

Session 2021-22
No. 77



Tuesday
23 November 2021

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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

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Written Statements

Tuesday, 23 November 2021

Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre for Women

[HLWS398]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My right hon Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Priti Patel) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

I am today announcing the opening of Derwentside immigration removal centre for women in County Durham. Detention plays a limited, but crucial role in maintaining effective immigration control and securing our borders. It is right that those with no right to remain in the UK are removed if they do not leave voluntarily.

This new, smaller immigration removal centre will replace Yarl's Wood as the only dedicated immigration removal centre for women. In order to maintain operational flexibility, we will continue to maintain some limited detention capacity for women at Colnbrook, Dungavel and Yarl's Wood. These changes will significantly reduce the overall immigration detention capacity for women.

Derwentside will be operated in line with the statutory framework established by the Immigration Act 1971 and the Detention Centre Rules 2001. The centre will provide safe, secure and fit for purpose accommodation for up to 84 women, with a full range of recreational and healthcare facilities tailored to women.

We are committed to ensuring the proper protection and treatment of vulnerable people in detention. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of women is at the forefront of the new facility, and builds on the learning and experience of Yarl's Wood. The new contract to operate the centre takes into account Stephen Shaw's reviews of vulnerability in detention, with increased staffing levels and major improvements in the frequency, diversity and accessibility of educational and recreational activities.

Driving Licences: Draft Legislation

[HLWS400]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: My Right Honourable friend, the Secretary of State for Transport (Grant Shapps), has made the following Ministerial Statement:

A statutory instrument was laid on 16 September 2021 titled the Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2021 (the "No. 2 Regulations") and was due to come into force on 15 November 2021. The substantive legislative changes proposed in the No. 2 Regulations would have removed the need for a person to pass the 'B+E' car and trailer test before they could pull a heavy trailer behind their car. This would have meant people with licences awarded

after 1997 also no longer needed to pass a separate test to tow a heavy trailer.

This statutory instrument was not approved in time for the No. 2 Regulations to come into force on 15 November 2021. Since such affirmative statutory instruments cannot be amended once laid in draft, we have taken action to lay the regulations afresh as the draft Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) (Amendment) (No. 5) Regulations 2021 (the "No. 5 Regulations").

To make rapid progress on this, we are seeking to make use of the urgency procedure under paragraph 14(6) of Schedule 8 to the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018. I am of the opinion that, by reason of urgency, the requirements for this affirmative statutory instrument (by virtue of paragraph 13(1) of Schedule 8 to the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018) to be made after being published in draft for 28 days, together with a scrutiny statement, should not apply.

Forgoing the 28-day publication period will allow earlier laying of the No. 5 Regulations than would have otherwise been possible and strengthen the steps we have already taken to increase HGV testing capacity and ease supply chain issues as quickly as possible. Arrangements will be in place to ensure that the changes made by the No. 5 Regulations are operationally effective as soon as they come into force.

Innovation Loans

[HLWS395]

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

Innovation is central to tackling the largest challenges the world faces, from climate change to global pandemics. The UK must be in the vanguard of the response to these challenges. That is why the Government has placed innovation at the heart of our Plan for Growth including through our Innovation Strategy.

The UK has a long and illustrious history of world-leading innovation, from the industrial revolution to the vaccine development of the past year. Now we have left the EU, we can move even more quickly to respond to emerging challenges and global opportunities, and cement the UK's position as a world-leader in science, research and innovation. That is why the Government committed to public R&D spending reaching £22 billion in 2026/27. This represents the fastest ever sustained uplift in R&D funding, increasing R&D funding to £20 billion per annum by the end of the SR period – £5 billion more than 2021/22.

Following a successful extended pilot with businesses including those in clean growth tech, Innovate UK will deliver a new programme of £150 million in flexible, affordable and patient Innovation Loans over the next three years. Innovation loans will help SMEs to take their late-stage R&D, including in support of Net Zero, to

commercial success so that they can grow and scale through innovation.

Net Zero Estate Playbook

[HLWS394]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: I am pleased today to formally launch the new Net Zero Estate Playbook.

Decarbonising the public estate will play a pivotal role in our fight against climate change. With more than 300,000 individual properties, at a combined value of £515 billion, the UK public sector manages, by some distance, the largest property portfolio in the country.

Operating at this scale means that every decision we make and every improvement we implement has an impact. We must go beyond decarbonising our own estate, by leading from the front, setting an example, and bringing industry with us.

There is a very clear direction set out for Government property. We are steadily working towards creating a greener public estate. Since 2010, we have reduced carbon emissions by 50%, but there remains much more work to do.

We have made significant progress on encouraging collaboration and co-location between parts of the public sector. We are working to improve maintenance, insulation, and efficiency across the public estate. We are prioritising retrofitting existing buildings where we can, and adopting modern and sustainable methods of construction where we need new buildings.

This Net Zero Estate Playbook is about helping us go further, and faster. It's a guide, to support every Government organisation. It takes best practice from around the UK, aligning with government policy and bringing the best advice into one place to inform and improve sustainability strategies and simplify the path to Net Zero.

It provides, for the first time, a methodical step-by-step guide to help government property professionals decarbonise their estate. A copy of the Net Zero Estate Playbook has been deposited in the Libraries of both Houses.

NHS Update

[HLWS401]

Lord Kamall: My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (Sajid Javid) has today made the following written statement:

Yesterday we announced to the House of Commons our intention to centralise NHS workforce and technology to prioritise better care for patients. Health Education England (HEE), NHS Digital (NHSD) and NHSX will become part of NHS England and Improvement (NHSE/I), putting workforce and technology at the heart of long-term planning. The plans will aim to see more patients benefit from the best possible care, with the right staff in place to meet patients' needs.

Subject to parliamentary passage of the requisite powers within the Health and Care Bill, these changes will help ensure that service, workforce and finance planning are integrated in one place at a national and local level. It will simplify the national system for leading the NHS, ensuring a common purpose and strategic direction.

I have accepted the recommendations of Laura Wade-Gery, Non-Executive Director at NHS England and Chair of NHSD, including to merge NHSX and NHS Digital into NHSE/I. A copy of the summary report is being placed in the library of the House. The recommendations build on the huge progress made on digital transformation during the pandemic and will improve co-operation between the key digital bodies of the NHS by bringing them under one roof for the first time.

NHSX has more than fulfilled the mandate it was given when it was set up, putting digital transformation right at the centre of the NHS's future vision and driving effective delivery of key programmes such as the Covid Pass. NHS Digital has kept the NHS's live services going, producing the Shielded Patients List, and run the technology that supported our vaccine deployment.

I would like to offer reassurance that in this new configuration the responsibilities for digitisation of the social care sector, and for ensuring the very highest standards of information governance and data privacy, will be retained.

Merging HEE with NHSE/I will put long-term planning and strategy for healthcare staff recruitment and retention at the forefront of the national NHS agenda. Combining HEE's strengths with those of NHSE/I will help ensure that:

- service, workforce and finance planning are properly integrated in one place, together with the work of the NHS People Plan, at national and local levels;
- the changes to education and training that we need – to enable employers to recruit the health professionals they need to provide the right care to patients in future – are driven further and faster;
- the record investment the Government is making in the NHS delivers for both front line NHS organisations and patients through one national organisation, making it easier to ensure a single national strategy for the service; and
- there is a simplified national system for leading the NHS, providing a single line of accountability for the whole of NHS performance.

This reform will build on the progress HEE has made and the vital role it has played during the pandemic, with record numbers of doctors and nurses currently working in the NHS.

I would like to pay tribute to colleagues at HEE, NHS Digital, and NHSX for the progress they have made, which we will continue to drive forward.

Public Records: Landing of BA Flight 149 in Kuwait

[HLWS397]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: My Right Honourable Friend, the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs (Elizabeth Truss), has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

Today the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) will release files covering the events surrounding British Airways flight 149 (BA149) to the National Archives. BA149 landed at Kuwait City on 2 August 1990 as the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was beginning. The passengers and crew from the flight were subsequently held hostage by Iraq and mistreated. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) provided consular and diplomatic support to those involved from the outset, but there have long been questions about how much the Government knew of the situation at the time.

We now know that Iraq was beginning a full invasion of Kuwait on the night of 1/2 August. The files being released today describe how things looked to those involved at the time.

On 1 August the British Embassy in Kuwait told the local British Airways office that while flights on 1 August should be safe, subsequent flights were inadvisable. BA149 took off from London at 18:04 GMT on 1 August, almost two hours later than scheduled because of technical problems. Its ultimate destination was Kuala Lumpur with a short stopover in Kuwait. At about 22:15 GMT, during its flight towards Kuwait, the captain spoke to the captain of another flight which had left Kuwait for London that evening. The pilot of that flight reported nothing unusual in Kuwait and no reason for BA149 to depart from its planned route.

The files show that the British Ambassador in Kuwait informed the Resident Clerk (the officer on overnight duty to deal with emergencies) at the FCO in London about reports of an Iraqi incursion into Kuwait around 00:00 GMT on 2 August 1990, while the British Airways flight was en route. The information was passed by the Resident Clerk to the Head of the FCO's Middle East Department and also to No.10, the Ministry of Defence, Cabinet Office and the Secret Intelligence Service, but not to British Airways.

BA149 landed at Kuwait City at 01:13 GMT. Around 45 minutes later Kuwait City airport was closed and BA149 was unable to leave. Its passengers and crew were subsequently held hostage by the Iraqis, with the last hostages released in December 1990.

The Government has always condemned the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the suffering that followed and the mistreatment of those aboard BA149. The responsibility for these events and the mistreatment of those passengers and crew lies entirely with the Government of Iraq at the time.

The files show that in the call to the Resident Clerk, the British ambassador in Kuwait was unclear whether the Iraqi move across the border was a limited or larger incursion. At that point, the evidence in the files suggests that it was not possible to say with certainty what was happening. Similarly, the Resident Clerk in the FCO would have had no knowledge of the timing of flights into Kuwait. At the time there appeared to have been no formal arrangements by which information about such events could be passed from the FCO to airlines or the Department of Transport. A procedure to deal with situations like this now exists involving Government and the airline industry.

There was also speculation at the time and since that the flight was used to carry members of UK Special Forces. The files are consistent with the then Minister for Europe's statement in April 2007 that 'the Government at the time did not attempt in any way to exploit the flight by any means whatever' (Hansard 2007, vol. 459, col.1217).

The call made by HMA Kuwait has never been publicly disclosed or acknowledged until today. These files show that the existence of the call was not revealed to Parliament and the public. This failure was unacceptable. As the current Secretary of State, I apologise to the House for this, and I express my deepest sympathy to those who were detained and mistreated.

Sub Judice: International Military Services Ltd

[HLWS399]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: I wish to make a Statement on the sub judice rule. The Lord Speaker has been advised that there are active legal proceedings in the High Court between International Military Services Ltd and Iran's Ministry of Defence. Last week in another place, Mr Speaker exercised his discretion to waive the strict application of the sub judice rule in respect of this matter and its connection to the detention of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe. Given the wish of certain noble Lords to table Questions for Written Answer on related matters, the Lord Speaker is exercising the discretion given to the Chair to waive the strict application of the sub judice rule to allow full reference to those proceedings as they concern issues of national importance.

The Lord Speaker will make an oral statement to the House on this matter before any relevant proceedings in the Chamber or Grand Committee. A debate on the detention of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe is expected to take place on Thursday 2 December on a motion in the name of Lord Collins of Highbury.

Whitelee Hydrogen Project

[HLWS396]

Lord Callanan: My Rt hon Friend the Minister of State for Energy, Clean Growth and Climate Change (Greg Hands) has today made the following statement:

I wish to update the House that today my Department has announced funding of £9.4 million for a first-of-a-kind new hydrogen project at the Whitelee onshore windfarm – the UK’s largest - in Glasgow.

The project will look to produce hydrogen for storing energy and providing zero-carbon fuel as the country shifts to a clean energy future, and support Glasgow’s ambition to become net zero by 2030.

Developed by ITM Power and BOC, in conjunction with Scottish Power’s Hydrogen division, the state-of-the-art facility will be able to produce enough green hydrogen per day – 2.5 to 4 tonnes – that, once stored, could provide the equivalent of enough zero-carbon fuel for 225 buses travelling to and from Glasgow and Edinburgh each day. A 10MW electrolyser, to be developed and manufactured at ITM Power’s Sheffield factory, will be co-located at the Whitelee windfarm. The electrolyser is expected to be the largest deployed to date.

This project is subject to planning permission, and final investment decisions from the organisations involved, expected by Summer 2022 with start of construction.

In addition, my Department is also supporting the development of hydrogen skills and standards for heating, with an additional £2.25 million in new government funding. This funding, under the Net Zero Innovation Portfolio, will see the British Standards Institution (BSI) develop technical standards, and a consortium comprising Energy and Utility Skills and the Institution of Gas Engineers and Managers, will establish new standards and training specifications to facilitate the training of hydrogen gas installers.

As part of the UK Government’s plans to decarbonise the UK’s power system by 2035, it is accelerating the transition to clean, renewable energy - however, the unpredictable nature of renewables like wind power means that energy can be produced when it is not needed by the grid. Hydrogen has the ability to store energy for long periods of time and in large quantities making it a vital part of the green energy future, as it provides the opportunity to convert excess renewable energy into a fuel for use across the economy. This means hydrogen storage will play key role in the shift towards a fully decarbonised energy system, which is crucial to the UK reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Written Answers

Tuesday, 23 November 2021

Abdul Jalil al-Singace

Asked by *Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have discussed the imprisonment of activist Abduljalil al-Singace with the government of Bahrain; and if so, when was the most recent discussion. [HL3907]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We continue to monitor and raise the case of Dr Abduljalil al-Singace and others as necessary, with the Bahraini Government as well as with the oversight bodies.

Armenia: Genocide

Asked by *Baroness Cox*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to join the governments of the United States of America, Germany, France and Canada in formally recognising the Armenian Genocide of 1915–23. [HL4071]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The events of 1915-1916 were a tragic episode in the history of the Armenian people and they must never be forgotten. The UK Government of the day condemned the massacres and this Government fully endorses that view. It is the long-standing policy of the British Government that any judgement as to whether genocide has occurred is a matter for a competent national or international court, rather than for governments or non-judicial bodies.

Catheters: Urinary Tract Infections

Asked by *Baroness Masham of Ilton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the case for requiring Integrated Care Systems to record the number of catheter associated urinary tract infections acquired by patients while in (1) hospital, and (2) community care facilities. [HL3584]

Lord Kamall: The UK Health Security Agency undertakes surveillance of bloodstream infections in hospital and community care facilities. This includes information on the infection source through National Health Service acute trusts, which will be part of integrated care systems, reporting infection cases. If a urinary source is identified, further information is requested around urinary catheterisation.

Children: Protection

Asked by *Lord Storey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of any potential child protection issues

as a result of primary school age children being put in unregistered schools. [HL4206]

Baroness Barran: The Department for Education regulates independent schools in England. Independent schools must be registered with the department, are required to meet the independent school standards (ISS), are subject to regular inspection to check that they are meeting the ISS and can be subject to regulatory and enforcement action where they fail to meet the ISS. The ISS require independent schools to have effective safeguarding and child protection arrangements.

Unregistered independent schools are unregulated and the department has no assurance that they are meeting the independent school standards. They therefore represent a significant safeguarding risk.

Conducting an unregistered independent school is a criminal offence under section 96 of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The Department for Education, Ofsted and the Crown Prosecution Service work together to investigate suspected unregistered independent schools and, where appropriate, prosecute those found operating them in line with department's policy statement. The policy statement, 'Prosecuting unregistered independent schools', is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulating-independent-schools>.

Where a suspected unregistered independent school is investigated and Ofsted find safeguarding, child protection or health and safety risks, other statutory authorities are informed to ensure they can also take appropriate action.

China: Taiwan

Asked by *Lord Dodds of Duncairn*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent discussions they have had with NATO partners about China's policy towards Taiwan. [HL3874]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Her Majesty's Government considers the Taiwan issue one to be settled peacefully by the people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait through constructive dialogue. The UK Government is in regular contact with like-minded partners on our shared priorities.

Asked by *Lord Dodds of Duncairn*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of the United States of America about the defence of Taiwan following the statement on 21 October by President Biden that the United States has a "commitment" to defend Taiwan. [HL3875]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Her Majesty's Government considers the Taiwan issue one to be settled peacefully by the people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait through constructive dialogue. The UK Government is in regular contact with the US Government on our shared priorities. We underscored the importance of peace

and stability across the Taiwan Strait alongside the US and other partners in the G7 Foreign and Development Ministers' communique in May and G7 Leaders' communique in June.

Coronavirus: Vaccination

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the local variations in delays to people in all eligible groups receiving the COVID-19 booster vaccination. [HL3445]

Lord Kamall: The Department and the National Health Service continue to monitor the pace of the COVID-19 booster vaccination programme and work closely with regional teams to ensure those eligible have timely access to appointments. The NHS assesses any potential delays to the programme, including between different local areas.

The National Booking Service has now been updated to allow those eligible to pre-book their booster vaccination five months after their second dose. As of 13 November 2021, more than 12.6 million people in the United Kingdom had received their booster vaccination or third dose, helping to ensure the vital protection is maintained over the winter months.

Cryptocurrencies and Financial Services: Regulation

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to create a new regulatory framework for (1) crypto-asset regulation, and (2) open finance. [HL3913]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Government launched a consultation on its regulatory approach to cryptoassets and stablecoins earlier this year. The government's proposed approach would make sure cryptoassets known as stablecoins meet the same high standards we expect of other payment methods. The Government is considering responses and will outline next steps shortly.

In relation to other forms of cryptoassets, the Government has taken a series of actions to protect consumers, ensure market integrity and support innovation. Last year the Government consulted on a proposal to bring certain cryptoassets into financial promotions regulation. This would ensure that relevant cryptoasset promotions are held to the same high standards for fairness, clarity and accuracy that exist in the financial services industry. The Government will issue its response shortly. The Government has also launched a new anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing regime for cryptoassets.

Regarding Open Finance, the Government recognises that increased data-sharing has the potential to offer

significant benefits to consumers by improving access to products and services that better meet their needs.

Following a consultation in September 2020, the Government announced plans to bring forward 'Smart Data' legislation to enable the Government to mandate data-sharing across sectors when Parliamentary time allows.

David Amess

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to convene a meeting between the College of Policing and religious leaders following the murder of Sir David Amess MP. [HL3882]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Following the murder of Sir David Amess MP, the College of Policing and police leaders have welcomed engagement with faith, community leaders or others who have concerns about guidance for police officers related to the preservation and security of crime scenes, to understand their views and consider possible next steps on this issue.

The Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, His Eminence Cardinal Vincent Nichols and Metropolitan Police Commissioner Dame Cressida Dick established a joint group to consider whether any changes are required to the guidance issued to officers faced with questions of access to crime scenes related to traumatic violence.

The joint group has begun its work, led by the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) lead for homicide investigation, Metropolitan Police Deputy Assistant Commissioner Stuart Cundy, and involving representatives from the Catholic Church, the College of Policing and relevant policing leads.

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: ThomasLloyd

Asked by Lord Lamont of Lerwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what criteria they used in developing their proposal to invest up to £25 million in the ThomasLloyd Energy Impact Asian renewable energy investment trust; and whether those criteria included an assessment of the number of such trusts that are already established. [HL3885]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The ThomasLloyd Energy Impact Trust proposal was assessed against the following 'Mobilising Institutional Capital in Public Markets' (MOBILIST) Competition criteria: i) scalability; ii) replicability; iii) commercial viability; iv) additionality; v) feasibility; vi) credibility. Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's assessment of the investment trust universe currently listed on the London market is that there are presently no products with exclusive exposure to renewables in lower-middle and low-income countries, such as those comprising the ThomasLloyd portfolio.

Asked by Lord Lamont of Lerwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether their proposed investment of up to £25 million in the ThomasLloyd Energy Impact Asian renewable energy investment trust has been approved by the accounting officer of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. [HL3886]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: All investments made by Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) under the Mobilist programme to support Competition participants, including the ThomasLloyd Energy Impact Trust, are subject to prior review and approval by both FCDO's Finance and International Finance Division.

Asked by Lord Lamont of Lerwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office launched a tender process before proposing an investment of up to £25 million in the ThomasLloyd Energy Impact Asian renewable energy investment trust. [HL3887]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The decision in principle to invest in the ThomasLloyd Energy Impact Trust is the outcome of an open competition. The 'Mobilising Institutional Capital in Public Markets' (MOBILIST) Competition was launched at a public event on 8th February 2021 and was publicised via HMG's website and through social media. All Expressions of Interest were subject to initial assessment and increasing levels of analysis and due diligence as the competition progressed. At each stage of the competition participants' proposals were evaluated against the same pre-defined selection criteria.

Gambling

Asked by Baroness Davidson of Lundin Links

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many times (1) ministers, and (2) officials, from the department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport have met representatives of the gambling industry since June 2020; and what was the nature of those discussions. [HL3868]

Asked by Baroness Davidson of Lundin Links

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many times (1) ministers, and (2) officials, from the department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport have met representatives of the gambling reform groups or survivors of gambling harm (a) in person, and (b) through video call, since June 2020; and what was the nature of those discussions. [HL3871]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: Ministers and officials have regular meetings with the industry and other gambling stakeholders to support ongoing work and policy development. There has also been a wide-ranging series of meetings to support the ongoing Gambling Act

Review which was launched in December 2020 with a Call for Evidence.

Records of ministerial meetings are published quarterly and are available on gov.uk. The meetings with the gambling industry and its representatives have covered a very wide range of issues, for instance the impact of Covid-19 closures on the land-based industry and the measures the Government was taking to support the economy, measures the industry is taking to make gambling safer, and industry evidence on the Act Review. A number of these have also been introductory meetings with new Ministers.

Officials in the gambling policy team have had around sixty meetings with industry in that period covering the above topics, particularly the impact of Covid-19, and also other areas such as animal welfare in horse and greyhound racing, the implications of Brexit and supply chain disruption, and delivery of previous commitments made by industry, such as the £100m to support treatment over four years.

Ministers have met a wide range of non-industry gambling stakeholders over the same period. This has included six meetings with gambling harm campaign groups or people with personal experience of gambling harm (including roundtables with many individuals or organisations present), thirteen meetings with parliamentarians campaigning for reform, and three meetings with gambling researchers and education and treatment providers. We do not have a record of which meetings were conducted remotely or in person.

Officials in the gambling policy team have had over one hundred further meetings with non-industry gambling related stakeholders since June 2020. This has included eleven with campaign groups or people with personal experience, thirty three with those working primarily on gambling research, seven with those primarily related to gambling harm education, seventeen with treatment providers for gambling related harm, and three meetings with think-tanks. Many of these meetings were in connection with the Gambling Act Review, discussing individuals' or groups' priorities and the evidence they presented.

Asked by Baroness Davidson of Lundin Links

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people were hospitalised in England as a result of gambling in each of the last five years. [HL3873]

Lord Kamall: The information is not available in the format requested. There are a very small number of patients identified as being admitted to hospital through gambling-related diagnoses as the primary diagnosis which NHS Digital publishes in an online format.

However, gambling will often be recorded as a secondary diagnosis which may be a contributory factor towards another diagnosis. In many cases patients will present in through accident and emergency settings. However, data on such patients is not collected in the format requested.

Gambling: Death

Asked by *Baroness Davidson of Lundin Links*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many deaths related to gambling harm were recorded in Great Britain in each of the last five years. [HL3934]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: The Ministry of Justice publishes annual coroner statistics which include all short form and narrative conclusions such as accident or misadventure, open and suicide.

However, the statistics do not include the motivating factor behind the deaths as it is beyond the coroner's jurisdiction to determine why someone died. The coroner's statutory role is limited to determining the identity of the deceased; how, when and where they died; and any information needed to register the death.

Gambling: Health Services

Asked by *Baroness Davidson of Lundin Links*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people have (1) been referred, and (2) self-referred, to NHS gambling addiction services in England in each of the last five years. [HL3935]

Lord Kamall: The information requested is not held centrally.

Gambling: Research

Asked by *Baroness Davidson of Lundin Links*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of problem gamblers in Great Britain; and what research they have undertaken to form this estimate. [HL3937]

Asked by *Baroness Davidson of Lundin Links*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of children in Great Britain who gamble regularly; and what research they have undertaken to form this estimate. [HL3938]

Asked by *Baroness Davidson of Lundin Links*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what impact assessments on the societal cost of problem gambling they have undertaken to inform their proposed white paper on gambling reform. [HL3939]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: As set out in Public Health England's evidence review on gambling-related harms, the estimated problem gambling rate for England was 0.5% in 2018, or around 245,600 people, with figures drawn from the Health Survey. The most recent combined Health Survey figure for adults in Great Britain was 0.6%, or approximately 340,000 people, in 2016. To supplement the Health Surveys, the Gambling Commission carries out a quarterly survey by telephone which includes a shortened problem gambling screening. For the year to

September 2021 this estimated a problem gambling rate of 0.3%.

According to the Commission's [Young People and Gambling 2019](#) report, 11% of 11-16 year olds said they had spent their own money on gambling activities in the seven days prior to being surveyed. This was a reduction from 14% in 2018 and 23% in 2011.

Public Health England's evidence review also looked at the available evidence on the direct, indirect and intangible costs of gambling harm to society. It estimated an annual cost of approximately £1.27 billion associated with people who are problem or at-risk gamblers, including £619.2 million of intangible costs associated with suicide.

Gambling: Taxation

Asked by *Baroness Davidson of Lundin Links*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of how much tax the Exchequer received from gambling-related activities in each of the last five years. [HL3870]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) publishes statistics relating to gambling related activities for Corporation Tax, Betting and Gaming Duties and VAT. For Income Tax, information for gambling related activities is not available.

Immigration Controls: Biometrics

Asked by *Lord Green of Deddington*

To ask Her Majesty's Government which countries' passport holders are able to use e-gates at UK borders when coming to the UK for short stays; what arrangements they have made to ensure that such people (1) are not taking paid employment whilst in the UK, and (2) do not stay longer than their permitted six months; and what assessment they have made of whether the system has been abused so far. [HL3881]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The use of e-Gates is a secure and efficient way of crossing the border.

In addition to British and Irish citizens aged 12 and over, who can use e-Gates to enter the UK for any purpose, citizens aged 12 and over of the countries named in the Schedule to the Immigration (Leave to Enter and Remain) Order 2000, as amended, are eligible to seek entry to the UK using an e-Gate for the purpose of short visits. The list of countries can be found online under the 'Amendment of the Immigration (Leave to Enter and Remain) Order 2000' on the legislation.gov.uk website.

We also operate the Registered Traveller service, where regular, compliant visitors to the UK and those with long term entry clearance can apply for membership which allows them to seek entry using an e-Gate once they have passed initial checks and been examined by a Border Force officer (BFO) on their next entry to the UK. The list of countries whose citizens are currently eligible to apply for membership of the RTS can be viewed on gov.uk

In terms of preventing illegal working and overstaying those who enter using an e-Gate and go on to work illegally or overstay will be identified in the same way as those who are granted leave to enter by an entry clearance officer or BFO.

We continue to monitor reports and trends of immigration abuse across the immigration system, including of illegal working and overstaying to ensure the immigration system continues to operate in the national interest.

Jerusalem: Palestinians

Asked by Baroness Janke

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations, if any, they have made to the government of Israel about the future status of Palestinians living in East Jerusalem, following the Supreme Court of Israel ruling that Palestinians living they will have "protected tenant" status for no more than two further generations. [HL3883]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Supreme Court 'protected tenant' proposal relates to an eviction case against four families resident in Sheikh Jarrah. We remain opposed to the eviction of Palestinians from their homes, and regularly make clear our concerns to the Israeli authorities and the Municipality of Jerusalem, both bilaterally and in co-operation with like-minded diplomatic partners. The Fourth Geneva Convention, which applies to all occupied territories, including East Jerusalem, prohibits demolitions or forced evictions absent military necessity. Our position on the status of Jerusalem has not changed: it should be determined in a negotiated settlement between the Israelis and the Palestinians, and should ultimately be the shared capital of the Israeli and Palestinian states.

Libya: Freezing of Assets

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the decision by the government of Malta to unfreeze Maltese bank accounts held by Libyan citizens, and (2) whether that decision is consistent with United Nations' resolutions on Libyan frozen assets. [HL3877]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: United Nations Security Council Resolution 1970 (2011) decided that all Member States shall freeze assets owned or controlled by individuals or entities listed by the Libya Sanctions Committee. The aim of the Libya asset freeze is to ensure that the frozen funds are preserved until such a time as they can be made available to, and for the benefit of, the people of Libya. Any amendments to the asset freeze will require consensus at the UN and will be judged against this goal.

Libya: IRA

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to obtain the support of the government of Libya in securing compensation for UK victims of Irish Republican Army terrorism sponsored by former Libyan president Colonel Muammar Gaddafi. [HL3876]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK Government reiterates its profound sympathy for UK victims of Qadhafi-sponsored Irish Republican Army (IRA) terrorism and indeed for all victims of the Troubles. As set out in the 23 March Written Ministerial Statement: <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2021-03-23/hcws874>, providing compensation for the actions of the Qadhafi regime, separate from the UK-funded support that has already been made available for victims of the Troubles, is the responsibility of the Libyan State. The UK continues to press the Libyan authorities to address the Libyan State's historic responsibility for the Qadhafi regime's support for the IRA, and has raised this issue at the highest levels of the Libyan Government.

Life Insurance: Foreign Companies

Asked by Lord Kilclooney

To ask Her Majesty's Government which organisation oversees firms which provide life insurance policies for persons in the UK. [HL3884]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and the Prudential Regulatory Authority (PRA) oversee firms which provide life insurance policies for those in the UK.

The Prudential Regulatory Authority (PRA), which is part of the Bank of England, promotes the safety and soundness of insurers, and the protection of policyholders. This includes arrangements for protecting customers in the event of an insurer failing, via the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) regulates the conduct of insurers, as well as more broadly the integrity of the UK's financial markets. The FCA also has an objective to secure an appropriate degree of protection for consumers.

Myanmar: Politics and Government

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken in response to the report by the Foreign Affairs Committee The UK Government's Response to the Myanmar Crisis, published on 16 July; and in particular the recommendation that the UK Government should increase (1) diplomatic, and (2) economic, pressure to reduce the violence committed against civilians in Burma. [HL3866]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is deeply concerned with the worsening situation in Myanmar. We continue to call publicly for a peaceful resolution to the crisis. In response to escalating violence in Chin and Sagaing, the UK convened the UN Security Council on 8 November. During that meeting we called on the military to exercise restraint and ensure the protection of civilians. On 15 October, the British Embassy in Yangon released a statement urging the military to end their campaign of violence and flagging our concern for communities, their livelihoods, property and places of worship.

The UK has played a leading international role in coordinating targeted sanctions against the military regime. Since the coup, we have announced seven tranches of sanctions, which have targeted the junta's ruling body and its military leadership, as well as its key commercial interests. In addition, the UK's trade review has suspended trade promotion in Myanmar and strengthened advice to British businesses on avoiding exposure to the military. The UK is considering further targeted actions against the regime.

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken in response to the Foreign Affairs Committee report *The UK Government's Response to the Myanmar Crisis*, published on 16 July; and in particular, the recommendation that Tatmadaw's supply of arms are cut off in order to end their violence against civilians in Burma. [[HL3867](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is a longstanding supporter of an arms embargo on Myanmar. We are clear that countries should not sell arms to the Myanmar military. The UK helped secure and strengthen a comprehensive EU arms embargo on Myanmar following the 2017 Rohingya crisis. Since we left the EU, we have transitioned this into domestic law. We are working closely with partners to coordinate pressure on those who sell arms to the military, and have used our leadership role at the G7 and UN to this end. On 5 May, the UK secured a G7 Foreign and Development Ministers' Meeting Communiqué that committed G7 members to continue to prevent the supply of arms and technical assistance to the military. The G7 Leaders' Communiqué of 13 June reaffirmed G7 unity on pursuing additional measures should they prove necessary. On 18 June, the UK worked with partners to deliver a UN General Assembly Resolution which urged member states to prevent the flow of arms to Myanmar.

NHS and Social Services

Asked by Baroness Cavendish of Little Venice

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take to establish a long-term workforce strategy for the NHS and social care; and what plans they have to present an annual report to both Houses on (1) health, and (2) care. [[HL3931](#)]

Lord Kamall: In July 2021, we commissioned Health Education England (HEE) to review long term strategic trends for the health and social care workforce. This will ensure we have the right, skills, values and behaviours across NHS and social care for the next 15 years. This will also include registered professionals working in social care.

The Health and Care Bill includes a statutory duty on the Secretary of State to produce a report describing the system in place for assessing and meeting the workforce needs of the health system in England. NHS England and HEE must assist in the preparation of this report if requested to do so by the Secretary of State. This report is required to be published at a minimum of every five years.

The Government recently announced at least £500 million over three years to support and develop the social care workforce, fund initiatives to support mental health and wellbeing and introduce further reforms to improve recruitment. We will work with care users, providers and other partners to develop more detail on the plans for reform of adult social care and publish further detail in a white paper for reform later this year.

Organised Crime

Asked by Baroness Eaton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that the UK's cash network is not exploited by transnational organised crime groups. [[HL3782](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The UK is internationally recognised as having some of the strongest controls worldwide for tackling money laundering (including through the use of cash) and bringing to justice those who seek to use or hide the proceeds of crime. These include Global Human Rights sanctions, Unexplained Wealth Orders, as well as our Economic Crime and Asset Recovery Action Plans.

The Home Office continues to work with our partners across Government and Law Enforcement to bring together the policy and operational response to Cash Based Money Laundering under one umbrella, with the overall objective to make the UK a harder place for criminals to launder cash in and through the UK and deter the use of criminal cash.

Economic crime knows no borders, and the actions that we take domestically need to be complemented at an international level. As noted in the Integrated Review and the new Atlantic Charter, we are working closely with the US to fight corruption and illicit finance. The UK-UAE Partnership to Tackle Illicit Financial Flows, recently announced by the Home Secretary, is another concrete example of joint international efforts to tackle the threat from dirty money and the serious and organised crime that it enables.

We have capitalised on the UK's G7 Presidency to strengthen the global response to corruption and illicit finance to reduce the space to hide dirty money.

Peers

Asked by Lord Truscott

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker whether there has been consideration of a prohibition on Members of the House of Lords (1) acting as political or parliamentary consultants, and (2) working for lobbying firms. [HL4170]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: There has been extensive consideration of this issue over many years. As long ago as 2009 the Leader's Group on the Code of Conduct proposed the prohibition of parliamentary consultancies, and this was incorporated in the Guide to the Code of Conduct that was agreed by the House on 17 March 2010. Since that time the rules on consultancies and lobbying have been regularly updated, following recommendations by the responsible committees.

Paragraphs 9(c) and 9(d) of the Code of Conduct say that members:

- must never accept or agree to accept any financial inducement as an incentive or reward for exercising parliamentary influence; and
- must not seek to profit from membership of the House by accepting or agreeing to accept payment or other incentive or reward in return for providing parliamentary advice or services.

The details of these restrictions are set out in more detail from paragraph 15 onwards in the Guide to the Code of Conduct. Members may also seek the advice of the Registrar of Lords' Interests.

The latest edition of the [Code of Conduct and the Guide to the Code](#) was ordered to be published on 28 October 2021 and is available on the parliamentary website and from the Printed Paper Office.

Prerogative of Mercy: Northern Ireland

Asked by Baroness Hoey

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Royal Pardons have been issued to people in Northern Ireland in the last 25 years. [HL3801]

Lord Caine: The Royal Prerogative of Mercy (RPM) was used 16 times in relation to persons convicted and sentenced for terrorist offences in Northern Ireland between 2000 and 2002; seven times in 2000, six times in 2001, and three times in 2002. It was used to shorten (that is not waive or remove) sentences in relation to individuals who, for technical reasons, were not eligible for the early release scheme established under the Northern Ireland (Sentences) Act 1998.

The RPM was used once in 1998 and once in 1999 in non-terrorism related cases in Northern Ireland. In one case, an individual was granted the RPM following

assistance that person gave to the authorities (reduction in sentence for such assistance is now provided for on a statutory basis under the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005). In the other, the RPM was used to commute a portion of a sentence for a soldier who spent time under close military arrest for an offence prior to conviction. Had this person been a civilian, such time (equivalent to being on remand) would have been deducted from the sentence, but there was no statutory provision for this at the time in relation to close military arrest.

Whilst the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland is responsible for recommending the exercising of the RPM for terrorism-related cases in Northern Ireland, since the devolution of policing and justice in 2010, responsibility for making recommendations for the RPM in all other cases lies with the Minister of Justice in Northern Ireland.

The Northern Ireland Office does not hold complete records for 1996 or 1997 due to record retention policies.

Asked by Baroness Hoey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to publish a list of names of all those who received a Royal Pardon in Northern Ireland in the last 25 years. [HL3802]

Lord Caine: There are no statutory requirements relating to the publication of pardons granted under the Royal Prerogative of Mercy (RPM).

When it is used to shorten, rather than to waive or remove sentences, it is the convention of successive governments not to publish the use of the Royal Prerogative. Its use in Northern Ireland between 2000 and 2002 was in line with the early release scheme established under the Northern Ireland (Sentences) Act 1998: the names of those who benefited from the early release scheme were also not published. The names of those who received the RPM in relation to terrorist convictions in Northern Ireland were made public in the judgement issued in the case of Rodgers [2014] NIQB 79.

Prison Sentences

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people are in prison serving (1) a life sentence, (2) an Extended Determinate Sentence, and (3) an Imprisonment for Public Protection sentence, by ethnicity. [HL3861]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: The number of prisoners serving Extended Determinate Sentences, Imprisonment for Public Protection sentences, and Life sentences, by ethnicity, as at 30 September 2021, in England and Wales, is shown in the following table:

	<i>Extended Determinate Sentence</i>	<i>Imprisonment for Public Protection</i>	<i>Life Sentence</i>
Asian or Asian British	365	84	591

	<i>Extended Determinate Sentence</i>	<i>Imprisonment for Public Protection</i>	<i>Life Sentence</i>
Black or Black British	794	216	1,187
Mixed	308	66	356
Other ethnic group	83	5	71
White	4,700	1,285	4,738
Not stated	15	3	20
Unrecorded	9	2	8

Note: These figures do not include recalled prisoners

Data sources and quality

The figures in this table have been drawn from administrative IT systems which, as with any large scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing.

Source: Prison NOMIS

Statistics on the ethnicity of the prison population are routinely published as part of the quarterly Offender Management Statistics on Gov.uk - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly>

Prisoners: Mental Health

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many (1) men, and (2) women, have been assessed by the screening tool for psychological maturity in each year since 2017 for every prison in England and Wales. [HL3860]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: HM Prison and Probation Service use a system called the Offender Assessment System (OASys) for assessing the risks and needs of an offender. The system is designed to assess how likely an offender is to re-offend, identify offending-related needs, and assess the risk of serious harm and risks to the individual and the community. It also links the assessment to the supervision or sentence plan, along with any indication of the need for further specialist assessments, including changes during the period of supervision.

Automatic screening data is held on the segmentation tool for those young adult men aged up to 25 who have a full OASys assessment completed. This does not include data for anyone without a full OASys, on remand, or aged over 25. There is not currently any maturity screening available for women.

Records for screening are held locally – there is no national system that collates the data. Data is only available from 2019 to present as the tool was not launched until July 2019. 89% of prisons holding young adults are currently using the screening tool.

The table below shows the data on the numbers of prisoners who have been screened as having low psychosocial maturity. These figures are not cumulative, but representative of the population on that date.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Population of young adult males</i>	<i>Population which could be assessed (those with a full OASys)</i>	<i>Number screened as having low psychosocial maturity</i>
31/03/2019	14,716	Not available	8,856
31/03/2020	15,340	10,445	6,400
31/03/2021	13,695	9,085	5,875

Railways

Asked by Lord Bradshaw

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much the most recent rise in rail fares affected profits from ticket sales; and what assessment, if any, they have made of recent changes in demand for rail travel. [HL3925]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: No assessment has been made of the proportion of industry revenues which can be attributable to the March 2021 fares changes. While fares changes impact total industry revenue there are also a number of other elements that impact it, including most notably at the moment the pandemic's impact on passenger travel.

Passenger demand fell during the pandemic and is slowly recovering. We are working with the rail industry to develop a number of recovery initiatives, for example we have introduced new flexible season tickets across England this year to help encourage passengers to return to the railway.

Asked by Lord Bradshaw

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to make rail travel more attractive. [HL3928]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail, published May 2021, contains a number of passenger-focused reforms that will bring in improved services and encourage the use of rail. The Spending Review 2021 confirmed £5.7bn of funding over three years to support essential rail services, and will see Government investing £360m in modernising ticketing and retailing systems, delivering a major overhaul to the way in which rail travel is bought and paid for.

We are also working with the rail industry to develop a number of recovery initiatives, for example we have introduced new flexible season tickets across England this year to help encourage passengers to return to the railway.

Railways: Fares

Asked by Lord Bradshaw

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of extending the 'off peak' period for rail travel to Fridays to increase the number of people travelling for leisure. [HL3927]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: We are working with the rail industry to develop a number of recovery initiatives, focused on restoring passenger confidence in travelling by rail. This includes assessing a variety of options that can be deployed at a time that would maximise their impact.

Railways: Season Tickets

Asked by Lord Bradshaw

To ask Her Majesty's Government, given the decreased demand for rail travel during the COVID-19 pandemic, what plans they have, if any, to change flexible season tickets to increase uptake. [HL3926]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Department will conduct a 12 month review of the flexible season tickets to evaluate their impact. We expect the review to report in the Summer of 2022.

Refugees: Afghanistan

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have reviewed the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme; and if not, what plans they have to conduct such a review. [HL3898]

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what criteria they use to select individuals for resettlement under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme. [HL3899]

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to use the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme as a model for the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme. [HL3900]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government has committed to welcoming around 5,000 people in the first year of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) - and up to 20,000 over the coming years. The ACRS will be partly modelled on the successful Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS), which resettled over 20,000 refugees fleeing the Syrian conflict, over a seven-year period from 2014 to 2021. Further information on the eligibility, prioritisation and referral of people for the ACRS is set out under the Afghanistan resettlement and immigration policy statement published on gov.uk on 13 September.

The VPRS is now closed. The selection criteria used for the VPRS is replicated for the UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS), this information is available on gov.uk.

Evaluation of the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS), and also the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme (VCRS), is ongoing. The UK Government's strategy for evaluating the delivery and effectiveness of the VPRS and VCRS is outlined on gov.uk.

The VPRS was also twice inspected by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration, in 2018 and 2020, with a number of recommendations accepted and implemented. Details of the inspections, and report overviews can also be found on gov.uk.

Sewage: Waste Disposal

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to stipulate a reduction in the volume of sewage that water companies can pump into waterways. [HL3912]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Earlier this year the Government published a new draft set of strategic priorities for the water industry's financial regulator Ofwat. In this publication Government set out its expectation that water companies must take steps to "significantly reduce the frequency and volume of sewage discharges from storm overflows".

The Environment Act then placed this direction on a statutory footing, setting a duty for water companies to achieve a progressive reduction in the adverse impacts of discharges from Storm Overflows. Defra intends to set out the level of ambition expected by this in due course.

Small Businesses: Compensation

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to increase the number of (1) resolved, and (2) settled, cases under the small business compensation scheme. [HL3914]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Business Banking Resolution Service (BBRS), which launched on 15 February 2021, offers a free, independent service which is designed to settle unresolved complaints that are not eligible for the FOS. The Government has always been clear that it welcomes the BBRS.

However, it is an independent non-governmental body, and this independence is vital to its role. Its credibility, authority and value to SMEs would be undermined if it were possible for the Government to intervene in its decision-making or detailed operational matters. As a result of its independence, it would be inappropriate for the Government to comment on cases taken before the BBRS or potential changes that could be made to the BBRS and its eligibility criteria in future.

Social Media: Journalism

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to introduce guidelines for social media companies on what counts as journalism in the Online Safety Bill. [HL3973]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: The draft Online Safety Bill requires the highest risk, highest reach in-scope service providers ('Category 1' services) to safeguard journalistic content. This is defined as UK-linked content that is generated for the purposes of journalism. As part of this duty, Category 1 services must specify in their terms of service the method by which they identify content as being created for the purposes of journalism. In doing so, companies will be expected to consider the ordinary English meaning of journalism, the underlying purpose of protecting freedom of expression and information, and relevant case law. Ofcom, the online safety regulator, will produce codes of practice to assist companies in complying with their duties to protect journalism.

Syria: Politics and Government

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they recognise Bashar al-Assad as the head of the government of Syria. [HL3903]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK's position remains unchanged; the Assad regime has lost its legitimacy due to its atrocities against the Syrian people. Despite the military successes of the regime and its external supporters, we do not believe that Assad is capable of delivering a lasting peace in Syria. We firmly believe that United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254 offers a clear path out of the conflict which protects the rights of all Syrians, in which civil society, women and minorities must play a role. We remain committed to highlighting the appalling violations of international humanitarian law in Syria and to pursuing accountability for the most serious crimes.

Syria: Sanctions

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government why they removed five Syrian individuals from the UK Sanctions List on 30 September. [HL3902]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Following a routine review of the UK's autonomous sanctions, on 30 September 2021 the FCDO revoked the designation of five Syrian individuals, as the listings were no longer compliant with regulations. This does not signal a change in our Syria policy and is not a sign of rapprochement with the regime.

Terrorism: Northern Ireland

Asked by Baroness Hoey

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Supreme Court judgment on 13 May 2020 in the case of R vs Adams (Appellant) (Northern Ireland) which related to the validity of an interim custody order made in 1973, (1) whether compensation has been paid to

Gerard Adams, and if so how much; (2) how many claims have been made by others to have their convictions overturned; (3) how many claims for compensation have been lodged with the Northern Ireland Office; and (4) how many of these have been settled and paid, and for what total amount. [HL3800]

Lord Caine: There has been no compensation paid to Gerard Adams relating to litigation against the Northern Ireland Office.

There have been two other appeals to have convictions overturned that have been allowed. There are a further two who have filed applications for leave to appeal, which have not yet been dealt with.

There are a number of internment-related civil claims against the Northern Ireland Office. The claims are asking for compensation on the basis of the claimants' view that they were unlawfully detained on a similar basis to Mr Adams.

None of these have been settled and the vast majority have not progressed far beyond the pre-action stage.

Trade Agreements: Australia and New Zealand

Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Grimstone of Boscobel on 4 November (HL3304), when the Trade and Agriculture Commission (TAC) will advise on the free trade agreements negotiated between the UK and (1) Australia, and (2) New Zealand; and whether the TAC will provide their advice before the agreements are finalised. [HL3816]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: As agreed during the passage of the Trade Act 2021, the Trade and Agriculture Commission (TAC) will consider whether the relevant provisions of an FTA are consistent with the maintenance of UK levels of statutory protection in relation to: animal and plant life or health; animal welfare; and the environment. In line with this, the TAC will consider the agreement after it has been signed but prior to it be laid before Parliament under the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act. The TAC will not advise on policy or live negotiations.

The TAC will commence its scrutiny of the free trade agreements negotiated between the UK and (1) Australia, and (2) New Zealand following signature of these agreements. The TAC will then have a minimum of three months to prepare its advice.

World Heritage Sites: Liverpool

Asked by Lord Storey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of Liverpool losing its UNESCO World Heritage Status; and the reasons of UNESCO's decision. [HL3967]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: The removal of Liverpool from the UNESCO World Heritage List is a matter of regret to Her Majesty's Government. My predecessor worked closely with the Mayor of Liverpool and the City Council to defend its status. However, it was clear that, following the development within the site since it was placed on the UNESCO danger list in 2012, some members of the Committee were persuaded that the Outstanding Universal Value of the site had been diminished to the extent that they voted in favour of its removal from the list. The full stated reasons given for the decision of the World Heritage Committee are set out in [the record of the meeting on UNESCO's website](#).

Despite the loss of Liverpool's World Heritage status, it remains a UNESCO City of Music, a beacon to the world

for its culture and heritage, and a tourism destination for visitors from around the world.

Zuhair Ebrahim Jassim Abdullah Abas

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have discussed the death sentence of Zuhair Ibrahim Jassim Abdullah with the government of Bahrain; and if so, when was the most recent discussion. [HL3908]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Ministers and our officials have consistently reiterated the UK's opposition to the use of the death penalty, in all circumstances, with the Bahraini Government.

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