

**Session 2019-21  
No. 208**



**Wednesday  
24 March 2021**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

# **HOUSE OF LORDS**

## **WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS**

**Written Statements .....1**

**Written Answers.....6**

[I] indicates that the member concerned has a relevant registered interest. The full register of interests can be found at <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/standards-and-interests/register-of-lords-interests/>

Members who want a printed copy of Written Answers and Written Statements should notify the Printed Paper Office.

This printed edition is a reproduction of the original text of Answers and Statements, which can be found on the internet at <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>.

Ministers and others who make Statements or answer Questions are referred to only by name, not their ministerial or other title. The current list of ministerial and other responsibilities is as follows.

<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
<b>Baroness Evans of Bowes Park</b>	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
<b>Earl Howe</b>	Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
<b>Lord Agnew of Oulton</b>	Minister of State, Treasury and Cabinet Office
<b>Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon</b>	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
<b>Lord Ashton of Hyde</b>	Chief Whip
<b>Baroness Barran</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
<b>Baroness Berridge</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education and Department for International Trade
<b>Lord Bethell</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
<b>Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist</b>	Whip
<b>Lord Callanan</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
<b>Earl of Courtown</b>	Deputy Chief Whip
<b>Lord Frost</b>	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
<b>Lord Gardiner of Kimble</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
<b>Baroness Goldie</b>	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
<b>Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park</b>	Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
<b>Lord Greenhalgh</b>	Minister of State, Home Office and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
<b>Lord Grimstone of Boscobel</b>	Minister of State, Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Department for International Trade
<b>Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Penn</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Scott of Bybrook</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Stedman-Scott</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
<b>Lord Stewart of Dirleton</b>	Advocate-General for Scotland
<b>Lord True</b>	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
<b>Baroness Vere of Norbiton</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
<b>Baroness Williams of Trafford</b>	Minister of State, Home Office
<b>Lord Wolfson of Tredegar</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Justice
<b>Viscount Younger of Leckie</b>	Whip

© Parliamentary Copyright House of Lords 2021

This publication may be reproduced under the terms of the Open Parliament licence, which is published at [www.parliament.uk/site-information/copyright/](http://www.parliament.uk/site-information/copyright/)

# Written Statements

Wednesday, 24 March 2021

## Climate-related Financial Disclosures Consultation

[HLWS875]

**Lord Callanan:** My Right Honourable friend the UK International Champion on Adaptation and Resilience for the COP26 Presidency and Minister of State (Minister for Business, Energy and Clean Growth) (Anne-Marie Trevelyan) has today made the following statement:

Today, the Government published its consultation on proposals requiring mandatory climate-related financial disclosures by publicly quoted companies, large private companies and Limited Liability Partnerships (LLPs).

In November 2020, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that in order to accelerate progress on climate risk disclosures, the UK will move towards mandatory Taskforce on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) across major segments of the UK economy by 2025, with a significant portion of requirements to be introduced by 2023. This will make the UK the first G20 country to make TCFD-aligned disclosures mandatory across the economy.

TCFD is an industry-led initiative which seeks to develop recommendations for climate-related financial disclosures. In 2017, the TCFD launched their recommendations, which set out how companies of any size, and in any sector or geography, could better manage and disclose their climate-related financial risks. Our proposed regulations will require companies to disclose information in line with the four pillars of TCFD (Governance, Strategy, Risk Management and Metrics & Targets).

High-quality disclosure of how organisations will manage the material financial risks and opportunities arising from climate change will improve transparency and encourage better informed pricing and capital allocation. As a result, and over time, TCFD-aligned disclosures will support investment decisions aligned with our transition to net zero. Our ambitious proposals will ensure the U.K. is leading the way ahead of COP26, where we will have an opportunity to encourage other countries to replicate our action.

I will place a copy of the Consultation Document in the Libraries of the House.

## Flags

[HLWS876]

**Baroness Barran:** My Right Honourable Friend the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, The Rt Hon Oliver Dowden CBE MP, has made the following Statement:

The Union flag will now be flown on UK Government buildings every day unless another flag is being flown - acting as a visual symbol of the UK's union, heritage and pride.

Currently, Union flags are only required to be flown on all UK Government buildings in England, Wales and Scotland on designated days, such as the Queen's birthday.

The changes will apply to all Government buildings across the UK, with the Union flag being flown by default if nothing else is being flown, such as another national flag of the UK, or a county flag or other flags to mark civic pride. The guidance will also encourage other buildings, such as councils, to follow this example, where they have a flagpole and wish to fly a flag.

The Union Flag is the National Flag of the United Kingdom, and it is so called because it embodies the emblems of the three constituent nations united under one Sovereign – the Kingdoms of England and Wales, of Scotland and of Northern Ireland. It serves as a reminder of our shared history and union. Flags, other than the Union such as national flags of the constituent nations of the United Kingdom, the Armed Forces flag, the Commonwealth flag, county and other local flags can be flown on non-designated days.

We will also cut red tape to allow dual flagging – where two flags can be flown on one pole. This will allow organisations to highlight local and national identities, for example by flying a Middlesex county flag alongside the Union flag in Middlesex, or the Saltire alongside the Union flag in Scotland. Where organisations have two flag poles, they can fly the Union flag alongside another flag, for example flying the Saltire alongside the Union flag in Scotland.

The Union Flag must always be flown in the superior position.

Following our departure from the European Union, planning regulations (in England) introduced by the then Government in 2007 that allow the EU flag to be flown on public buildings without securing express consent in the normal way, will also be removed.

Instead, new 'deemed consent' will be granted for the NHS flags. This will allow for NHS flags to be flown, without the need for express consent – alongside the Union flag.

The changes will help champion the UK's national identities and strengthen our shared pride in the union through the institutions that define Britain.

This guidance is [published](#) today and will apply from the summer.

The Statement includes the following attached material:

Flag Flying Guidance [Flag Flying UK Government Buildings Guidance 24 March 2021.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:  
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2021-03-24/HLWS876/>

## New Plan for Immigration

[HLWS872]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** My hon Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Immigration Compliance and Justice (Chris Philp) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

We have today published the New Plan for Immigration – the Government’s landmark programme to deliver the first comprehensive overhaul of the asylum system in decades.

These reforms are explained in more detail in our policy statement, which we have published today. To inform the proposals set out and ensure we can deliver effective change across the system, we have also launched a public consultation and run a wide-reaching engagement process. We will use this opportunity to listen to a wide range of views from stakeholders and sectors as well as members of the public.

The policy statement and consultation are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/new-plan-for-immigration>.

## North Sea Oil and Gas and Clean Energy Transition

[HLWS871]

**Lord Callanan:** My Right Honourable friend the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Kwasi Kwarteng has today made the following statement:

Today I am delighted to announce a landmark agreement between Government and the oil and gas industry – the North Sea Transition Deal - to support the industry’s transition to clean, green energy and secure future of high-skilled oil and gas workers and the supply chain. This follows our commitment to securing a Deal in the 2019 Conservative Party manifesto and is the first of its kind to be agreed by a G7 nation.

The offshore oil and gas industry has been a major British industrial success story. For decades, the sector has strengthened our energy security, generated significant tax revenue to fund our public services, and currently supports around 260,000 jobs across the UK. From the Shetland Islands and Aberdeen to Teesside and the Humber, the industry is critical to the health of local economies across the country.

In the Energy White Paper, we have committed to work with industry to make the UK Continental Shelf a net zero basin by 2050. The oil and gas industry will have a critical role in maintaining our energy security through this transition. Domestically produced gas still met approximately 46 percent of the country’s supply of gas in 2019 and the Climate Change Committee forecasts our continued need for fossil fuels for years to come.

The North Sea Transition Deal between the UK Government and oil and gas industry will support

workers, businesses, and the supply chain as it transitions to a net zero future by harnessing the industry’s existing capabilities, infrastructure, and private investment potential to exploit new and emerging technologies such as hydrogen production, Carbon Capture Usage and Storage and offshore wind – as well as offshore decommissioning.

Through the Deal, the oil and gas sector and government will work together over the long-term to deliver the skills, innovation and new infrastructure required to decarbonise North Sea production, as well as other carbon intensive industries. Not only will the Deal support existing companies to decarbonise in preparation for a net zero future, but it will also attract new industrial sectors to base themselves in the UK, develop new export opportunities for British businesses, and secure new high-value jobs.

Through the package of measures, the Deal is expected to support up to 40,000 jobs across the supply chain and is expected to cut pollution by up to 60 million tonnes by 2030 including 15 million tonnes from oil and gas production on the UK Continental Shelf - the equivalent of annual emissions from 90% of the UK’s homes.

### *The North Sea Transition Deal*

Delivery of the new Green Industrial Revolution will require a strong partnership between government, regulators and industry. This Deal sets out a template for that partnership and includes an ambitious plan to meet stretching greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets. The Deal aims to support and anchor the expert supply chain that has built up around oil and gas in the UK, to both safeguard and create new high-quality jobs.

The Deal includes:

- The sector setting early targets to reduce emissions by 10% by 2025 and 25% by 2027 and has committed to cut emissions by 50% by 2030. This will be supported by joint work to address the commercial and regulatory barriers to electrification of offshore platforms to realise these targets.
- Joint government and industry investment of up to £16 billion by 2030 to reduce carbon emissions. This includes up to £3 billion to replace fossil fuel-based power supplies on oil and gas platforms with renewable energy, up to £3 billion on Carbon Capture Usage and Storage, and up to £10 billion for hydrogen production.
- By 2030, the sector will voluntarily commit to ensuring that 50% of its offshore decommissioning and new energy technology projects will be provided by local businesses, helping to anchor jobs to the UK. This will be supported by the appointment of an Industry Supply Chain Champion who will support the coordination of local growth and job opportunities with other sectors, such as Carbon Capture Usage and Storage and offshore wind.
- A 60Mt reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, including 15Mt through the progressive decarbonisation of UKCS production over the period to 2030.[1]

- Support for up to 40,000 direct and indirect supply chain jobs in decarbonising UKCS production and the CCUS and hydrogen sectors.

Today's announcement delivers on the Prime Minister's Ten Point Plan and builds on our ambitious Energy White Paper, which set out how the government would support the decarbonisation of offshore oil and gas production while promoting opportunities for the sector to transition to clean energy.

To aid the transition to a green economy, today's package follows the recent Budget in which the Chancellor committed to funding that targets the oil and gas sector and supports businesses to develop green energy. This includes up to £27 million for the Aberdeen Energy Transition Zone to transform the area into a green energy hub and up to £5 million additional funding for the Global Underwater Hub based in Aberdeen to open up opportunities for the city to become a global hub for underwater engineering, including in offshore wind and hydrogen – further supporting the creation of green jobs and helping the transition to net zero.

I will place a copy of the North Sea Transition Deal in the Libraries of the House.

*The Review of Future Licensing of Offshore Oil and Gas*

We committed in September 2020 to reviewing policy on licensing for North Sea oil and gas to ensure it was compatible with our climate change objectives. This included assessing whether licensing for new oil and gas exploration and production should continue in its current form, as well as the scope for formalising any aspects of our existing processes to provide additional assurances.

Noting the ongoing role of oil and gas on our path to net zero, the Government will introduce a new Climate Compatibility Checkpoint on future oil and gas licensing rounds to ensure they are compatible with wider climate objectives, including net-zero emissions by 2050. This checkpoint will use the latest evidence of the time, looking at the UK's demand for oil and gas, the sector's projected production levels, the increasing prevalence of clean technologies such as offshore wind and carbon capture, and the sector's continued progress against its ambitious emissions reduction targets.

Design of this checkpoint will be completed by the end of 2021, before the next oil and gas licensing round. The Oil and Gas Authority has already indicated that they will not be running a new licensing round this year. In parallel, the Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment and Decommissioning is commencing work on a new Offshore Energy Strategic Environmental Assessment which will underpin future licensing rounds.

Government response to the public consultation 'Aligning UK international support for the clean energy transition'

At the Climate Ambition Summit on 12 December 2020, the Prime Minister announced that the UK will end new direct financial or promotional support for the fossil fuel energy sector overseas, other than in limited

circumstances, as soon as possible. A consultation on this and how to accelerate growth in UK clean energy exports was subsequently held until 8 February 2021.

Following the consultation, the Government will no longer provide support for the fossil fuel energy sector overseas from 31 March 2021. This will include UK Export Finance support, international aid funding, and trade promotion for new crude oil, natural gas and thermal coal projects.

To support the UK's energy sector in making this transition, we will provide a one-year exemption for Small and Medium sized Enterprises, to ensure the most vulnerable firms are given time to adjust; a new 'Transition Export Development Guarantee', so that oil and gas focused companies with credible transition plans can benefit from UK Export Finance's working capital support to achieve these plans; and publish a comprehensive and transparent description of the exemptions underpinning the policy shift, to provide clarity and certainty for business and civil society.

This balanced approach will make the UK an even stronger and more credible international partner to the growing number of countries who are seeking to make the transition to a cleaner future. The UK will build on the implementation of the policy shift by working with likeminded partners to make similar commitments, including through our G7 and COP26 Presidencies.

[1] The 60Mt also includes emissions savings from CCUS and hydrogen already set out in the PM's 10 Point Plan.

## Oil and Gas Decommissioning Relief Deeds

[HLWS870]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** My honourable friend the Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury (Kemi Badenoch) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

At Budget 2013, the government announced it would begin signing decommissioning relief deeds. These deeds represented a new contractual approach to provide oil and gas companies with certainty on the level of tax relief they will receive on future decommissioning costs.

Since October 2013, the government has entered into 98 decommissioning relief deeds.

Oil & Gas UK estimates that these deeds have so far unlocked approximately £8.1bn of capital, which can now be invested elsewhere.

The government committed to report to Parliament every year on progress with the decommissioning relief deeds. The report for financial year 2019-20 is provided below.

- Number of decommissioning relief agreements entered into: the government entered into 4 decommissioning relief agreements in 2019-20.
- Total number of decommissioning relief agreements in force at the end of that year: 96 decommissioning relief agreements were in force at the end of the year.

iii) Number of payments made under any decommissioning relief agreements during that year, and the amount of each payment: two payments were made under a decommissioning relief agreement in 2019-20, for £54.6m in total. These were made in relation to the provision recognised by HM Treasury in 2015, as a result of a company defaulting on its decommissioning obligations.

iv) Total number of payments that have been made under any decommissioning relief agreements as at the end of that year, and the total amount of those payments: six payments have been made under any decommissioning relief agreement as at the end of the 2019-20 financial year, totalling £148.6m.

v) Estimate of the maximum amount liable to be paid under any decommissioning relief agreements: the government has not made any changes to the tax regime that would generate a liability to be paid under any decommissioning relief agreements. HM Treasury's 2020-21 accounts will recognise a provision of £258.1m in respect of decommissioning expenditure incurred as a result of a company defaulting on their decommissioning obligations[1]. The majority of this is expected to be realised over the next three years.

[1] This figure takes into account payments made subsequent to the financial year covered by this Written Ministerial Statement.

## Public Spending: Devolved Administrations

[HLWS878]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** My right honourable friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Steve Barclay) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

On 15 February the UK Government announced an additional £2.1 billion for the devolved administrations through the Barnett formula to support people, businesses and public services affected by coronavirus. This was on top of the £16.8 billion that had previously been guaranteed.

In recognition of the exceptional circumstances and in response to calls for flexibility, the devolved administrations were given the option to carry forward any of the £2.1 billion into 2021-22 on top of their existing facilities to transfer funding between financial years.

The devolved administrations have now confirmed they wish to carry forward the following amounts. They will receive this funding at Main Estimates 2021-22.

<i>£ million</i>	<i>Scottish Government</i>	<i>Welsh Government</i>	<i>Northern Ireland Executive</i>
Resource DEL excluding depreciation	873.510	497.557	238.054

<i>£ million</i>	<i>Scottish Government</i>	<i>Welsh Government</i>	<i>Northern Ireland Executive</i>
Capital DEL (general)	236.845	137.130	74.964
Capital DEL (Financial Transactions)	41.532	25.530	14.039
Total DEL	1,151.888	660.218	327.057

The devolved administrations' 2020-21 funding as at Supplementary Estimates 2020-21 is therefore being reduced by the same amount.

In line with the Statement of Funding Policy the Welsh Government is also switching £501 million from Resource DEL to Capital DEL (general).

This means that revised 2020-21 funding is as follows:

<i>£ million</i>	<i>Scottish Government</i>	<i>Welsh Government</i>	<i>Northern Ireland Executive</i>
Resource DEL excluding depreciation	39,210.215	17,923.931	14,974.531
Capital DEL (general)	4,836.545	2,837.569	1,591.874
Capital DEL (Financial Transactions)	612.198	313.696	214.816
Total DEL	44,658.957	21,075.195	16,781.222

## Sale of a Credit Guarantee Finance Loan

[HLWS873]

**Lord Bethell:** My Hon Friend the Minister of State (Minister for Health) (Edward Argar) has made the following written statement:

In 2005 The Department of Health (as it was then) made two loans under a policy created by HM Treasury called Credit Guarantee Finance, one for the PFI (Private Finance Initiative) scheme at the Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust for the Bexley Oncology Wing and the other for the PFI scheme at the Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust for the redevelopment of the Queen Alexandra Hospital. The purpose of the policy was to reduce the financing costs of Private Finance Initiative deals and improve their value for money. An assessment at the time concluded that these objectives had been met.

It has now been agreed that the Department of Health and Social Care will sell its entire interest in the Credit Guarantee Finance loan which was used for the PFI scheme at Queen Alexandra Hospital, Portsmouth.

The Credit Guarantee Loan which was used for the PFI scheme at Bexley Oncology Wing, at the Leeds was repaid in full in 2017.

## Specialty and Associate Doctors' Contract Agreement

[HLWS874]

**Lord Bethell:** My Hon Friend the Minister of State for Care (Helen Whately) has made the following written statement:

I am pleased to confirm that specialty and associate specialist doctors have backed a multi-year pay and contract reform agreement.

This is a diverse group of doctors who play a vital role in delivering high-quality care within healthcare teams and we recognise the particular issues they have faced. This agreement focuses on fixing long-standing concerns around equality of pay and terms and conditions for this group of staff. The agreement will improve their experiences of work and provide more opportunities to progress in their careers, in return for contractual changes which will deliver improvements to NHS services.

The deal will give around 10,000 doctors the option to transfer to new contracts. The contract changes prioritise doctors' physical and mental wellbeing through introducing new limits on work in unsocial hours and additional annual leave to improve equity with other staff groups. The new pay scales will have fewer progression points, enabling faster progression to the top of the pay scale, heeding the recommendations from the Gender Pay Gap in Medicine Review. The introduction of a new senior grade will expand opportunities for career progression for specialty doctors.

Over recent years we have sought major contractual reforms right across the NHS workforce. Public sector pay must deliver value for money for the taxpayer and this agreement commits investment in return for reforms which will help improve recruitment and retention, enhance morale and boost capacity and productivity.

This agreement delivers on the commitment in the NHS People Plan to make these roles more attractive and fulfilling and will help us retain more talent to ensure our NHS is there for everyone in the years to come.

## UK Health Security Agency

[HLWS877]

**Lord Bethell:** My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (Matt Hancock) has made the following written statement:

I wish to inform the House of progress in establishing the UK Health Security Agency and the appointment of its leadership.

In August 2020, the Government announced its intention to create a new body, bringing together the at-scale operational response capability of NHS Test and Trace, the Joint Biosecurity Centre's intelligence and analytical capability and the public health science and health protection expertise of Public Health England into an organisation focused wholly on protecting people from external threats to this country's health.

From 1 April, we will formally establish the new UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA). The UKHSA will be this country's permanent standing capacity to prepare for, prevent and respond to threats to health.

The UKHSA will plan for the risk of future infectious disease pandemics and other major health threats, maintaining this focus both during a crisis and in better times. It will work with partners around the world and lead the UK's global contribution to global health protection research. The new Agency will prevent threats by deploying the full weight of our analytic and genomic capability, on infectious diseases and beyond, and will hold responsibility for our health security scientific capabilities including those at Porton Down and Colindale. It will respond to the threats we face with speed and scale, including terrorist threats to health, another pandemic or environmental hazards.

The Agency will operate with local and national partners to deliver its brief, including building a strong partnership with local government and Directors of Public Health. It will work with the national public health bodies for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, continuing strong collaborative work such as the Joint Biosecurity Centre to support health security for the whole of the UK.

UKHSA will be empowered to hire the very best team possible from around the world. Its Chief Executive will be Dr Jenny Harries, who has performed brilliantly during this crisis. Dr Harries previously led the public health response to the Novichok poisonings, she played a critical part in the UK's Ebola response and last year, as Deputy Chief Medical Officer, she's delivered the shielding programme which is both incredibly sensitive and has been superbly delivered. Dr Harries' distinguished career as both a public health physician, and crucially, as a public health leader, make her impeccably qualified for this role.

Ian Peters will be UKHSA's Chair. Under Ian's leadership as Chairman of Barts Health NHS Trust, the Trust has built an impressive track record in life sciences with the combination of private sector, academic and Government capability that is so important to delivering excellence at scale. Ian brings his extensive experience of leadership in the public and private sector to this task, including several years as Managing Director of British Gas. Both Dr Harries and Mr Peters will be appointed from 1 April.

To protect operational continuity and provide for necessary staff consultations, the transition of responsibilities and capabilities from Public Health England and NHS Test and Trace into the new Agency will take place over the coming months, with the UKHSA fully operational from October 2021. Until this date, PHE and NHS Test and Trace will continue to deliver their existing functions.

I will provide a further update in due course on the Government's wider plans for public health reform, including on arrangements for promoting and improving health.

# Written Answers

Wednesday, 24 March 2021

## Armed Forces: Families

Asked by **Lord Tunnicliffe**

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to publish the new UK Armed Forces Families Strategy. [HL14176]

**Baroness Goldie:** I refer the noble Lord to the reply I gave to the right hon Lord Touhig on 26 November 2020, in response to Question HL10461.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

HL10461 - Armed Forces Families [HL10461.docx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-03-11/HL14176>

## Artificial Intelligence: Curriculum

Asked by **Lord Taylor of Warwick**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to include artificial intelligence awareness in the education curriculum. [HL14114]

**Baroness Berridge:** The computing curriculum, introduced in 2014, aims to ensure that all pupils understand the fundamental principles of computer science, information technology and digital literacy.

As set out in the programme of study for the computing curriculum, computing has deep links with mathematics, science, and design and technology, and provides insights into both natural and artificial systems. The core of computing is computer science, in which pupils are taught the principles of information and computation, how digital systems work and how to put this knowledge to use through programming. Further detail about the curriculum content is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-computing-programmes-of-study>.

The curriculum was deliberately designed to avoid over prescription, and reduce the risk of the content becoming outdated, given the speed of development of digital skills and technological advance. Programming, algorithms, and the use of information technology, are taught to pupils in key stage 3, which provide the foundations for pupils to acquire further knowledge about artificial intelligence (AI).

This government wants every child in England to receive a world class computing education. That is why we created the National Centre for Computing Education (NCCE), backed by £84 million of government funding, to improve the quality of computing teaching. The NCCE have created 500 hours of free, high quality teacher resources, which align to the computing curriculum. This

includes a unit of learning on AI which is taught to year 8 pupils.

## Asylum: Military Bases

Asked by **Lord Roberts of Llandudno**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many asylum seekers have contracted COVID-19 while staying at (1) Napier Barracks, and (2) Penally military training camp. [HL14102]

Asked by **Lord Roberts of Llandudno**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the findings of the Independent Chief Inspector, published on 8 March, of the asylum accommodation at (1) Napier Barracks, and (2) Penally military training camp. [HL14103]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration announced an inspection of contingency asylum accommodation on 25 January 2021.

The department acknowledges the ICIBI's decision to publish on 8 March the initial findings from site visits to Napier Barracks and Penally.

The ICIBI's inspection continues and a full inspection report will follow.

The duration of the inspection is a matter for the ICIBI and upon its conclusion, following standard procedure set out in the UK Borders Act 2007, the Department will issue a formal response alongside the inspection report as it is laid before Parliament and published on Gov.UK.

197 people accommodated at Napier tested positive for coronavirus earlier this year. There have been no recorded cases at Penally.

## Care Homes: Coronavirus

Asked by **Baroness Sherlock**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Care Quality Commission (CQC) (1) holds, and (2) publishes, data identifying those nursing homes where residents have died from COVID-19 during the pandemic; and if so, whether the CQC shares that data with those who process claims to the NHS and Social Care Coronavirus Life Assurance Scheme. [HL10016]

**Lord Bethell:** The Care Quality Commission (CQC) regularly shares data on notifications of deaths in individual care homes with the Department and other partners, including the Office of National Statistics, in order to monitor, plan and respond to the pandemic. The CQC does not publish mortality data by location.

The NHS and Social Care Coronavirus Life Assurance Scheme provides a safety net for the families of National Health Service and social care staff who die from coronavirus contracted through the course of their work.

The scheme does not cover residents of care homes and does not receive data regarding care home resident deaths.

### China: Coronavirus

*Asked by Lord Blencathra*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of China about its reported refusal to share the raw data on the first 174 COVID-19 cases to be identified in December 2019 with the World Health Organization. [[HL14084](#)]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** As the Foreign Secretary has made clear, it is important the WHO-convened experts be given full access to the data they need to understand why the outbreak happened, why it was not stopped earlier and what can be done to manage any outbreak in the future. We will look closely at the field mission's report when it is published and continue to advocate for a robust, open and scientifically rigorous international investigation.

### Church of England: Land Use

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of London*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the report by the Commission of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York on Housing, Church and Community Coming Home: Tackling the housing crisis together, published on 21 February, and (2) proposals to use church-owned land to build affordable housing developments; and what plans they have (a) to review existing charity law, (b) to extend the provisions of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, and (c) to amend other relevant legislation, to allow for land to be used for charitable purposes without a requirement for financial gain. [[HL14092](#)]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** We welcome the recent report from the Archbishops' Commission, and the very important contribution of the Church to our shared commitment to help our country build back better, including supporting affordability. We will continue to work closely with the Church of England to explore how we can support them and work together to achieve our shared commitments.

We have already made a number of commitments which will bolster the delivery of high quality and sustainable affordable housing. The Government is investing over £12 billion in affordable housing over 5 years, the largest investment in affordable housing in a decade. This includes the new £11.5 billion Affordable Homes Programme, which will leverage up to £38 billion of private finance and provide up to 180,000 new homes across the country, should economic conditions allow.

The Government would welcome the use of church-owned land to bring forward more affordable housing, and is content that charity law can facilitate this. The

Charity Commission is able to approve the disposal of land or other assets at less than market value where the disposal is consistent with the charitable purpose of the organisation. We understand that the Charity Commission is engaging with the Archbishops' Commissioners to understand how this can be better communicated within the Church, and we welcome that dialogue.

### Coal: Cumbria

*Asked by Baroness Worthington*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many times the Cumbria County Council decision to approve the opening of a new coal mine in Cumbria was mentioned in communications between ministerial private offices in the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government. [[HL14307](#)]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** None. No mention has been made, as Cumbria County Council has not approved the opening of the new coal mine in Cumbria.

### Commonwealth: Coronavirus

*Asked by Lord Blencathra*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will prioritise the sending of surplus COVID-19 vaccines to Commonwealth countries following the conclusion of the UK vaccination programme; and whether any such prioritisation will be confined to those countries with a ranking below 90 in the Transparency International Corruption Index. [[HL14083](#)]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The Prime Minister announced on 19 February that the UK will share the majority of any surplus COVID-19 vaccine doses with the COVAX international vaccine procurement pool. As the multilateral mechanism for ensuring equitable global access to vaccines, COVAX is best able to distribute vaccines where they are needed most, and will be most effective, and any doses we contribute will be allocated in line with COVAX's agreed protocols and criteria.

All but two members of the Commonwealth are COVAX members, and I am pleased to note that 31 Commonwealth countries, across four regions, will be receiving COVID-19 vaccines as part of the first set of COVAX deliveries, the very first of which was received in Ghana on 24 February.

### Coronavirus: Vaccination

*Asked by Lord Birt*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the percentage of adults that need to be vaccinated against COVID-19 in order for the UK to achieve herd immunity. [[HL14207](#)]

**Lord Bethell:** No specific assessment has been made. The full impact of vaccination on infection and

transmission of the virus will not become clear until a large number of people have been vaccinated.

*Asked by Lord Addington*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide surplus COVID-19 vaccines to athletes from Commonwealth countries to ensure that they are vaccinated in time for the Tokyo Olympic Games. [HL14247]

*Asked by Lord Addington*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide (1) Olympic athletes, and (2) Olympic officials, of any nation with COVID-19 vaccines after all vulnerable groups in the UK have been offered the vaccine. [HL14248]

**Lord Bethell:** We have no plans to do so.

*Asked by Baroness Featherstone*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they made of the (1) safety, and (2) effectiveness, of the Oxford/AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine. [HL14264]

**Lord Bethell:** The vaccines approved for use in the United Kingdom, including the Oxford/AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine, have met strict standards of safety, quality and effectiveness set out by the independent Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). Any vaccine that is approved must go through the same clinical trials and safety checks as other licensed medicines. The MHRA follows international standards of safety. So far, millions of people have been given a COVID-19 vaccine and reports of serious side effects, such as allergic reactions, have been very rare. No long-term complications have been reported. Preliminary results showing that the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine might reduce the spread of COVID-19 are hugely encouraging.

*Asked by Lord Greaves*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the letter by the Medical Director for Primary Care and the Director of Primary Care at NHS England and NHS Improvement to Primary Care Network (PCN)-led local vaccination sites and community pharmacy-led local vaccination sites, published on 13 February, whether PCN-led local vaccination sites are required to invite anyone who has ever had an emergency asthma admission as part of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation's cohort six. [HL14266]

**Lord Bethell:** NHS England advised local vaccination sites that Primary Care Networks should focus their efforts on inviting priority cohort six, which includes adults who had required hospital admission due to the severity of their asthma.

## Devolution: Northern Ireland

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the implementation of devolution in Northern Ireland. [HL14156]

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** This Government remains fully committed to the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, which provided an important and stable base for power-sharing in Northern Ireland. The New Decade New Approach (NDNA) deal reached in January 2020 resulted in the restoration of the NI institutions. Good progress has been made in implementing the deal (which has included releasing over £555million of the £2bn of funding agreed in the deal and progress towards the establishment of an independent fiscal council) and establishing the governance structures that underpin NDNA (such as the Joint Board and Implementation Review meetings). The Government does acknowledge, however, that some of the matters targeted for early resolution under NDNA have been affected and challenged by the ongoing public health crisis.

The Government is working to deliver the next tranche of our commitments, such as progressing legislation on the sustainability of the institutions and reforms to the Petition of Concern mechanism.

## Educational Institutions: Cybercrime

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support educational institutions in protecting themselves from cyber threats. [HL14113]

**Baroness Berridge:** Education settings rely heavily on IT and online services to function. They also hold large amounts of sensitive personal data on pupils, parents and staff. All this and more needs to be kept safe and secure. Education settings are directly responsible for their own levels of security and data protection and need to ensure they have the appropriate security protections in place to safeguard their systems, data, staff and students. The department encourages all leadership in education to ensure institutional resilience, by taking proactive steps and following advice and guidance from the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) and the Department for Education.

The department has been working closely with the NCSC on developing updated advice and guidance to give leadership the best quality advice, such as advice for governors and trustees which is now included in the governors handbook. Furthermore, the department is developing a self-assessment tool for schools on cyber security for the next academic year, which will help highlight areas of potential weakness and what steps can be taken to mitigate cyber security risks.

The department will continue to work closely with the National Technical Authorities in this space to ensure that we provide targeted threat briefing to the education sector when issues emerge, as was done in September 2020 following a number of ransomware incidents in the education sector.

### **Ethiopia: Genocide**

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports of mass killings of civilians in the Oromia region of Ethiopia; and what steps they are taking in response. [HL14076]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We are deeply concerned by the violent clashes in recent months in the Oromia region of Ethiopia with reports of mass killings. We are also extremely concerned by recent reports of killings of Amharan civilians, including women and children in Horoguduru in Western Oromia. Leaders on all sides must be clear that ethnic-based violence and discrimination will not be tolerated, and must stress to all those under their control the importance of respecting human rights and avoiding civilian loss of life at all costs. The Foreign Secretary underlined the need for all Ethiopians to be respected and not be subject to violence and discrimination during his visit to Ethiopia on 22 January. When the Minister for Africa visited Ethiopia from 27-29 July 2020, he discussed ethnic tensions with the Ethiopian President and senior Ministers, as well as the President of Oromia. We continue to monitor the human rights situation in Ethiopia closely.

### **Falkland Islands: Marine Protected Areas**

*Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 9 March (HL13597), (1) whether, and (2) if so, why, the Falkland Islands have been excluded from the definition of the South Atlantic Overseas Territories; and whether the Falkland Islands have benefited from the Blue Belt programme. [HL14091]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The Falkland Islands are geographically part of the South Atlantic UK Overseas Territories region, but they have so far chosen not to be part of the Blue Belt initiative. The Blue Belt programme remains open to all Overseas Territories, and the UK is keen to offer support to any Territory wishing to enhance marine protection in its waters. Over the past five years, the Blue Belt programme has also contributed funding to the Darwin Plus scheme, which has funded marine environment projects in Overseas Territories which are not currently participating in the programme.

### **Fire Safety Bill**

*Asked by Lord Berkeley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Greenhalgh on 9 March (HL13562), what changes, if any, they made to the Fire Safety Bill after discussions with the Royal Estate following their request for Queen's Consent; for what purpose any such changes were made; and with whom the discussions were held. [HL14079]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** The Home Office sought Queen's Consent for the Fire Safety Bill on 20 February 2020. This was obtained by the Royal Estate on 9 March 2020 and there were no changes to the Bill.

### **Fisheries**

*Asked by Lord Randall of Uxbridge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effect of bycatch on populations of (1) harbour porpoises, (2) common dolphins, (3) humpback whales, and (4) other species sensitive to the effects of bycatch. [HL14097]

*Asked by Lord Randall of Uxbridge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of fisheries bycatch on the welfare of (1) porpoises, (2) dolphins, (3) whales, (4) seabirds, and (5) other species sensitive to the effects of bycatch; and what steps they are taking to prevent any negative effects caused by such bycatch. [HL14098]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** The UK Government funds a comprehensive and well-respected bycatch monitoring programme which helps to protect sensitive marine species and to monitor and reduce any potential fisheries impacts on these species. The UK has an additional observer programme which collects data on fisheries catch and bycatch for scientific advice and management.

The Government also funds Clean Catch UK which is a collaborative research programme dedicated to better monitoring, reducing, and, where possible, eliminating the bycatch of sensitive marine species in UK fisheries.

In addition, we also fund the Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme, which conducts research on threats facing cetaceans (dolphins, porpoises and whales) through carrying out post-mortems on stranded animals. We are about to let a new 10-year contract for this programme, which demonstrates our long-term commitment to monitoring and mitigating such threats, including bycatch.

These programmes all contribute to the assessment of bycatch on populations and associated welfare implications of sensitive marine species.

*Asked by Lord Randall of Uxbridge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have (1) to prevent, and (2) to monitor, fisheries bycatch to protect (1) porpoises, (2) dolphins, (3) whales, (4) seabirds, and (5) other species sensitive to the effects of bycatch; and what methods they intend to use to monitor such bycatch. [HL14099]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** The Government funds Clean Catch UK which is a collaborative research programme dedicated to better monitoring, reducing, and, where possible, eliminating bycatch of sensitive species in UK fisheries. We are taking a risk-based approach to implementing this, focussing on fisheries which experience the highest rates of bycatch in the first instance. As a known hotspot for bycatch, work is already underway in the South West of England. We are currently undertaking trials for a range of mitigation measures in different fisheries along Cornwall's south coast and will be looking to include more fisheries in this over the next 12 months.

The Government remains committed to monitoring and enforcing our fisheries so that we can manage them sustainably. As part of this, we continue to explore the potential uses of Remote Electronic Monitoring alongside other tools such as observer coverage and self-reporting apps.

**Foreign Relations***Asked by Viscount Waverley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many requests have been (1) received, and (2) accepted, by the Prime Minister for a meeting with another head of government in each of the past 12 months; from which governments they have received any such requests; and when any such meetings (a) occurred, and (b) are due to take place. [HL14119]

**Lord True:** Meetings between the Prime Minister and his international counterparts are a regular part of Government business. Details are published on the gov.uk website.

*Asked by Viscount Waverley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many requests have been (1) received, and (2) accepted, by the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs for a meeting with a foreign affairs minister from another government in each of the past 12 months; from which governments they have received such a request; and when any such meetings (a) occurred, and (b) are due to take place. [HL14121]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Meetings between Ministerial departments and their international counterparts are a regular part of Government business.

For security and diplomatic reasons we do not routinely publish details of these meetings.

**Fuel Poverty***Asked by Lord Foster of Bath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 26 January (HL12049), how they define the word 'ensure' in the context of their stated commitment "to ensure that as many fuel poor homes as is reasonably practicable achieve a minimum energy efficiency rating of Band C, by 2030". [HL14085]

**Lord Callanan:** In the context of this target, we use the word 'ensure' to mean that we will take steps to make sure that this target is delivered. We will make sure that as many fuel poor homes as is reasonably practicable achieve a minimum energy efficiency rating of Band C, by 2030.

**Halifax Bank of Scotland and Royal Bank of Scotland: Fraud***Asked by Lord Sikka*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether any department has given directions to the Financial Conduct Authority in connection with its investigation of the alleged frauds identified in the 2013 'Project Lord Turnbull Report' at (1) Halifax Bank of Scotland, and (2) Royal Bank of Scotland. [HL14344]

*Asked by Lord Sikka*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to establish an independent inquiry into the handling by the Financial Conduct Authority of the alleged frauds at (1) Royal Bank of Scotland, and (2) Halifax Bank of Scotland. [HL14345]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** As you are aware, the FCA is an independent non-governmental body responsible for regulating and supervising the financial services industry. Although the Treasury sets the legal framework for the regulation of financial services, it has strictly limited powers in relation to the FCA. In particular, the Treasury has no general power of direction over the FCA and cannot intervene in individual cases.

Given the matters raised are the responsibility of the FCA, in view of its independence, it is not for the Government to provide direction.

However, as you may be aware, in the case of HBOS, Dame Linda Dobbs has been appointed as an independent legal expert to consider whether issues in the HBOS Reading Fraud were investigated and appropriately reported to authorities at the time by Lloyds Banking Group. At present the Dobbs review is ongoing and once completed, its findings will be shared with the FCA.

On Royal Bank of Scotland and GRG, the FCA has concluded their final investigation, which reaffirms the outcome of its enforcement investigation, which was announced in July 2018.

Finally, there are currently no plans for the Government to establish an independent review of the conduct of the Financial Conduct Authority in relation to the RBS and Lloyds Banking Group.

### Home Office: Sanitation

*Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the cost of the works to make the toilets in the Home Office unisex; what assessment they have made of staff satisfaction with the unisex toilets; whether any female (1) staff, or (2) visitors, have refused to use the unisex facilities; and if so, how many. [[HL14095](#)]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The cost of directional signage and conversion works carried out in 2017 at the department's Headquarters at 2 Marsham Street to provide gender neutral toilet facilities was £36,963.

Data is not collected on the number of staff or visitors who may have refused to use the facilities.

### Housing: Disability and Older People

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they plan to meet the housing needs of (1) older, and (2) disabled, people. [[HL14164](#)]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** We place great importance on the provision of suitable homes for older and disabled people. Our planning rules already mean councils must consider the needs of older and disabled people when planning for new homes. In 2019 we published Planning Practice Guidance in order to help councils implement the National Planning Policy Framework policies.

In August 2020 we published our planning white paper, which set out the high-level details of our proposed planning reforms and we continue to engage with a range of stakeholders in order to help shape our proposals.

In September 2020 we consulted on how to raise accessible housing standards and we have also committed to a full review of Part M of the Building Regulations which includes a research programme to help us to consider what changes can be made.

In January 2021 we published the draft National Model Design Code, which guides local authorities on how to provide a variety of choice of homes to suit all needs and ages, including those of older people and disabled people.

We are committed to protecting and boosting the supply of supported housing and our aim is that 10% of delivery under the new Affordable Homes Programme will be for much needed specialist and supported housing for older and disabled people.

Lastly, by 2021-22 we will have invested over £4 billion into the Disabled Facilities Grant (2010-11 to 2021-22) which has provided an estimated 400,000 adaptations in disabled people's homes.

### Human Rights: Older People

*Asked by Baroness Greenross*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to support the proposed United Nations Convention on the Rights of Older Persons; and what assessments they have made of the potential risks of ratifying this convention, including the risk that older people may be classified as having different human rights to other adults. [[HL14086](#)]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK is clear that human rights are universal and is committed to protecting the human rights of all persons, including older persons. The UK recognises that there can be barriers to the enjoyment of human rights associated with certain characteristics, including age, and we know that older persons often face serious human rights issues in many parts of the world. We are supportive, in principle, of a multilateral instrument dedicated to the rights of older persons, and welcome the UN Open Ended Working Group on Ageing's work to help deepen our understanding of the important issues, before we consider what might be the most appropriate solution. There is currently no draft Convention for the UK to consider ratifying. We will continue to work closely with Parliament, academia, civil society and national human rights institutions, to draw on their expertise and ensure that our approach takes account of their views.

### Jobcentres: Staff

*Asked by Baroness Sherlock*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many 50 PLUS Champions are currently employed in Jobcentres. [[HL14166](#)]

**Baroness Stedman-Scott:** We currently have 14 50PLUS Champions at Department regional level who work collaboratively with our 37 District 50PLUS Champions to raise the profile of our older claimants. The champions act as a single point of contact for cascading messages, communications and best practice to colleagues locally and nationally. They raise awareness with Work Coaches, employers and providers of the products available to them, for example local groups, online tools and more.

### Levelling Up Fund: Cornwall

*Asked by Lord Berkeley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what criteria they used to allocate Cornwall to tier 2 for assistance from the Levelling Up Fund; and what plans they have, if any, to transfer Cornwall to tier 1. [[HL14206](#)]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** As set out in the prospectus published at Budget, the index used for the Levelling Up Fund places areas into category one, two or three based on the local area's need for economic recovery and growth, improved transport connectivity, and

regeneration. We have published the index and further details of the methodology used to calculate the index of places set out in the prospectus.

While preference will be given to bids from higher priority areas, the bandings do not represent eligibility criteria, nor the amount or number of bids a place can submit. Bids from categories 2 and 3 will still be considered for funding on their merits of deliverability, value for money and strategic fit, and could still be successful if they are of sufficiently high quality.

### Ministry of Defence: Buildings

*Asked by Lord Lee of Trafford*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the national availability of warehouse space; what steps they are taking in response; and what assessment the Ministry of Defence has made of the potential for private sector involvement in the utilisation of suitable surplus or underutilised sites and buildings. [[HL14147](#)]

**Baroness Goldie:** The Government Property Agency is working in partnership with the Ministry of Defence (MOD) to analyse existing storage requirements within the Civil Estate in order to ensure that the future warehousing and depot strategy provides value for money.

The MOD has commissioned a project to evaluate warehousing and storage capacity across the UK, which aims to deliver an initial capability report by spring 2022. There is currently no spare warehousing capacity to offer to the private sector.

### Ministry of Defence: Civil Proceedings

*Asked by Lord Tunnicliffe*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many investigations into (1) current, or (2) former personnel, have been launched following the pursuit of civil claims against the Ministry of Defence by (a) current, or (b) former, personnel in each year since 2015. [[HL14175](#)]

**Baroness Goldie:** The Ministry of Defence has a duty to ensure that common law compensations claims are paid at the correct level where there is a legal liability to do so. In exceptional circumstances, surveillance investigations are undertaken to observe the true extent of a claimant's alleged injuries in cases where there is a reasonable suspicion about the veracity of a claim or where medical evidence suggests that the claimant's disability is wholly inconsistent with the type of injury. There is no distinction made between serving or former personnel.

The table below shows the number of surveillance cases undertaken for the last five complete financial years.

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Number of cases</i>
2019-2020	37
2018-2019	21
2017-2018	22
2016-2017	17
2015-2016	11

### Monetary Policy

*Asked by Lord Myners*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Bank of England's actions to insulate public funding to interest rate increases by issuing debt with larger maturities; and the effect of quantitative easing on that strategy. [[HL14332](#)]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** The UK Debt Management Office, an executive agency of HM Treasury, is responsible for government wholesale sterling debt issuance, not the Bank of England. HM Treasury and the Debt Management Office seek to minimise, over the long term, the costs of meeting the Government's financing needs, taking into account risk.

In its March 2021 Economic and fiscal outlook the Office for Budget Responsibility noted that quantitative easing reduces the average effective maturity of UK government debt from 15 years to 11 years. This maturity remains much longer than international peers, with most G7 countries' debt maturity averaging 5-8 years.

### Napier Barracks

*Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, when Napier Barracks was last used continuously to house military personnel. [[HL14100](#)]

**Baroness Goldie:** From 1967 Napier Barracks was used continuously to house military personnel up until 1991. Following this it was reallocated as a training camp and used by personnel training at nearby locations as temporary accommodation. It was then taken over by the Home Office in September 2020.

*Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, on how many occasions Napier Barracks was used for short-term training purposes in each year since 2016. [[HL14101](#)]

**Baroness Goldie:** The number of occasions that Napier Barracks was utilised for short-term training purposes in each year since 2016, up until it was taken over by the Home Office in September 2020, is detailed in the table below:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of days</i>
2016	352
2017	352
2018	290
2019	155
2020	40
Total	1,189

### **National Tutoring Programme: Pay**

*Asked by Lord Storey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the payment rate for tutors delivering the National Tutoring Programme. [HL14112]

**Baroness Berridge:** High quality tuition remains one of the core principles of the programme, and the department have worked closely with delivery partners to ensure this is delivered across both pillars of the programme.

When selecting approved tuition partners, the department worked with the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) to ensure schools had a wide range of high quality tuition partners to choose from in order to best suit the needs of pupils.

As a result, the approved tuition partners include a range of profit, non-profit and educational institutions, all of which offer tuition through different models and varying in price. It is the responsibility and discretion of tuition partners to set their own pay and conditions for the tutors they employ in accordance with other costs associated to tutoring, such as training, preparation for sessions, delivering tutoring via online platforms, communication with schools and quality assurance processes.

The EEF have developed a guide to the cost, quality and value for money of tuition, which can be accessed here:

<https://nationaltutoring.org.uk/news/making-tutoring-count-cost-quality-and-value-for-money>.

### **Northern Ireland Government**

*Asked by The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the position set out in the Joint Declaration 1993, that they have "no selfish strategic or economic interest in Northern Ireland", is their current policy. [HL14151]

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** This Government has always been clear about the importance it places on the Union and Northern Ireland's integral place within it.

Our commitment to promoting the positives of the Union for Northern Ireland does not negate the principles of the Belfast Agreement, including the Principle of

Consent providing that any change in Northern Ireland's position in the Union, will only come about based on the consent of a majority of its people.

The joint declaration in 1993 was an important part of the architecture that led to the Belfast Agreement in 1998 and of the peace process which has brought huge benefit to the people of Northern Ireland and we remain committed to the principles it espoused, the Agreement itself and the institutions it established.

### **Peers: Correspondence**

*Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to respond to the letter from Lord Pearson of Rannoch to Baroness Williams of Trafford, sent on 19 February; and if so, when. [HL14096]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** I can confirm to the noble Lord that a response to this letter was sent on 16th March 2021.

### **Pornography: Internet**

*Asked by Baroness Greder*

To ask Her Majesty's Government which commercial pornography companies will be in scope of the Online Safety Bill; and whether commercial pornography websites which (1) do not host user-generated content, or (2) allow private user communication, will also be in scope. [HL14223]

**Baroness Barran:** The government is committed to ensuring children are protected from accessing online pornography through the new online safety framework. Where pornography sites host user-generated content or facilitate online user interaction such as video and image sharing, commenting and live streaming, they will be subject to the new duty of care. Commercial pornography sites which allow private user to user communication will be in scope. Where commercial pornography sites do not have user-generated functionality they will not be in scope. The online safety regime will capture both the most visited pornography sites and pornography on social media, therefore covering the majority of sites where children are most likely to be exposed to pornography.

We expect companies to use age assurance or age verification technologies to prevent children from accessing services which pose the highest risk of harm to children, such as online pornography. We are working closely with stakeholders across industry to establish the right conditions for the market to deliver age assurance and age verification technical solutions ahead of the legislative requirements coming into force.

*Asked by Baroness Featherstone*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of current age verification tools in protecting children from seeing adult content online; and what plans they

have to ensure that the efficacy of such tools are addressed as part of the forthcoming Online Safety Bill. [[HL14263](#)]

**Baroness Barran:** Although the government will not be mandating the use of specific technologies through the legislation, we do expect that the regulatory framework will drive innovation and take-up of age assurance solutions, where some in-scope companies will be required to identify child users and provide them with a higher level of protection. This includes the use of age verification technologies to prevent children from accessing high-risk content such as online pornography.

We are continually assessing the benefits of technical measures while developing online safety policy. We are also working closely with stakeholders across industry to establish the right conditions for the market to deliver robust and effective age assurance solutions ahead of the legislative requirements coming into force. This includes working with regulators and industry to deliver transparency on the efficacy of solutions.

### Prisons: Body Searches

*Asked by Lord Blencathra*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Wolfson of Tredegar on 9 March (HL13570), what consideration they have given to the views of women prisoners regarding the possibility of being searched by people identifying as transgender women in their review of the national policy on the searching of prisoners. [[HL14081](#)]

**Lord Wolfson of Tredegar:** The national policy on the searching of prisoners, staff and visitors (PSI 07/2016 – Searching of the Person) is currently under review and a revised version is intended to be published later this year.

In reviewing the policy, Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) has consulted with the Government's Legal Department and HMPPS Equalities Team. Further consultation will be made with contributing groups including HMPPS women's group. The new policy will be compliant with the Equality Act 2010, Gender Recognition Act 2004 and the European Convention of Human Rights.

### Pupils: Food

*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of state schools providing (1) breakfast clubs, (2) food banks, and (3) food and other parcels, to the families of pupils; and what plans they have to support schools to continue this provision in the long-term. [[HL14090](#)]

**Baroness Berridge:** The government remains committed to ensuring the most disadvantaged children continue to be supported.

The department is investing up to £38 million in the National School Breakfast Programme. Overall, this money will set up or improve breakfast clubs in up to 2,450 schools in disadvantaged areas, making them sustainable in the long run. The focus of these clubs has been to target the most disadvantaged areas of the country – including the Department for Education's Opportunity Areas – to help make sure every child gets the best start in life. We will shortly be providing more information on the future of breakfast club provision, as our current contract is due to expire in July.

During the periods of school attendance restrictions, schools have been asked to continue to provide support for eligible free school meal pupils learning at home. Schools have been able to choose the approach that works best for them, whether providing a lunch parcel, a locally arranged voucher or accessing the national voucher scheme. So far families have redeemed more than £90 million in supermarket vouchers during this school term.

The government has taken unprecedented measures during the COVID-19 outbreak to protect the most vulnerable and put in place a strong package of financial support to support families and children. The COVID Winter Support Package was announced in November 2020. This included: the Department for Work and Pensions' £170 million COVID Winter Grant Scheme, which has now been extended until the end of the Easter holidays (16 April 2021); the £220 million national expansion of the department's Holiday Activities and Food Programme in 2021; and a further £16 million for FareShare to distribute to food charities.

### Railways: Heathrow Airport

*Asked by Lord Berkeley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will announce the process for securing a private sector development partner for the Southern Railway Link to Heathrow Airport. [[HL14132](#)]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Department remains committed that the Southern Access to Heathrow scheme, formerly known as Southern Rail Link to Heathrow, should be a 'pathfinder' project with increased levels of market involvement.

Government intends to provide further guidance to the market regarding the proposed commercial direction and next steps, including the process for selection of a development partner in Summer 2021.

### Small Businesses: Loans

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the British Business Bank Small Business Finance Markets Report 2021, published on 10 March. [[HL14116](#)]

**Lord Callanan:** The British Business Bank's Small Business Finance Markets Report makes clear how difficult the last year has been for many small businesses, which is why the Government continues to provide an extensive and generous package of support.

This package of support includes the extended furlough scheme, VAT and business rates relief, loan guarantees and direct cash grants so small businesses are able to keep afloat, protect jobs, and build back better from the pandemic.

## Special Educational Needs

Asked by **Lord Storey**

To ask Her Majesty's Government (1) how many Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans were agreed, (2) how many EHC appeals took place, and (3) of those appeals, how many were successful, in each year from 2016. [HL14174]

**Baroness Berridge:** The number of Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans agreed is contained in the table below.

	2016	2017	2018	2019
Number of new EHC plans	36,094	42,162	48,907	53,899

These figures are from the Department for Education publication 'Education, Health and Care plans' and are for calendar years.

The Ministry of Justice has provided figures on appeals and outcomes from the publication Tribunal Statistics Quarterly and these are given in the attached Excel spreadsheet. The Ministry of Justice figures relate to academic years from 1 September to 31 August of each year and are, therefore, not directly comparable to the Department for Education figures. Please note as well that a claim is recorded as being in favour of the appellant if they succeed in any part of the appeal. This means that if a parent appeals on three separate grounds, and is successful in only one of the grounds, the appeal is recorded as being successful.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

HL14174\_xlsx [HL14174 table.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-03-11/HL14174>

## Trade Agreements

Asked by **Viscount Waverley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many requests have been (1) received, and (2) accepted, by the Secretary of State for International Trade for a meeting with a trade minister from another government in each of the past 12 months; from which governments they have received such a request; and

when any such meetings (a) occurred, and (b) are due to take place. [HL14120]

**Lord Grimstone of Boscobel:** Given the number of invitations received for Ministers, this information is not readily available or held centrally.

Meetings between Ministerial departments and their international counterparts are a regular part of Government business. For security and diplomatic reasons we do not routinely publish details of these meetings.

## Turkey: Christianity

Asked by **Lord Patten**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the government of Turkey's expulsion of 60 Protestant and Evangelical Christians resident in Turkey, on security grounds. [HL14093]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We are aware of the issue of foreign Christians being denied permission to remain in or re-enter Turkey and have raised our concerns with the Turkish authorities. Decisions concerning immigration to Turkey are a matter for the Turkish authorities and we are unable to intervene or request information on individual cases. We will continue to monitor the situation and to encourage Turkey to safeguard freedom of religion and belief as enshrined in the Turkish constitution.

## Turkey: Religious Freedom

Asked by **Lord Patten**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, since March 2016, what estimate they have made of how many British citizens have been expelled by the government of Turkey because of their religious belief, where the stated grounds for expulsion concern security. [HL14094]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We do not hold figures for the numbers involved. We would not usually become aware of such cases unless the individuals concerned approached our diplomatic missions in Turkey seeking consular assistance.

## UK Trade with EU

Asked by **Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the level of (1) exports from the UK to the EU, and (2) imports from the EU to the UK, since 1 January. [HL14230]

**Lord True:** The information requested falls under the remit of the UK Statistics Authority. I have, therefore, asked the Authority to respond.

Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick  
House of Lords

London  
SW1A 0PW

Dear Lady Ritchie,

As National Statistician and Chief Executive of the UK Statistics Authority, I am responding to your Parliamentary Question asking what assessment has been made on the level of (1) exports from the UK to the EU, and (2) imports from the EU to the UK, since 1 January (HL14230).

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) publish monthly trade statistics[1]. The latest official estimates are for January 2021, the first month since the end of the UK's transition period with the European Union (EU). It should be noted that monthly data are erratic and small movements in these series should be treated with caution. There were also a number of atypical economic and global factors[2] contributing to the falls seen in the January data, so it is too soon to draw conclusions from the data.

Data on exports of goods from the UK to the EU and imports of goods to the UK from the EU can be found in Table 1 below. Please note that data are in current prices and, as such, include the effect of inflation.

Services data for January 2021 are not currently available at a geographical level.

*Table 1: UK Imports and exports of goods with EU excluding non-monetary gold and other precious metals, in £ billion, seasonally adjusted*

	Exports	Imports
December 2020 Value (£bn)	13.7	22.8
January 2021 Value (£bn)	8.1	16.2
Change (£bn)	-5.6	-6.6
% change	-40.7%	-28.8%

Source: ONS

Yours sincerely,

Professor Sir Ian Diamond

[1]

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/nationalaccounts/balanceofpayments/bulletins/uktrade/january2021>

[2]

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/nationalaccounts/balanceofpayments/articles/impactofthecoronavirusandeuexitonthecollectionandcompilationofuktradestatistics/2021-03-08>

## UN Climate Conference 2021: Visas

Asked by *Viscount Waverley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that visa applications from COP26 attendees are dealt with efficiently. [HL14118]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The Home Office is working closely with Cabinet Office, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and other government departments on preparations for welcoming participants to COP 26.

The Home Office has provided the UNFCCC with information on the visa application process and will be supplying event specific guidance in the upcoming months.

Arrangements are in progress to ensure entry clearance staff will be able to cross reference applications with the UNFCCC to confirm invitations of those registered to attend the event along with an escalation process.

## Unemployment: Older People

Asked by *Baroness Sherlock*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many meetings the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions held with the Business Champion for Older Workers in (1) 2020, and (2) 2021. [HL14167]

**Baroness Stedman-Scott:** The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions delegated the ownership of the relationship with the Business Champion for Older workers, Andy Briggs, to her ministerial team.

The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Employment) and departmental officials have regular meetings with the Business Champion for Older workers to actively promote the business case and the benefits for the retention, retraining and recruitment of older workers.

Asked by *Baroness Sherlock*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many meetings the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Employment) held with the Business Champion for Older Workers in (1) 2020, and (2) 2021. [HL14168]

**Baroness Stedman-Scott:** The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Employment) held standalone meetings with the Business Champion for Older Workers twice in 2020, and so far once in 2021, with a further meeting scheduled in April. The Minister for Employment and the Business Champion for Older Workers co-chair quarterly Roundtables with national employer organisations jointly, delivering their shared aim of promoting and championing the benefits of employing older workers.

In addition, Officials work closely with the Business Champion for Older Workers to support employers and actively promote the business case and benefits for the retention, retraining and recruitment of older workers. We are grateful for the outstanding work of the Business Champion for Older Workers.

## Index to Statements and Answers

## Index to Statements and Answers

<b>Written Statements.....1</b>	
Climate-related Financial Disclosures Consultation.....1	Levelling Up Fund: Cornwall..... 11
Flags .....1	Ministry of Defence: Buildings ..... 12
New Plan for Immigration.....2	Ministry of Defence: Civil Proceedings ..... 12
North Sea Oil and Gas and Clean Energy Transition.....2	Monetary Policy ..... 12
Oil and Gas Decommissioning Relief Deeds .....3	Napier Barracks ..... 12
Public Spending: Devolved Administrations .....4	National Tutoring Programme: Pay..... 13
Sale of a Credit Guarantee Finance Loan.....4	Northern Ireland Government..... 13
Specialty and Associate Doctors’ Contract Agreement .....5	Peers: Correspondence ..... 13
UK Health Security Agency .....5	Pornography: Internet..... 13
<b>Written Answers.....6</b>	Prisons: Body Searches ..... 14
Armed Forces: Families .....6	Pupils: Food..... 14
Artificial Intelligence: Curriculum .....6	Railways: Heathrow Airport..... 14
Asylum: Military Bases.....6	Small Businesses: Loans ..... 14
Care Homes: Coronavirus .....6	Special Educational Needs ..... 15
China: Coronavirus.....7	Trade Agreements..... 15
Church of England: Land Use .....7	Turkey: Christianity..... 15
Coal: Cumbria .....7	Turkey: Religious Freedom..... 15
Commonwealth: Coronavirus.....7	UK Trade with EU..... 15
Coronavirus: Vaccination.....7	UN Climate Conference 2021: Visas ..... 16
Devolution: Northern Ireland .....8	Unemployment: Older People ..... 16
Educational Institutions: Cybercrime .....8	
Ethiopia: Genocide .....9	
Falkland Islands: Marine Protected Areas.....9	
Fire Safety Bill .....9	
Fisheries.....9	
Foreign Relations.....10	
Fuel Poverty .....10	
Halifax Bank of Scotland and Royal Bank of Scotland: Fraud.....10	
Home Office: Sanitation.....11	
Housing: Disability and Older People.....11	
Human Rights: Older People.....11	
Jobcentres: Staff .....11	