and Pensions: Jobcentres

**Jonathan Ashworth:**

[133611]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much his Department spent on (a) IT and (b) costs associated with running Jobcentres in each of the last five years.

**Guy Opperman:**

Departmental expenditure on IT Services is reported in the DWP Annual Report & Accounts.

[DWP annual report and accounts 2021 to 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/103111/dwp-annual-report-and-accounts-2021-to-2022.pdf)

## ■ Health: Employment

**Wes Streeting:**

[132500]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the single largest cause of sickness-related economic inactivity.

**Tom Pursglove:**

There are often multiple and complex reasons why a person is economically inactive due to long-term sickness. They are also likely to face several barriers in returning to the labour market. For example, they are:

- Likely to have multiple long-term health conditions (80% report more than one condition);
- More likely to have no qualifications (30% compared to 16% of people inactive for any reason); and
- Unlikely to have worked for some time (67% have not worked in the last two years).

Source: Employment of disabled people 2022 - [GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/103111/dwp-annual-report-and-accounts-2021-to-2022.pdf).

## ■ Jobcentres: Finance

**Jonathan Ashworth:**

[133612]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much funding was allocated to each Jobcentre Group and District in the last financial year.

**Guy Opperman:**

The information requested is not available.

## ■ Jobseekers Allowance: Employment

**Jonathan Ashworth:** [\[133616\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what was the average amount of time between a person first receiving Jobseeker's Allowance and receiving a job offer, for people who gained employment in the past year.

**Jonathan Ashworth:** [\[133617\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what was the average salary of people on job seeking benefits who gained employment in the past year.

**Guy Opperman:**

The information requested is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

## ■ Pension Wise

**Jonathan Ashworth:** [\[132379\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much his Department has spent on the Pension Wise service in each of the last five financial years.

**Laura Trott:**

The Pension Wise service offered by the Money and Pension Service (MaPS) is funded by a levy which is collected from financial services firms by the Financial Conduct Authority at the request of DWP. MaPS have delivered the Pension Wise service since 2019. Prior to this the Pension Wise service was delivered by the Department for Work and Pensions from 2017 – 2019. The costs to deliver the Pension Wise service over the last five financial years are as follows:

*2017 – 18	**2018 – 19	2019 – 20	2020 -21	2021/22
18.1m	16.9m	16.0m	15.6m	15.2m

\*Department for Work and Pensions

\*\* Includes Pension Wise expenditure in DWP and Single Finance Guidance Body (now Money & Pensions Service)

The figures comprise the costs associated with Pension Wise delivery through grants, as well as MaPS employees.

The reduction in costs over time is due to operational efficiencies via grant delivery driving better value for money.

## ■ Pensioners: Government Assistance

**Dean Russell:** [\[130084\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps he is taking to support pensioners.

**Laura Trott:**

The Secretary of State announced on 17 November that State Pensions and benefits will be up-rated from April 2023 by 10.1%, in line with the increase in the Consumer Prices Index in the year to September 2022, subject to parliamentary approval.

The government understands the pressures people are facing with the cost of living, which is why, in addition to the £37 billion of support we have provided for cost of living pressures in 2022/23, we are acting now to ensure support continues throughout 2023/24.

Over 8 million UK households on eligible means tested benefits, including the 1.4 million currently in receipt of Pension Credit, will receive additional Cost of Living Payments totalling up to £900 in the 2023/24 financial year.

In addition, eight million pensioner households will receive a £300 Pensioner Cost of Living Payment as a top-up to their Winter Fuel Payment, and pensioners in receipt of an eligible disability benefit will receive the £150 Disability Cost of Living Payment.

**■ Pensions: Reform****Chi Onwurah:**[\[132399\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 18 January 2023 to Question 122141 on Pensions: Reform, whether the reforms will be (a) published and (b) implemented before 1 June 2023.

**Laura Trott:**

The final draft Occupational Pension Schemes (Administration, Investment, Charges and Governance) and Pensions Dashboards (Amendment) Regulations 2023 were laid on 30 January 2023 and, subject to Parliamentary approval, these regulations will come into force from 6 April 2023.

**■ Social Security Benefits: Overpayments****Hywel Williams:**[\[133554\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many instances of benefit overpayment that were not attributable to a fault made by the claimant in each year since 2018.

**Tom Pursglove:**

Information on the levels of official error in the benefit system is captured in the annual Fraud and Error in the Benefit System publication, which reports that the rate of official error within the department has remained steady at 0.4% since 2018, except for 2021-2022 where the rate dropped to 0.3%.

YEAR	OFFICIAL ERROR RATE	VALUE OF ERROR
2021-2022	0.3%	£700m
2020-2021	0.4%	£800m

YEAR	OFFICIAL ERROR RATE	VALUE OF ERROR
2019-2020	0.4%	£800m
2018-2019	0.4%	£700m

[Fraud and error in the benefit system: financial year 2021 to 2022 estimates - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\).](#)

**Hywel Williams:**

**[133557]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many instances of benefit overpayment that were not attributable to a fault made by the claimant were (a) requested to be waived by claimants and (b) waived by his Department in each year since 2018.

**Tom Pursglove:**

The Department for Work and Pensions only started to categorise waiver requests in 2020/21. Information from 2020/21 onwards can be found in the table below.

	WAIVERS REQUESTED RELATING TO OFFICIAL ERROR	O/E WAIVED
<b>20/21</b>	12	3
<b>21/22</b>	97	5
<b>22/23 (to date)</b>	104	25

Section 105 of The Welfare Reform Act 2012 states that any overpayment of Universal Credit, new style JSA or ESA, in excess of entitlement, is recoverable. The department therefore seeks to recover benefit overpayments accordingly, but remains committed to doing so without causing undue financial hardship.

Any claimants struggling with the proposed rate of deductions are encouraged to contact DWP Debt Management to discuss a temporary reduction in their rate of repayment.

## ■ State Retirement Pensions: Females

**Conor McGinn:**

**[131233]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many women in (a) St Helens and (b) Merseyside are claiming a state pension.

**Laura Trott:**

In the quarter ending May 2022 the State Pension caseload for women in the St. Helen's Local Authority was 19,161.

In the quarter ending May 2022 the State Pension caseload for women in Merseyside was 140,772.

The table below shows the State Pension caseload for women in the Local Authorities of Merseyside in the quarter ending May 2022.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OF MERSEYSIDE	NUMBER OF FEMALES
Knowsley	13,576
Liverpool	37,976
Sefton	33,531
St. Helens	19,161
Wirral	36,528
<b>Total Merseyside</b>	<b>140,772</b>

Source: [DWP benefits statistics: November 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/dwp-benefits-statistics-november-2022)

#### ■ State Retirement Pensions: Terminal Illnesses

**Andrew Western:**

**[132575]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of allowing people who receive terminal diagnoses to access their allowance under the State Pension before they reach pensionable age.

**Laura Trott:**

No assessments have been made on early access to the State Pension for terminally ill people.

Hearing that your illness cannot be cured can be a frightening and devastating experience. For those at the end of their life, the Government's priority is providing financial support quickly and compassionately. The main way that the Department does this is through special benefit rules, sometimes referred to as "the Special Rules". These enable people who are nearing the end of their lives to get faster, easier access to certain benefits, without needing to attend a medical assessment, serve waiting periods and in most cases, receive the highest rate of benefit. For many years, the Special Rules have applied to people who have 6 months or less to live and now they are being changed so they apply to people who have 12 months or less to live.

## MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

### CABINET OFFICE

#### ■ Immigration: Older People

**Geraint Davies:**

[\[122030\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will make an estimate of the number of (a) UK citizens who have returned from the EU to the UK and (b) EU citizens who have returned to EU countries who are over the age of 60 in the period since June 2016.

**An error has been identified in the written answer given on 17 January 2023. The correct answer should have been:**

**Jeremy Quin:**

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

A response to the Hon. Gentlemen's Parliamentary Questions of 12 January is attached.

**Attachments:**

1. ~~PQ122030\_122031 HR (1).pdf~~
2. [PQ122030\\_122031.pdf](#)



## WRITTEN STATEMENTS

### ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

#### ■ Environmental Improvement Plan 2023

**Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Dr Thérèse Coffey):**  
[\[HCWS535\]](#)

This government is committed to leaving the environment in a better state than we found it. Five years ago, the 25 Year Environment Plan (25YEP) set out our vision for a quarter-of-a-century of action to help the natural world regain and retain good health. We said we would refresh the plan every five years, a commitment we set into law in the Environment Act 2021.

Today I am publishing that revised plan: the Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP23). The 25YEP set out ten complementary goals. This improvement plan sets out the interim targets and our plan to deliver those goals, including measures such as:

- A comprehensive delivery plan to halt the decline in nature by 2030
- A commitment to creating and restoring at least 500,000 hectares of wildlife habitat, with 70 new projects including 25 new or expanded National Nature Reserves
- A new pledge on access to nature with everyone to live no more than a 15 minutes' walk from a green or blue space
- The Species Survival Fund for domestic species at risk, like the red squirrel
- Five-year interim targets to drive progress towards our long-term targets.

I will look to provide the House with further details shortly.

We also included in the Environment Act a requirement to publish a statement explaining the changes made through our review of the 25YEP.

These changes can be grouped into two themes. These are content updates where scientific understanding and new policy has developed over the last five years; and structural changes that build on the 25YEP.

Content updates:

1. EIP23 brings more specificity to our 25YEP goals by incorporating long-term and interim targets in the four priority areas (air quality, water, biodiversity, and resource efficiency and waste reduction), as required under the Environment Act. Also included are woodland cover and marine targets. These targets will drive environmental long-term improvement to protect and enhance our natural world.
2. The delivery plans for each 25YEP goal incorporate the previously published environmental land management priorities (climate change mitigation and adaptation; species abundance; water quality; and soil health).

3. EIP23 shows how our goals are interconnected, recognising the environment as a system. This includes including cross-cutting themes such as green finance and highlighting how actions in one chapter's delivery plan drives progress towards other goals' targets.
4. EIP23 sets our domestic framework in the context of our wider international commitments. The 15th Conference of The Parties to The Convention on Biological Diversity in December 2022 (COP15) was an important moment for progress on biodiversity. It was agreed that Parties would update their National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) by COP16. EIP23 fulfils that commitment for England in setting out actions we are taking nationally to contribute to our global commitments, with further detailed policy commitments published separately and in discussion with devolved colleagues.
5. EIP23 outlines how driving progress towards the goals will contribute to growth in green jobs, as well as supporting employers across England to create a pipeline of skilled people to fill those jobs. Tree planting, for example, can support job creation and deliver associated economic benefits. Our new target to increase tree canopy and woodland cover to 16.5% of total land area in England is expected to support an additional 1,400 jobs by 2035. This equates to approximately one job being supported for every 5 ha of new woodland creation.

Structural changes:

- Each 25YEP goal has its own chapter and delivery plan in EIP23. Our Environment Act targets are linked into their relevant goal chapter, showing how they have been designed to fill gaps to complement our broader environmental commitments.
- Improving our natural environment requires action from across government and the wider public and private sector. EIP23 provides that strengthened approach to cross-government action by including specific actions and commitments across relevant government departments within the delivery plan for each goal. Implementation will continue to be managed by cross-government governance. Specific roles for the public and private sectors and the general public are also accounted for in delivering environmental improvement.

This revised Plan makes clear what the government wants to achieve; as well as when and how we will achieve it, and how we will measure progress. This sets the direction for action both in the short term and the long term.

Today I am also publishing the final Environmental Principles Policy Statement setting out how the principles are to be interpreted and proportionately applied, as well as the Significant Improvement Test review report, both on gov.uk and laid before Parliament.

**HOME OFFICE****■ Police Funding Settlement 2023-24**

**The Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Fire (Chris Philp):** [\[HCWS537\]](#)

My Rt Hon Friend, the Home Secretary, has today laid before the House the Police Grant Report (England and Wales) 2023-24 (HC 1066). The Report sets out the Home Secretary's determination for 2023-24 of the aggregate amount of grants that she proposes to pay under section 46(2) of the Police Act 1996. Copies of the Report are available from the Vote Office.

The allocations that have been laid before the House today are as set out in my Statement and the provisional Police Grant Report of 14 December 2022.

In 2023-24 the overall funding settlement for the policing system will total up to £17.2 billion, a £287 million increase on the 2022-23 funding settlement. Available funding to Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) will increase next year by up to an additional £523 million, assuming full take-up of precept flexibility and using latest forecasts.

This would represent an increase to PCC funding in cash terms of 3.6% on the 2022-23 police funding settlement. This settlement demonstrates how the government is honouring the commitments set out at Spending Review 2021 to provide additional funding to maintain the Police Uplift Programme and to provide additional support for the recent pay award.

The attached table documents funding to PCCs for 2023-24, including precept.

**Attachments:**

1. table [\[Total Police Funding to Police Forces 2023-24.pdf\]](#)

**■ Report of the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation on the operation in 2020 of the Terrorism Acts**

**The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Suella Braverman):**  
[\[HCWS536\]](#)

In accordance with section 36 of the Terrorism Act 2006, Jonathan Hall KC, the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation, has prepared a report on the operation in 2020 of the Terrorism Acts, which was laid before the House on 28 April 2022.

I am grateful to Mr Hall KC for his report and have carefully considered the recommendations and observations included within. I am today laying before the House the Government's response to the report (CP 788). Copies will be available in the Vote Office and it will also be published on GOV.UK.

**JUSTICE****■ Female Offender Delivery Plan**

**The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice (Damian Hinds):**

[\[HCWS534\]](#)

The Government is today publishing its Female Offender Strategy Delivery Plan. The Delivery Plan sets out how Government will deliver four overarching priorities to improve outcomes for women in or at risk of contact with the criminal justice system over the period 2022 to 2025:

- Fewer women entering the justice system and reoffending
- Fewer women serving short custodial sentences with a greater proportion managed successfully in the community
- Better conditions that support rehabilitation for women in custody
- Protecting the public through better outcomes for women on release

The Delivery Plan includes specific and measurable commitments aimed at reducing women's offending and reoffending, in turn making communities safer for the public. We will publish a one-year on progress report on implementation of our Delivery Plan.

Effective community support is essential for women in or at risk of contact with the justice system and the Government recognises the vital role played by the women's community sector in supporting vulnerable women and helping to reduce their reoffending. On 1 September, we announced that up to £24m will be invested in women's community services until 2025 through multi-year grant competitions. These grants will allow us to improve the sustainability of women's services by meeting organisations' core costs such as rent and utility bills, to improve the join up of local services and to test and build our evidence base by investing in new or additional services or interventions.

The Government recognises that community sentences also play an important role in supporting women with complex needs, which often underlie their offending behaviour. While women who commit the most serious crimes will always be sent to prison, custody should be a last resort. A robust and effective community sentence delivers benefits to wider society as well as the individual. An effective community sentence means women will be less likely to lose their accommodation and employment, making it less likely they will have to call on statutory services. An effective community sentence will enable them to receive targeted support to address their individual needs, reducing the likelihood of reoffending. Targeted community sentences can help to limit the disruption to women's families, particularly their children, in turn helping to address the cycle of intergenerational offending. We are working with courts to raise awareness and increase understanding of the specific issues faced by women who offend, including piloting a women's specific Problem-Solving Court.

Although the number of women in custody reduced by 24% between 2011 and 2021, we are committed to improving conditions for those women who do need to be in custody. We will be funding measures such as family engagement workers, additional support for women in their early days in custody and a social workers pilot with up to £14m between 2022 and 2025 to improve outcomes, including reducing self-harm. The Delivery Plan will also highlight wider government work on reducing reoffending through effective resettlement by focusing on what we know works: a home, a job and access to treatment

for substance misuse, focusing on the particular issues that women face when seeking to address the causes of their offending.

Alongside this Delivery Plan we are publishing two related progress reports on the Farmer Review for Women and on the National Concordat on women in or at risk of contact with the criminal justice system. Outstanding commitments from both the Farmer Review and the Concordat will be taken forward under this Delivery Plan.

## WORK AND PENSIONS

### ■ Diffuse Mesothelioma Payment Scheme Levy 2022-23

**Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work (Tom Pursglove):**  
[\[HCWS533\]](#)

The Diffuse Mesothelioma Payment Scheme (Levy) Regulations 2014 require active employers' liability insurers to pay an annual levy, based on their relative market share, for the purpose of meeting the costs of the Diffuse Mesothelioma Payment Scheme (DMPS). This is in line with the insurance industry's commitment to fund a scheme of last resort for persons diagnosed with diffuse mesothelioma who have been unable to trace their employer or their employer's insurer.

Today I can announce that the total amount of the levy to be charged for 2022-23, the ninth year of the DMPS, is £20.3 million. The amount will be payable by active insurers by the end of March 2023.

Individual active insurers will be notified in writing of their share of the levy, together with how the amount was calculated and the payment arrangements. Insurers should be aware that it is a legal requirement to pay the levy within the set timescales.

I am pleased that the DMPS has seen nine successful years of operation, assisting many hundreds of people who have been diagnosed with Diffuse Mesothelioma. The eighth Annual Report for the scheme, along with the annual statistics, were published on 22 November 2022 and is available on the gov.uk website. I hope that members of both Houses will welcome this announcement and give the DMPS their continued support.