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**Wednesday
26 January 2022**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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[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/>

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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>
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 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
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

Wednesday, 26 January 2022

Help To Claim

[HLWS547]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: My honourable Friend, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Welfare Delivery (David Rutley MP) has made the following Written Statement:

The Department for Work and Pensions has announced today, on gov.uk, the outcome of the Future Support Offer grant competition. The link to the announcement can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/funding-boost-to-citizens-advice-to-deliver-help-to-claim-universal-credit-support>

Citizens Advice, in partnership with Citizens Advice Scotland, were successful and will deliver independent support from April 2022 following a further £21.3 million investment. The provision will continue to cover England, Scotland and Wales for 12 months, and ensures that free confidential and impartial support is available to help people make a new Universal Credit claim and manage their claim, up to receiving their first correct payment.

The ‘Future Support Offer’ name, used during the competition to indicate that DWP was looking for future provision, will revert to ‘Help to Claim’. The decision to retain the name reflects the fact that ‘Help to Claim’ is a recognisable brand, both to people who will be using the support and to the staff who will be providing that support.

Since April 2019, ‘Help to Claim’ has supported over half a million people, with 9 in 10 people rating their overall experience as good or very good and would recommend it to friends and family.

From April 2022, the support will be provided through telephony and digital channels. For those individuals who are unable to access support via these channels, they will be able to go to their local jobcentre, where jobcentre staff will identify the right support to meet their needs. This support is already in place and available to those individuals who choose to seek support from the Department directly in making a claim to Universal Credit.

The Department is committed to providing the best possible support for all our claimants, including the most vulnerable in society, in both making and maintaining their claim.

Special Health Authority for Independent Maternity Investigations

[HLWS546]

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

I wish to inform the house of the Government’s plans to establish a Special Health Authority under secondary legislation to continue the Maternity Investigation Programme which is currently a function the Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch.

Plans to establish the Health Services Safety Investigations Body as a Non-Departmental Public Body are contained in the Health and Care Bill 2021. The Health Services Safety Investigations Body will take forward the work of the current Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch’s national programme once fully operational (expected to be April 2023). The scope of the Health Services Safety Investigations Body’s investigations in the Bill does not include the current Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch’s Maternity Investigations Programme. This is because conducting investigations under ‘safe space’ is a key element of the new Health Services Safety Investigations Body. The Maternity Investigation Programme investigations do not follow ‘safe space’ principles.

The Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch became responsible for conducting independent investigations relating to intrapartum stillbirth, early neonatal death, or severe brain injury diagnosed in the first seven days of life and also maternal deaths (approx. 1,000 every year) on 1 April 2018. In 2020-21, the Maternity Investigation Programme completed 1,024 reports and made more than 1,500 safety recommendations to individual NHS trusts addressing a wide array of issues.

The Government considers that independent, standardised, family-centred investigations should continue beyond April 2023 once the new Health Services Safety Investigations Body is established. The new Special Health Authority will:

- provide independent, standardised, and family-focussed investigations of maternity cases that provide families with answers to their questions about why their loved ones died or were seriously injured;
- provide learning to the health system at local, regional and national level via reports for the purpose of improving clinical and safety practices in Trusts to prevent similar incidents and deaths occurring;
- analyse the incoming data from investigations to identify key trends and provide system-wide learning in these areas including identifying where improvements are being made or there is lack of improvement;
- be a system expert in standards for maternity investigations and support Trusts to improve local investigations; and
- collaborate with system partners to escalate safety concerns and share intelligence.

The Special Health Authority will be established for up to five years from 2022-23 to enable maximum learning to be achieved and to equip NHS Trusts with the expertise, resources, and capacity to take on maternity safety incident investigations in the future.

Learning from these investigations is key for meeting the Government’s commitment to ‘make the NHS the best

place in the world to give birth through personalised, high-quality support'; and our National Maternity Safety Ambition to halve the 2010 rates of stillbirths, neonatal and maternal deaths and brain injuries in babies occurring during or soon after birth by 2025.

Written Answers

Wednesday, 26 January 2022

Antimicrobials: Drug Resistance

Asked by *Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of antimicrobial resistance during the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL5366]

Lord Kamall: The UK Health Security Agency undertakes continuous surveillance for antimicrobial resistance (AMR). Data showed that the AMR burden increased annually between 2016 and 2019, before declining in 2020 at the beginning of the pandemic. Data for 2021 is still under review.

Care Homes: Derbyshire

Asked by *Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions, if any, they have had with Derbyshire County Council regarding the council's proposals to close care homes in the county. [HL5489]

Lord Kamall: We have had no such discussions. The commissioning of care and support services is a matter for local authorities, who are best placed to understand and plan for the care needs of their local populations. Under the Care Act 2014, local authorities are required to shape their local markets and ensure that people have a range of high-quality, sustainable, and person-centred care and support options available to them.

Providers entering and exiting, including changes to local authority provided services, is a normal part of a functioning market and local authorities should have appropriate plans in place to minimise any impacts.

Asked by *Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the provision of care homes in Derbyshire, and (2) proposals by Derbyshire County Council to close care homes in the county. [HL5540]

Lord Kamall: The commissioning of care and support services is a matter for local authorities, who are best placed to understand and plan for the care needs of their local populations. There are currently 271 active locations registered as care homes in the county of Derbyshire. Of these, nine are rated outstanding, 200 are rated as good, 52 are rated as requires improvement and seven are rated as inadequate. Three services do not currently have a rating.

No assessment has been made of the proposals by Derbyshire County Council.

Under the Care Act 2014, local authorities have a temporary duty to ensure people's needs for care and support continue to be met if a provider fails or exits the market due to business failure. This ensures that people

continue to receive the care and support they need if their adult social care provider is no longer able to carry on delivering services.

Coronavirus: Vaccination

Asked by *Lord Mendelsohn*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people who are immunocompromised or immunosuppressed have received a third dose of a COVID-19 vaccine in England to date. [HL4022]

Lord Kamall: The latest data available shows that between 1 September 2021 and 19 December 2021, 442,235 individuals identified as severely immunosuppressed received a third primary dose.

EGNOS: Finance

Asked by *Lord Berkeley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 28 April 2021 (HL15095), what financial contribution the EU requested for the UK to continue to access to the European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service Safety of Life service; how the request compared with the UK's previous contributions; how they assessed value for money in view of its impact on aviation; and whether they have any plans to renegotiate access to this service. [HL5379]

Lord Callanan: The UK sought to negotiate a service access agreement on the European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service (EGNOS) with the EU. However, the EU required participation in the programme along with the full associated costs of participation which would have equated to €30-€35 million per year. For all programmes under consideration, the Government was clear it would only participate where the terms were in the UK's interests, and in this case, it was not considered value for money. The negotiations on EGNOS concluded in December 2020 and there are no plans to reopen the discussions on this matter.

Energy: Prices

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to introduce an energy price cap for small businesses. [HL5370]

Lord Callanan: There are no plans to introduce an energy price cap for businesses. The price cap on domestic default variable tariffs was put in place to address the loyalty penalty and prevent consumers from being overcharged. There is a greater diversity of supply arrangements for businesses compared to the domestic sector. Businesses are therefore better placed to effectively procure goods and services for their business, including energy supply.

Environmental Protection

Asked by *Baroness McIntosh of Pickering*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when their Environment Principles Policy Statement will be published. [HL5497]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: We will publish the environmental principles draft policy statement as soon as possible, following the consultation we carried out last year. In the meantime, we are working closely with departments to support them in planning for implementing the duty to have due regard to the policy statement.

Foreign Companies: Property

Asked by *Lord Goodlad*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will bring in a public register of foreign owned properties; and if so, when. [HL5359]

Lord Callanan: As set out in the Written Ministerial Statement I made on 2nd November 2021, the Government remains committed to establishing a new beneficial ownership register of overseas entities that own UK property. The register will not include the details of the properties owned by the overseas entities, which are recorded at HM Land Registry. This register will help combat money laundering and achieve greater transparency in the UK property market. We will legislate when parliamentary time allows.

Health Professions: Pensions

Asked by *Lord Naseby*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will review their pension "abatement" rules for (1) nurses, (2) midwives, (3) physiotherapists, and (4) mental health officers, who wish to keep working due to the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL5503]

Lord Kamall: The pension measures in Section 45 of the Coronavirus Act 2020 allow retired and partially retired staff to return to work or increase their working commitments without the risk of having their pension benefits suspended.

Since March 2020, abatement of 'Special Class' members of the 1995 Section, including nurses, midwives and physiotherapists and mental health officers with the reserved right to retire at 55 years old with pension enhancements, has been suspended. Abatement recognises that 'Special Class' members have a significant benefit not available to other staff in the National Health Service. Once abatement is resumed, these staff can continue working for the NHS, typically at least half time. Other staff are not subject to abatement after taking their pension.

These measures are set to expire on 24 March 2022, with the NHS Pension Scheme rules returning to business as usual arrangements. The Department is reviewing this position.

Health Professions: Training

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to either (1) reimburse tuition fees, or (2) clear current student debt, for all nursing, midwifery and allied healthcare students affected by the removal of the NHS bursary. [HL5268]

Lord Kamall: There are no plans to do so. In September 2020, we introduced a non-repayable, training grant of £5,000 per academic year for eligible nursing, midwifery and allied health profession students studying pre-registration courses at English universities. We also made a further £3,000 available to support students with childcare costs and those studying a specialist subject. These grants are in addition to funding available through the Students Loan Company and through the NHS Learning Support Fund for travel expenses, accommodation expenses and exceptional hardship. We keep the funding arrangements for all National Health Service health professionals' education under review to ensure that students are appropriately supported.

High Rise Flats: Insulation

Asked by *Lord Leigh of Hurley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are aware of any instances where leaseholders are being denied reimbursement of completed cladding works due to the failure of the freeholder to apply for remediation; and if so, how many such situations are believed to exist. [HL5364]

Asked by *Lord Leigh of Hurley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take in situations where a building owner refuses to apply for government remediation for building safety issues for a qualifying high-rise building. [HL5365]

Lord Greenhalgh: The Government has been clear that leaseholders should not bear the costs for the remediation of unsafe cladding. We are aware of one unacceptable case where the building owner is refusing to accept government funding and reimburse their leaseholders. The Department is urgently working to resolve this to make sure that the building owner does right by their leaseholders and reimburses them.

Where a building owner does not wish to apply for government funding, they should fund remediation themselves or through warranty claims and litigation against those responsible for the installation of unsafe cladding.

House of Lords: Charging Points

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker what assessment has been made of the demand for installing electric vehicle charging points in the House of Lords car parks; what is the estimated cost of installing charging points; whether there are plans to install such charging points; and if so, when they are expected to be operational. [HL5378]

Lord Touhig: The Senior Deputy Speaker has asked me, as Chair of the Services Committee, to respond on his behalf. A survey of all members in May 2021 identified 33 members who at that time expected they would make use of an electric vehicle charging facility for the House of Lords. Work to date has not identified a final, fully costed and value for money approach. Further work to identify, approve and set a delivery timescale for such an approach is ongoing.

India: Christianity

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Bishop of Truro's independent review for the Foreign Secretary on the persecution of Christians, what discussions they have had with the government of India following attacks over the Christmas period in various Indian states on churches, Christian schools, and mission facilities, including the vandalism of a statue of Jesus in Ambala at a church in Haryana State. [HL5369]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We condemn any instances of discrimination because of religion or belief, regardless of the country or faith involved. We look to India to uphold all freedoms and rights guaranteed in its strong constitution and by the international instruments to which India is a party. We engage with India on a range of human rights matters, working with Union and State Governments, and with non-governmental organisations, to build capacity and share expertise to promote human rights for all. Where we have concerns, we raise them directly with the Government of India, including at ministerial level.

The British High Commission in New Delhi and our network of Deputy High Commissions across India regularly meet religious representatives and engage with Indian faith communities. The UK will host an international Ministerial conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) in 2022 to energise collective efforts on this agenda, demonstrating our enduring commitment to promoting FoRB for all. We also work with the UN, OSCE, Council of Europe, G7 and other multilateral fora to promote FoRB.

India: Missionaries of Charity and Oxfam

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of India over its

refusal to allow Oxfam and the Missionaries of Charity operating in that country to receive money from abroad. [HL5368]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are aware that some Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) have faced difficulties in India due to the application of the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) by the Indian authorities, and that some have recently had applications to renew their foreign funding licenses rejected. We continue to support a wide range of local NGO partners in India, including through programmes, and officials have discussed issues facing NGOs directly with the Indian Government.

On 8 January, the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs restored the FCRA license of the Missionaries of Charity, meaning the NGO will be able to receive and use foreign funding again. The British High Commission in New Delhi will continue to monitor developments.

Migrants and Refugees

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their definition of (1) a refugee, and (2) a migrant; and what are the practical consequences of the distinction between them. [HL5374]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Refugee status is granted when an individual has a well-founded fear of persecution under the Refugee Convention. Those who are not in need of protection are required to leave the UK or apply for leave to remain on another basis.

Paragraph 334 of the Immigration Rules sets out the circumstances in which an asylum applicant will be granted Refugee Status in the UK. 334(ii) confirms that an individual must be a refugee as defined in regulation 2 of The Refugee or Person in Need of International Protection (Qualification) Regulations 2006.

The 2006 Regulations refer to individuals who fall within Article 1(A) of the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees done at Geneva on 28 July 1951 and the New York Protocol of 31 January 1967 and to whom regulation 7 (Exclusion) does not apply.

The Nationality and Borders Bill is aiming to make the definition of a refugee even clearer, improving the consistency of decisions across all decision makers (including the Courts).

The conditions of refugee leave which a person will be granted if they qualify for refugee status under the Immigration Rules is broadly five years' limited leave, access to the labour market and welfare support, and a route to apply for settlement after five years.

The term migrant is not routinely used in legislation – it is more common to refer to “a person subject to immigration control”. The Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002A does include a definition of a migrant for the purposes of section 59(3)(a) being “a person who leaves the country where he lives hoping to settle in

another country (whether or not he is a refugee within the meaning of any international Convention)". However, that definition is used in a specific context and not more broadly in terms of legislation.

In practical terms, an individual subject to immigration control requires specific permission to stay in the UK and will usually be subject to conditions attached to that permission. These conditions vary depending on the type of leave for which an individual applies.

Ophthalmic Services: National Clinical Directors

Asked by **Lord Hunt of Kings Heath**

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect to confirm the appointment of the National Clinical Director for Eye Care. [HL5487]

Lord Kamall: NHS England and NHS Improvement have advised they are planning to commence the recruitment process shortly for the role of a National Clinical Director for Eye Care.

Parking: Pedestrian Areas

Asked by **Lord Berkeley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will publish the findings of their Pavement parking: options for change consultation, which ran from 31 August 2020 to 22 November 2020. [HL5470]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Ministers are now actively considering the options for addressing pavement parking. We will publish the formal consultation response and announce next steps as soon as possible.

Prison Officers: Recruitment

Asked by **Lord Bradley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people (1) joined, or (2) transferred internally to take up a role, as a band three to five prison officer in each of the last 10 years by ethnicity. [HL5355]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: The number of people who joined or transferred internally to take up a role as a band three to five prison officer for the past ten years, by ethnicity, is shown in the tables attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Table [2022-01-26 HL5355 Table.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-01-12/HL5355>

Prison Officers: Resignations

Asked by **Lord Bradley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many band three to five prison officers left the prison service in each of the last 10 years by ethnicity. [HL5356]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: The number of band 3-5 prison officers who left HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) by ethnicity for the past ten years is shown in the table below.

Table 1: Band 3-5 Prison Officer¹ leavers to HMPPS by ethnicity² for the years October to September 2011/12 to 2020/21³

Headcount

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
All Ethnic minorities (excluding white minorities) groups	59	132	75	74	68	108	54	121	132	141
Of which:										
Asian or Asian British ⁴	13	17	16	18	19	29	16	35	45	50
Black or Black British	22	62	31	32	27	35	17	48	45	41
Other ethnic group	15	32	19	12	13	31	16	28	29	44
Mixed Ethnic Groups	9	21	9	12	9	13	5	10	13	6
White	1,147	2,427	1,413	1,241	1,309	1,325	1,101	1,473	1,525	1,702
Not known / Prefer not to say	106	244	163	176	343	520	1,146	1,272	676	744
Total	1,312	2,803	1,651	1,491	1,720	1,953	2,301	2,866	2,333	2,587

Source: HMPPS - Oracle HRMS and Single Operating Platform.

Data Quality and Scope: Although care is taken when processing and analysing the returns, the data collected is subject to the inaccuracies inherent in any large-scale recording system.

Movements due to machinery of Government changes or due to staff transferring to or from the private sector as a result of changes in the management of establishments are not included in these tables.

Notes:

1) Band 3-5 Officers includes Band 3-4 / Prison Officers (incl specialists), Band 4 / Supervising Officers, and Band 5 / Custodial Managers.

2) Race is a self-declared, optional field. Since the introduction of Single Operating Platform (SOP) in January 2017, there has been a large decrease in the declaration rates of new joiners to HMPPS. It is likely that the lower declaration rates are due to the user-friendliness issues of SOP when it was first introduced.

3) Years are 12 months to 30 September i.e. October to September and not financial years.

4) Includes Chinese.

~ denotes suppressed values of 2 or fewer or other values which would allow values of 2 or fewer to be derived by subtraction. Low numbers are suppressed to prevent disclosure in accordance with the Data Protection Act, 2018.

Procurement Frigates: Procurement

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with (1) BA Systems, or (2) Babcock, regarding the build rate of the (a) Type 26 frigates, or (b) Type 31 frigates. [HL5599]

Baroness Goldie: Ministers and officials hold regular meetings with defence contractors and suppliers, including BAE Systems and Babcock to discuss a variety of subjects, including frigate programmes.

Protective Clothing: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the total public expenditure on faulty PPE products made by Zhende and Inivos which cannot be used by the NHS; and what steps they are taking to recoup this expenditure. [HL5352]

Lord Kamall: Inivos supplied gowns with a contract value of £117,360,000, which are currently under investigation through the technical regulatory assurance process. Since the Department does not have a contract directly with Zhende, the information requested is not held centrally.

Public Order Offences: Religious Buildings

Asked by Baroness Hooper

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the potential impact on religious gatherings of the provisions relating to public order offences in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill. [HL5361]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: A policy equality statement for the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill was published in September 2021 which covers the public order measures introduced in the Bill. This can be found on GOV.UK.

The public order measures in the Bill will improve the police's ability to manage highly-disruptive protests, enable the police to balance the rights of protesters and the rights of others to go about their daily business, and to dedicate their resources to keeping the public safe.

Refugees: Afghanistan

Asked by Lord Sheikh

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to integrate Afghan refugees who have arrived in the UK into the UK labour market at a level which is equivalent to their qualifications. [HL5404]

Lord Callanan: The Government recognises the challenges and upheaval Afghan refugees have faced, and significant work is underway across the whole of Government to support them in rebuilding their lives in the UK.

For qualified Afghan professionals arriving in the UK, we are taking targeted steps to assist them in utilising their skills and experience to participate in the labour market, including to pursue employment in their professions in the UK while upholding UK professional standards.

As part of the cross-government initiative, they can access tailored support to help them address any qualification equivalence barriers through Jobcentre Plus work coaches and the UK Centre for Professional Qualifications (<https://cpq.ecctis.com/>). The UKCPQ, specifically, is a service that provides guidance and advice to overseas-qualified professionals to get their qualifications recognised in the UK.

Regional Planning and Development

Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will publish their Levelling Up white paper. [HL5392]

Lord Greenhalgh: Levelling up is a transformative agenda and the Department's priority is to produce a White Paper which matches our ambition, building on existing action we are already taking across Government and setting out a new policy regime that will drive change for years to come.

Work is progressing well and we plan to publish the White Paper in due course.

Road Traffic Offences: Mobile Phones

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the strengthening of existing laws making it illegal to use a hand-held mobile phone while driving will come into force. [HL5472]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Government's response to the consultation on using a hand-held mobile phone while driving was published in November 2021. The response confirmed that the Government would be implementing the change proposed in the consultation document to broaden the offence of using a hand-held mobile phone while driving so that it captures standalone functions (such as taking a photo or scrolling for music stored on the phone) as well as the interactive communication functions covered now. The Government intends to make the change later this year.

Schools: Air Conditioning

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of classrooms that have windows that cannot be opened; what steps they are taking to address this; and what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of air filtration units in classrooms that do not have a source of fresh air. [HL5415]

Baroness Barran: During the autumn term, the department provided over 350,000 CO2 monitors to all state-funded education settings, including early years, schools, and further education providers, backed by £25 million in government funding. Feedback suggests that schools are finding the monitors helpful to manage ventilation and, in the majority of education providers, existing ventilation measures are sufficient.

Where an area of poor ventilation has been identified that cannot be resolved through simple measures such as opening doors and windows, schools are advised to explore what remedial works may be required to improve ventilation.

The department does not hold data on the number of classrooms that have windows that cannot be opened. Maintaining adequate ventilation remains the responsibility of individual education providers. The law says employers, including education and childcare providers, must make sure there is an adequate supply of fresh air (ventilation) in enclosed areas of the workplace. This has not changed during the COVID-19 outbreak. Health and Safety Executive provides more information at: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/equipment-and-machinery/air-conditioning-and-ventilation/index.htm>. Schools, colleges, and universities are expected to plan and prioritise any necessary remedial works within

existing budgets. For more substantial capital works, education providers and those responsible for buildings have access to funding to improve the condition of buildings through different routes depending on their size and type.

Where it is not possible to maintain adequate ventilation, it may be appropriate for education providers to consider the use of an air cleaning unit while the underlying ventilation issue is addressed.

On 2 January, we announced that we are supplying up to a total of 8,000 air cleaning units to providers. My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, is making a new commitment to fulfil all eligible applications from education settings for air cleaning units, and will make up to an additional 1,000 units available to do so. Our decision to make air cleaning units available for poorly ventilated spaces in education providers was informed by advice from the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) and external consultation with specialists. We have closely monitored the evidence and reviewed the scientific literature, including evidence from SAGE and the Environmental Modelling Group on the application of air cleaning units to manage the transmission of COVID-19. This evidence is available here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/939173/S0867_EMG_Potential_application_of_air_cleaning_devices_and_personal_decontamination_to_manage_transmission_of_COVID-19.pdf. When used properly, air cleaning units can help reduce airborne contaminants in a poorly ventilated space, including viruses like COVID-19. Air cleaning units are not a substitute for ventilation and should never be used as a reason to reduce ventilation. They are not necessary in spaces that are adequately ventilated. We will continue to develop our policy and guidance on ventilation in line with the latest scientific advice and in consultation with industry-wide experts.

Throughout the COVID-19 outbreak, we have emphasised the importance of ventilation and provided guidance to schools, colleges and universities on ventilation requirements. In addition to our existing guidance on ventilation, we have provided education providers with guidance on how to use the air cleaning units, as well as how to order a unit via the online marketplace. This marketplace is available at: <https://s107t01-webapp-v2-01.azurewebsites.net/list/air-cleaning>.

Social Media: Safety

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to require social media platforms to appoint a senior manager liable for the safety of their users. [HL5371]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: The draft Online Safety Bill includes tough powers for Ofcom to take action against companies breaching their online safety

duties, including substantial fines and even blocking services in the most serious cases.

The Bill will also provide for Ofcom to pursue criminal action against a named senior manager who fails to ensure that their company complies with Ofcom's information requirements. This will encourage strong senior engagement and ensure Ofcom has the information it needs to regulate the tech sector effectively and improve user safety.

Social Services: Vacancies

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to establish an emergency volunteer army for social care in light of reports that (1) care homes, and (2) home care providers, are struggling to operate properly due to staff shortages. [HL5270]

Lord Kamall: We are engaging with the social care sector on all potential options to address staff shortages, such as volunteers, which are already used by many social care providers. We have also provided an additional £462.5 million to support recruitment and retention in social care, expanded the Health and Care Visa to include care workers and the Made with Care national recruitment campaign is running until March 2022.

Supported Housing

Asked by Lord Foulkes of Cumnock

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the implications of the Adult Social Care Reform White Paper for (1) housing-with-care, and (2) integrated retirement communities [HL5431]

Asked by Lord Foulkes of Cumnock

To ask Her Majesty's Government what form of cross-government work they are undertaking on expanding housing-with-care. [HL5432]

Asked by Lord Foulkes of Cumnock

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the proposal from the Associated Retirement Community Operators on setting up a cross-government task force on expanding housing-with-care. [HL5433]

Asked by Lord Foulkes of Cumnock

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the Associated Retirement Community Operators on expanding housing-with-care. [HL5434]

Lord Kamall: The white paper commits to incentivise the supply of supported housing, including housing-with-care and integrated retirement communities through the Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund, with £213 million available over the next three years. This is alongside a new £300 million investment to connect

housing with health and care, increase the supply of supported housing and local expenditure on services for those in supported housing.

We will work with local authorities, housing providers and others to design and establish this new investment. Further detail on how this will be targeted and the impact we expect to deliver will be made available as it develops. We are engaging with stakeholders from the private and social sectors, including the Associated Retirement Community Operators, to inform future cross-Government action to stimulate a specialist housing market. This includes considering the merits of different engagement and delivery models, including proposals for a cross-Government taskforce.

Tonga: Volcanoes

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assistance they are providing to Tonga following the volcanic eruption and tsunami on 15 January. [HL5546]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The UK is deeply concerned by the appalling devastation caused by the volcanic eruption and tsunami in Tonga. While full details of the humanitarian impact are still unknown, it is estimated that up to 80,000 people will have been affected. Her Majesty's Government has been working with partners on options for support, helping to ensure a coordinated regional response.

On Friday 21 January, the UK sent supplies to support the humanitarian and disaster relief effort on Australia's HMAS Adelaide. 17 pallets are on board, including 90 family tents, 8 community tents and 6 wheelbarrows. All of these items were requested by the Tongan government.

In addition, HMS Spey has now set sail for Tonga, loaded with additional items including fresh water and medical supplies.

The UK is also funding the deployment of crisis experts through the United Nations. They will support the Tongan authorities to coordinate the international response.

The UK-funded International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) has also released £345,000 to support Tonga. The UK has committed a £6 million contribution to the DREF through an annual £1.5 million donation 2020-2023.

Ventilation: Standards

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have for establishing ventilation standards for privately owned indoor areas such as shops and entertainment venues. [HL5419]

Lord Greenhalgh: In England, buildings should be provided with an adequate means of ventilation as a requirement of Part F of the Building Regulations. The

Building Regulations apply when a new building is constructed, or work is done to an existing building. We have recently published our response to the Future Buildings Standard Consultation which sets out new guidance on Part F, to come into force in June 2022. The new guidance of relevance to shops and entertainment venues is included in Approved Document F2.

The health and safety legislation which applies to ventilation is Regulation 6 of the Workplace, Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations 1992, which states, 'Effective and suitable provision shall be made to ensure that every enclosed workplace is ventilated by a sufficient quantity of fresh or purified air.' The Health and Safety Executive do not establish specific ventilation standards.

Visas: Dependants

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to relax the rules on adult dependent relative visas to benefit non-British NHS staff whose parents are overseas. [HL5372]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office continues to keep the Immigration Rules for adult dependent relatives under review and makes adjustments in light of feedback on their operation and impact. The adult dependent relative rules were reviewed in 2016 and the report of that review can be seen on GOV.UK, under 'Adult dependent relatives review'.

It is right and fair that the Rules for adult dependent relatives apply equally to all and are applied consistently. Whilst we appreciate that for the adult dependent relatives of both British and non-British doctors and other NHS staff, any additional burden to the healthcare system may be offset by their sponsor's contribution to it, any decision to relax the Rules for family members of NHS staff could undermine the principle behind the Rules and would be discriminatory to those in other professions, many of whom face similar concerns and are contributing to the UK in other ways.

Our overall assessment is the Rules represent a fair deal for the UK taxpayer and are helping to ensure public confidence in the immigration system by protecting our

public services from the significant NHS and social care costs to which these cases can give rise.

Water: Consumption

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to introduce new policies to deliver long-term reductions in water usage across England. [HL5519]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The Government published a Written Ministerial Statement on Reducing Demand for Water on 1 July 2021, which announced measures that we will take forward to deliver reductions in water demand across England. This includes plans to introduce a mandatory water efficiency label to inform consumers and encourage the purchase of more water-efficient products, to develop a roadmap towards greater water efficiency in new developments and retrofits, and to ask water companies to develop a consistent approach to address leakage on customers' own pipes.

Written Questions: Government Responses

Asked by Lord Hain

To ask the Leader of the House, further to the Written Answers by Lord True on 10 January (HL5119) and 18 January (HL5234, HL5235, HL5236 and HL5360), what assessment she has made of the extent to which Ministers answer written questions from Members of the House comprehensively; and what steps she is taking to support the requirement of the Ministerial Code that "Ministers should be as open as possible with Parliament and the public" in respect of answers to written questions. [HL5538]

Baroness Evans of Bowes Park: As Leader of the House I take very seriously the responsibility incumbent on all Ministers to provide full, timely and comprehensive answers to Questions for Written Answers.

Ministers are reminded regularly of the importance of their obligations to the House and under the ministerial code. My office works closely with all departmental Parliamentary teams and Private Offices to help provide advice on what is expected of them in providing such answers.

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