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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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Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
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Lord Bellamy	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Justice
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Lord Callanan	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Earl of Courtown	Deputy Chief Whip
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Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park	Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Lord Kamall	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
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Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and Whip
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Baroness Scott of Bybrook	Whip
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Lord Stewart of Dirleton	Advocate-General for Scotland
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Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Minister of State, Home Office
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

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Written Statements

Monday, 5 September 2022

Approved Mileage Allowance Payments

[HLWS281]

Baroness Penn: My right honourable friend the Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury (Alan Mak) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

The Government has become aware of a technical inaccuracy in its responses to a number of Parliamentary Questions, correspondence and a Parliamentary e-petition response on the subject of Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (AMAP) from March to August 2022.

The response stated that actual expenditure in relation to business mileage could be reimbursed free of Income Tax and National Insurance contributions. This is in fact only possible for volunteer drivers. Where an employer reimburses more than the AMAP rate, Income Tax and National Insurance are due on the difference. The AMAP rate exists to reduce the administrative burden on employers.

The guidance available on GOV.UK has been correct throughout and the government believes that the number of taxpayers who could be affected is very small.

HMRC is also taking steps to bring this inaccuracy to the attention of employers and employees where necessary. Should any cases arise HMRC will work on an individual basis aiming to ensure that any taxpayers who relied on incorrect information are not disadvantaged.

Bearskins Clarification

[HLWS284]

Baroness Goldie: My hon Friend the Minister for Defence Procurement (Jeremy Quin) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

On 11 July in a debate in Westminster Hall on Bearskins, I referred to data on potential faux fur products that had previously been shared with the Department but I also stated that the Ministry of Defence had not received recent results data. Whilst my statement was in line with advice I had received further work has revealed that this was not correct and I wish to correct the record.

In May 2022 a letter was sent to the Prime Minister by PETA, copying Defence Ministers, enclosing a report against two of the five initial criteria which faux fur would have to meet in order for further work to be done to consider it as a replacement for the Guardsmen's caps. This was passed to officials in the Ministry of Defence, who responded on 15 June 2022 requesting that the report should be sent by the organisation which had conducted the tests direct to our partner, Leidos. We understand an email containing the report was sent but was blocked by Leidos' spam filters and deleted. Subsequent to the debate the email was resent, copying the MOD. After the MOD forwarded a copy to Leidos it was safely received.

To date, the Ministry of Defence has not seen a set of verifiable data which demonstrates a single sample of faux fur meets the five criteria. We are aware of testing which was carried out in December 2020 by an accredited testing house, against three of the criteria, although the material only passed one of those tests (water penetration). As I have explained we are also aware of further testing, conducted in April 2022. The MOD does not believe from the information we have seen that the organisation which conducted those tests is accredited by either the UK Accreditation Service or the International Laboratory Accreditation Operation. In order to consider taking any proposed product forward we need test results that have been conducted by an independent and accredited testing house.

Consequently, we have not to date seen evidence that a suitable faux fur product exists to be considered as an alternative.

Currently the Foot Guards' ceremonial caps are sourced exclusively from Canada which is a regulated market and a declared party to the convention on international trade in endangered species of wild fauna and flora (CITES). A CITES permit is required for the export of pelts from Canada to the United Kingdom. Canadian and international laws provide strict trade regulations to protect against unlawful trade in black bears, both within Canada and internationally. No bears are hunted to order for the Ministry of Defence, pelts are a product of legal and licensed hunting authorised in Canada by provincial and territorial Governments with the goal of long-term population sustainability.

Buses: £2 Fare Cap and Bus Recovery Grant

[HLWS274]

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

On 3 September, we announced plans to invest up to £60m to introduce a £2 bus fare cap on a single bus ticket on most services in England outside London. This will start no later than 1 January 2023 and will be in place for a period of 3 months until March 2023.

At a time when many are struggling with the rising cost of living, this is a significant investment that will result in millions of people across England saving on travel costs. This investment also makes clear our continued commitment to delivering on the bold vision for bus services set out in 'Bus Back Better', the Government's National Bus Strategy, and particularly our ambition to make bus services cheaper. The introduction of the £2 bus fare cap is a significant step forward to delivering this and continues the Government's track record of providing the largest investment in bus services in a generation, in England outside London.

This fare cap will not apply to bus services in London as transport is devolved to the Mayor of London, including fare setting. However, I know that colleagues across Parliament will be pleased that this announcement

follows the agreement with Transport for London on a £1.2bn multi-year settlement to secure the long-term future of London's transport network, including bus services.

As well as supporting passengers by reducing the cost of bus fares, we have also continued to invest in bus services, in response to the unprecedented impacts caused by the Covid-19 pandemic but which would now be threatening the provision of services at a time when the public need bus services more than ever.

With nearly £2bn provided so far, through the Covid-19 Bus Service Support Grant, the Bus Recovery Grant and most recently the Local Transport Fund, we have mitigated the impacts of the pandemic on bus networks. This meant that buses were kept running over the course of the pandemic to ensure that those who had to travel for work, education or healthcare were able to access these vital services and help keep this country running.

As I announced to this House in March, this funding was originally due to end in April, but at the time it was clear that the sector was still facing significant financial challenges as it sought to recover from the pandemic. That is why we announced we would provide a further £150m, and extend recovery funding for the sector until October, to allow bus services the maximum amount of time to recover.

At the time of announcing this funding, we were clear that this would be the last such round of recovery funding. However, with the sector continuing to face significant challenges, and many people facing pressures due to the rising cost of living, we recognise that further Government support is necessary to prevent significant cuts to bus services for the millions of people who use them every day.

That is why on 19 August we announced a six-month extension to the Bus Recovery Grant, worth up to £130m, to continue supporting bus services in England outside London. This will be in effect for six months starting in October 2022 until the end of the financial year in March 2023. This funding will provide the sector and passengers with certainty in the short-term and ensure that these vital services will continue to serve those that rely on them to live, work and travel.

Both of these further investments in England's bus services demonstrate our commitment to supporting bus services. We will continue to work closely with the sector as we deliver the National Bus Strategy, and fulfil our ambition for everyone, everywhere to have access to great bus services.

Business Update

[HLWS288]

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

Contingent Liability (Letter of Credit)

Today I will lay before Parliament a Departmental Minute describing a number of contingent liabilities arising from the issuance of letters of credit for the Energy Administrators acting in the Special Administration Regime for Bulb Energy Limited ('Bulb'). These letters of credit replace previous ones provided, announced within past Written Ministerial Statements, which soon expire.

It is normal practice when a Government Department proposes to undertake a contingent liability of £300,000 and above, for which there is no specific statutory authority, for the Department concerned to present Parliament with a minute giving particulars of the liability created and explaining the circumstances.

I have ensured that Parliament has been afforded the full 14-sitting day notification period to allow the proper scrutiny of these new contingent liabilities.

Bulb entered the Energy Supply Company Special Administration Regime on 24 November 2021. Energy Administrators were appointed by court to achieve the statutory objective of continuing energy supplies at the lowest reasonable practicable cost until such time as it becomes unnecessary for the special administration to remain in force for that purpose.

My Department has agreed to provide a facility to the Energy Administrators, with letters of credit issued, with my approval, to guarantee such contract, code, licence, or other document obligations of the company consistent with the special administration's statutory objective. I will update the House if any letters of credit are drawn against.

The legal basis for a letter of credit is section 165 of the Energy Act 2004, as applied and modified by section 96 of the Energy Act 2011.

HM Treasury has approved the arrangements in principle.

Publication of Latest Bounce Back Loan Scheme and Lender Performance Data

Today the Government provides an update on the performance of the Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBLs), which was designed to provide rapid access to finance for small businesses affected by the coronavirus pandemic. The data in this release includes specific information on the value of loans marked as suspected fraud, and claims made and settled by individual lenders who are accredited for the scheme.

This data release is part of the Government's ongoing commitment to transparency in relation to BBLs. The Government will continue to provide updates at regular intervals. This update will be published on the BEIS website to allow members to further scrutinise the data.

The data in this publication is as at 31 July 2022, unless otherwise stated. The data comes from information submitted to the British Business Bank's (the Bank's) scheme portal by accredited scheme lenders.

As of 31 of July 2022, businesses have drawn a total of £46.6 billion through BBLs. The first evaluation of BBLs, published in June 2022, found that up to 500,000 businesses could have permanently ceased trading in 2020 in the absence of the scheme.

It is unfortunate that some have taken the decision to take advantage of this vital intervention by defrauding the scheme for their own financial gain. The Government has always been clear that anyone who sought to do so is at risk of prosecution.

Checks were put in place from the outset to reduce the risk of fraudulent applications being successful. Lenders are the first line of defence, and were required to make or maintain know-your-customer and anti-money laundering checks and use a reputable fraud bureau to screen applicants against potential or known fraudsters. Lenders reported preventing over £2.2 billion worth of fraudulent applications as a result of these checks.

The Government remains focused on working with the Bank, lenders and law enforcement agencies to tackle fraud in the scheme. This work is supported by the Public Sector Fraud Authority, who have led the development of a sophisticated analytics programme to better understand the level and types of fraud committed against the scheme.

We are working with enforcement bodies including the National Investigation Service (NATIS) and the Insolvency Service to investigate instances of fraud, recover fraudulent loans and penalise fraudsters. Since September 2020, NATIS has opened 273 investigations into BBLs fraud, with a total value of £160 million. 78 suspects have been dealt with to date, with 49 arrests made. Meanwhile, Insolvency Service activity on BBLs fraud has so far resulted in 242 director disqualifications, 101 bankruptcy restrictions and 1 criminal prosecution. This enforcement activity is in addition to recovery work being undertaken by lenders as part of their obligations under the BBLs Guarantee Agreement.

At Spring Statement 2022, the Government announced an additional £48.8 million of funding over three years to tackle public sector fraud. This included further investment of £13.2 million in NATIS, effectively doubling their capacity to investigate BBLs fraud, and £10.9 million to enhance the Bank's counter-fraud and assurance work programme.

Headline figures

- £28.3 billion: the Outstanding Balance of total Drawn loans making payments on schedule
- £4.7 billion: the amount that has been Fully repaid by borrowers
- £3.2 billion: the Outstanding Balance of loans in Arrears that haven't yet progressed to Defaulted
- £1.4 billion: the Outstanding Balance of loans Defaulted that haven't yet progressed to Claimed
- £2.6 billion: the Outstanding Balance of loans Claimed that haven't yet progressed to Settled

- £1.2 billion: the total Settled amount (the amount paid out to lenders under the BBLs Guarantee Agreement)
- £1.1 billion: the total Drawn value flagged by lenders as suspected fraud

Notes:

The values stated above will not add up to the total Drawn values as set out in column 1 of Table 3 (Detailed loan status by lender). That is because the above figures do not take account of events which can reduce outstanding balances – for example: partial repayments of a loan, certain recoveries received in respect of a loan, and amounts written-off loans by lenders.

To aid the reader's understanding of the data, the terms used in this publication are defined at the end.

All businesses remain responsible for repaying their loans under BBLs and are fully liable for the debt.

It is important to recognise that it is still relatively early in the life of the scheme, and therefore it is too soon to definitively assess the performance of the BBLs scheme as a whole. Data being collected from accredited scheme lenders is subject to refinement, addition, and correction over time. Please see "Limitations and further considerations" for further background.

Please see attached for data tables.

The Statement includes the following attached material:

Bounce Back Loan Scheme & Lender Performance Data
[Data.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2022-09-05/HLWS288/>

Children with No Recourse to Public Funds

[HLWS272]

Baroness Barran: My honourable friend, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families (Brendan Clarke-Smith), has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

Today I am providing an update following a consultation undertaken by my department to consider access to the two-year-old early education entitlement for children from families with no recourse to public funds (NRPF). The purpose of the two-year-old early education entitlement is to provide early education and support to the most disadvantaged two-year-olds in England.

Some families with an irregular immigration status have a NRPF condition designated by the Home Office. This condition restricts these families from drawing on welfare support and other passported government support, and previously this has meant that their children, regardless of their own circumstances, have been unable to access the early education entitlement for disadvantaged two-year-olds.

The department announced on 24 March 2022 that we would extend eligibility for free school meals to children with all families with NRPF subject to income thresholds and that we would consult on whether there are any

additional groups of children from NRPF families who should be eligible for the two-year-old entitlement that we have not already identified.

I am pleased to confirm the publication of our consultation response on [Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk). This confirms that the additional groups that have been identified are:

- (1) those with a UK ancestry visa;
- (2) those with temporary protection status under Section 12 of the Nationality and Borders Act; and
- (3) those with pre-settled status with no qualifying right to reside.

We have now permanently extended eligibility for the two-year-old early education entitlement to children from all families with NRPF, subject to the income thresholds as follows:

- £26,500 for families outside of London with one child.
- £34,500 for families within London with one child.
- £30,600 for families outside of London with two or more children.
- £38,600 for families within London with two or more children.

A maximum capital threshold of £16,000 applies in all areas.

These thresholds were developed to create comparative thresholds with broad equivalence with families with recourse to public funds and who qualify for the early education entitlement due to being in receipt of welfare benefits.

This permanent extension began on 1 September 2022. We have [published guidance](#) to support local authorities in implementing these changes.

This will help to ensure that every child gets the best possible start and receives the right support, in the right place, at the right time.

Contingency Fund Application: Departmental Update

[HLWS271]

Baroness Barran: My honourable friend the Minister of State for School Standards (Will Quince) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

I hereby give notice of the Department for Education's intention to seek an advance from the Contingencies Fund.

This follows the Department's announcement on 11 March that a new independent Government body will be created to support teachers in delivering excellent curriculum content as part of world class lessons. The body will help every child in the country reach the true height of their potential.

The body is expected to become fully operational from Autumn following a transition phase which will include procurement and development of new resources. The first new resources will be available to teachers by September

2023. The body has been incorporated as Oak National Academy Limited.

Parliamentary approval for additional resources of £2,809,000 and capital of £3,869,000 for this new expenditure will be sought in a Supplementary Estimate for the Department for Education. Pending that approval, urgent expenditure estimated at £6,678,000 will be met by repayable cash advances from the Contingencies Fund.

We will seek a movement of funding in budgetary requirements at Supplementary Estimate. Accessing the Contingency Fund allows the Department to manage the expenditure associated with establishing and launching the new body.

I am therefore seeking Parliamentary approval for costs of £6,678,000. The advance will be repaid upon receiving approval of the Supplementary Estimate.

Covid-19 Update

[HLWS287]

Lord Kamall: My Hon Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Vaccines and Public Health) (Maggie Throup) has made the following Written Statement:

The Covid-19 vaccination programme continues to protect the UK against the virus. As of 30 August 2022, over 126 million doses have been provided, including 45.2 million first doses, 42.6 million second doses and 33.5 million third primary and booster doses in the UK. This represents uptake of 93.5% for the first dose, and 88.1% for the second dose.

Vaccines remain the best protection against Covid-19. Given winter is expected to present another severe challenge from Covid-19, we continue to urge everyone to play their part by taking up the Covid-19 vaccine and, where eligible, autumn booster offer without delay.

If eligible the NHS will invite you to come forward for your vaccine via SMS, emails and letters.

If you are unvaccinated and eligible for Covid-19 vaccinations, you can still come forward and book an appointment.

The independent Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has published further advice on the Covid-19 vaccination programme. Her Majesty's Government (HMG) has accepted this advice and I am informed that all four parts of the UK intend to follow the JCVI's advice.

Autumn vaccination programme:

The JCVI advises that for the 2022 autumn booster programme, the following groups should be offered a Covid-19 booster vaccine:

- Residents in a care home for older adults and staff working in care homes for older adults.
- Frontline health and social care workers.
- All adults aged 50 years and over.
- Persons aged 5 to 49 years in a clinical risk group.

- Persons aged 5 to 49 years who are household contacts of people with immunosuppression.
- Persons aged 16 to 49 years who are carers.

For the 2022 autumn booster programme, the primary objective is to augment immunity in those at higher risk from Covid-19 and thereby optimise protection against severe Covid-19, specifically hospitalisation and death, over winter 2022/23.

Following appropriate data to demonstrate quality, safety and efficacy, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) authorised Moderna's BA1/wild-type bivalent vaccine for administration as a Covid-19 booster vaccination on 12 August 2022 and Pfizer's BA1/wild type bivalent vaccine on 3 September 2022. Covid-19 bivalent vaccines target two different variants of Covid-19, which broadens immunity and therefore potentially improves protection against variants of Covid-19.

The UK, following the JCVI advice, now intends to deploy authorised bivalent vaccines throughout the autumn programme for those eligible.

The JCVI published advice stating that the autumn booster vaccine dose should be offered at least three months after the previous dose.

- Eligible persons aged 18 years and over may be offered booster vaccinations: 50mcg Moderna mRNA bivalent Omicron BA.1/wildtype vaccine; 50mcg Moderna mRNA wild-type vaccine (Spikevax); 30mcg Pfizer BioNTech mRNA wild-type vaccine (Comirnaty) or 30mcg Pfizer BioNTech mRNA bivalent vaccine (Comirnaty).
- Eligible persons aged 12 to 17 years may be offered booster vaccinations with: 30 mcg Pfizer BioNTech mRNA wild-type vaccine (Comirnaty) or 30mcg Pfizer BioNTech mRNA bivalent vaccine (Comirnaty).
- Eligible persons aged 5-11 years may be offered booster vaccinations 10 mcg Pfizer-BioNTech mRNA wild-type vaccine (Comirnaty) paediatric formulation.
- In exceptional circumstances the Novavax Matrix-M adjuvanted wild-type vaccine (Nuvaxovid) is approved for primary course vaccination in adults aged 18 years and above and may be used when no alternative clinically suitable UK-approved Covid-19 vaccine is available. Deployment is expected to start at the beginning of September 2022.

Nuvaxovid

On 3 February 2022, the Novavax Covid-19 vaccine, Nuvaxovid, was authorised by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), authorising the deployment of the vaccine after it has generated appropriate data to demonstrate quality, safety and efficacy. The JCVI has provided deployment advice on Nuvaxovid and it is expected to be deployed at the end of September 2022. Nuvaxovid may be used 'off-label' as a booster dose for persons aged 18 years and above when no alternative clinically suitable UK-approved Covid-19 vaccine is available.

The agreement to provide an indemnity as part of the contract between HMG and Novavax creates a contingent liability on the Covid-19 vaccination programme. Putting in place appropriate indemnities to be given to vaccine suppliers has helped to secure access to vaccines much sooner than may have been the case otherwise.

With the vaccine offer expanded for autumn for the groups as listed above and the deployment of Nuvaxovid in exceptional circumstances, I am now updating the House on the liabilities HMG has taken on in relation to further vaccine supply via this statement and the Departmental Minutes laid in Parliament containing a description of the liability undertaken. The agreement to provide indemnity with deployment of further doses increases the statutory contingent liability of the Covid-19 vaccination programme.

Deployment of effective vaccines to eligible groups has been and remains a key part of the Government's strategy to manage Covid-19. Willingness to accept the need for appropriate indemnities to be given to vaccine suppliers has helped to secure access to vaccines, with the expected benefits to public health and the economy alike, much sooner than may have been the case otherwise.

Given the exceptional circumstances we are in, and the terms on which developers have been willing to supply a Covid-19 vaccine, we, along with other nations have taken a broad approach to indemnification proportionate to the situation we are in.

Even though the Covid-19 vaccines have been developed at pace, at no point and at no stage of development has safety been bypassed. These vaccines have satisfied, in full, all the necessary requirements for safety, effectiveness, and quality.

We are providing indemnities in the very unexpected event of any adverse reactions that could not have been foreseen through the robust checks and procedures that have been put in place.

I will update the House in a similar manner as and when other Covid-19 vaccines or additional doses of vaccines already in use in the UK are deployed.

DCMS Update

[HLWS279]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: I am repeating the following Written Ministerial Statement made today in the other place by my Right Honourable Friend, the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Nadine Dorries MP:

I would like to inform the House of a number of DCMS Updates.

Over summer recess we also reached another key milestone in the transformation of the UK's broadband networks - announcing that over 70% of homes and businesses across the country now have access to lightning-fast, gigabit connections.

It has also been an incredible summer of sport, with my department helping to successfully host both the UEFA

Women's Euros and the Birmingham Commonwealth Games.

Building on the spectacular performance of the Lionesses at the Euros Final, I wish to inform the House that on 2nd September, the Government has officially launched a review of the Future of Women's Football.

Launch of the Future of Women's Football Review

The Lionesses' Euros victory rightfully put women's sport at the centre of the agenda. Record numbers of viewers watched their success: 574,875 tickets were sold at the tournament, with sell-out crowds wherever the Lionesses played. The final also broke the attendance record for a EUROs final - in either the women's or men's game. While it is right that we celebrate and reflect on that success, we must now refocus to ensure that this success translates to the continued growth of the women's game.

The Fan Led Review of Football Governance, conducted in 2021, recognised the different issues that the women's game faces in comparison to men's football. The Fan Led Review therefore recommended that women's football should receive its own dedicated review. Government accepted this recommendation. Rather than issues of financial mismanagement and fit and proper owners that the Fan Led Review considered, the Review of the Women's Game will focus on capitalising on popularity and continuing to grow the game.

The Review will be chaired by former England and Great Britain footballer Karen Carney MBE. Karen has extensive knowledge of women's football and the issues affecting it, having had a very successful playing career, and later moving on to become a respected broadcaster and columnist on both women's and men's football. Karen's unique experience will be invaluable in ensuring that the review makes proposals that help to continue the growth and success of the women's game.

The Review will now commence with stakeholders and fan groups having the opportunity to provide evidence on the issues affecting the women's game. There will be a particular focus on assessing the potential audience reach and growth of the game, examining the financial health of the game, its financial sustainability for the long term and examining the structures within women's football.

The findings and recommendations arising from this review will be set out in a published report next year.

We have further updates to make on the gifting of Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games assets, and the removal of facsimile services from the Universal Service Order.

Gifting of assets following the conclusion of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games

During the Summer Recess my Department has been working with the Organising Committee of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games to prepare to donate the sports equipment assets to Sport England for onward distribution to community organisations in Birmingham and the West Midlands. This will ensure

maximum legacy opportunities for communities and sporting organisations to benefit from the Games.

It is normal practice when a Government department (in this instance an Arms Length Body of the department) proposes to make a gift of a value exceeding £300,000, for the department concerned to present to the House of Commons a minute giving particulars of the gift and explaining the circumstances; and to refrain from making the gift until fourteen parliamentary sitting days after the issue of the minute, except in cases of special urgency.

As the Games equipment was being passed to Sport England immediately after the conclusion of the Games, and with the Games having taken place during Summer Recess, DCMS wrote to Dame Meg Hillier MP as Chair of the Committee of Public Accounts, and Julian Knight MP as Chair of the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee on 29 July 2022, informing them of the proposed course of action.

Ministers at HM Treasury have approved the proposal in principle. If, during the period of fourteen parliamentary sitting days beginning on the date on which this minute was laid before the House of Commons, a Member signifies an objection by giving notice of a Parliamentary Question or a Motion relating to the minute, or by otherwise raising the matter in the House, final approval of the gift will be withheld pending an examination of the objection.

I inform the House today of the Departmental Minute which sets out the detail of the decision, which has been laid in both Houses.

The distribution of sports equipment from Sport England onwards is expected to commence in October.

A copy of the departmental minute will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Removal of the Fax USO

Tomorrow, the Government will amend [The Electronic Communications \(Universal Service\) Order 2003](#) ("the USO") to remove facsimile (fax) services from the USO. This will come into force on 1 October 2022.

DCMS previously wrote to Ofcom to consult them ahead of potentially removing fax from the Universal Service Order (USO). This was in light of the industry-led migration from the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) to all-Internet Protocol (IP) telephony, which will mean that fax machines will no longer work in the same way. This was in accordance with S65(4) of the Communications Act 2003 which states that, before making or varying the universal service order, the Secretary of State must consult Ofcom and such other persons as they consider appropriate.

After a public consultation, Ofcom concluded it would be appropriate to remove fax from the USO. Ofcom noted the low usage of fax, as well as the availability of reliable alternatives (many of which are free of charge). DCMS officials conducted further investigations with the healthcare, tourism, legal, and energy sectors, and found that use of fax was minimal and alternatives are being sought where its use still continues.

DCMS is content that it is appropriate to remove fax from the telephony USO. As a result, the designated providers BT and KCOM will no longer be required to provide fax services. We are making this change now given the ongoing changes to the UK's telephone networks as well as recognising that the limited existing use of fax services makes their inclusion in the USO unnecessary.

Fax services will remain available on existing PSTN connections until the service is withdrawn by the industry in 2025. BT has also indicated that fax services may continue to function over its Digital Voice services, though they are not guaranteed in the same way. Furthermore, the move from fax services to alternatives will have already been a part of many sectors' preparation for migration to All-IP. DCMS has been working closely with other Government departments to raise awareness of this change and others expected as part of PSTN migration.

The Government will also be making a minor clarification to the USO with regard to the term 'publicly available telephone service', as recommended by the joint committee on statutory instruments in 2011.

DHSC Update

[HLWS285]

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

Over the Summer Recess, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has made significant progress in many areas, both to prepare the NHS and social care systems for the winter and to lay the foundations for further improvements in the coming years.

In respect of preparations for winter, the Department has worked closely with NHS England and other Departments across-government to:

- Widen and launch the COVID autumn booster programme, including through the first approval worldwide of two 'bivalent' vaccines which protect against both the original and Omicron strains of COVID-19.
- Increase capacity in primary care, including through additional roles in primary care.
- Put in place plans to boost the NHS's capacity by the equivalent of 7,000 beds, including through the use of innovative 'virtual' beds.
- Increase the numbers of call handlers in both the 999 and 111 services respectively, with a target of having 2,500 call handlers in 999 and 4,800 call handlers in 111 by the end of December.
- Agree a new ambulance auxiliary contract with St John Ambulance, providing at least 5,000 hours of extra support each month.

The Department, the NHS and local authorities also continue to work together to address ambulance handover

delays and delayed discharges, including by identifying the actions for which NHS leaders are responsible, and those for which social care leaders are responsible, thus supporting accountability.

Over the Summer Recess, we have also been focusing on increasing the NHS and social care workforce, by drawing on both domestic and international sources, with the aim of increasing the capacity of the NHS and social care systems both in the short-term and over time. Our International Recruitment Taskforce is developing plans for implementing a 'support hub' to help care providers recruit from abroad, and the Department is laying regulations today to help increase the capacity and capability of the professional regulators to test the standards of overseas recruits. We also launched a consultation on 28 August with the aim of extending 'Retire and Return' NHS pension changes through to 31 March 2023, allowing retired and partially-retired NHS staff to continue to receive important pension changes if they re-enter the workforce. Further work is also under way, including the consideration of further options on the pensions of healthcare professionals.

The Department continues to work closely with NHS England to address the COVID-19 waiting times backlog. 104-week waits were virtually eliminated in line with the Elective Recovery Plan, and the NHS is making good progress to address 78-week waits by April 2023. In support of this:

- A further 50 surgical hubs were given the go-ahead over the summer, in addition to the existing 91 surgical hubs.
- A further 7 Community Diagnostic Centres were given the go-ahead. The programme has so far delivered an extra 1.7 million tests.
- Choice of provider at the point of GP referral will be available to all patients from April 2023 at the latest, supported by information to be made available to patients through the NHS App.

A number of reforms looking to the long-term needs of the NHS and care system are also now under way:

- Work led by Professor John Deanfield is considering how we better embrace home testing for a wider range of conditions through a modernised NHS Health Check.
- The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is expediting work to consider how to improve the uptake and adoption of well-evidenced MedTech.
- Standardised, modular hospital design – delivering scale and process efficiencies – will be adopted as the default for cohorts 3 and 4 of the New Hospitals Programme. Enabling works for the new hospitals at Whipps Cross, Kettering and Hillingdon have been unlocked, and the Strategic Outline Case for Shrewsbury and Telford has been approved.

Good progress continues to be made on the development of Framework 15 and the NHS Workforce Plan. The future needs of the NHS and social care systems are best met by a workforce which is trained flexibly, is adaptable, which embeds new roles in clinical

practice, and which allows all health and care professionals to practice at the top of their competence.

Taxpayers expect the Department and the NHS to continue to be effective stewards of public money. We have therefore imposed further controls on the use of consultancy, professional services and contingent labour with the aim of generating at least £170 million of additional savings over this financial year, with further recurrent savings thereafter. We have also instituted new mechanisms to assist transparency: more than 50,000 people work in national and local NHS organisations which do not provide direct patient care, and to help those who work in the NHS and the wider public understand more about the value delivered we are today publishing an organogram of the Department (to be made available on a searchable platform over the coming days), followed by searchable organograms for NHS England and the other national arm's length bodies by the end of September. Integrated Care Boards are being asked to emulate this approach.

There has also been progress on a number of other very important issues including:

- The publication of the Women's Health Strategy.
- The launch of the Government's Dementia Mission.
- Confirmation of interim payments to those who have been infected by contaminated blood and bereaved partners.

In November 2021, the Government announced it would make £50 million funding available for research into motor neurone disease over five years. Following work over the summer with DHSC and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), through the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), to support researchers to access funding in a streamline and coordinated way we are pleased to confirm that this funding has now been ringfenced. DHSC and BEIS welcome the opportunity to support the motor neurone disease (MND) scientific community of researchers, as they come together through a network and link through a virtual institute.

The Department has taken these actions to help the NHS and social care systems be better prepared for the winter challenges ahead and beyond.

DWP: Work of the Department during the Summer Recess

[HLWS282]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: My Rt Hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (Greg Clark) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

Since I was appointed on 7 July, I have been privileged to lead the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities in its work to spread opportunity in all parts of the United Kingdom.

This Statement updates the House on progress that has been made during the summer recess. All relevant documents referred to will be placed in the Library of the House.

We have delivered stronger local leadership

- A Devolution Deal has been signed with York and North Yorkshire to create a Mayoral Combined Authority comprising the City of York and North Yorkshire Councils and covering a population of 818,000 people. The deal, which is subject to ratification by the councils, includes a £540 million investment fund over the next 30 years and over £22.5 million to support the building of new homes on brownfield land and to drive green growth in the area; the devolution of the Adult Education Budget; an integrated transport settlement and confirmation that the Government is minded to provide additional support for the regeneration of the York Central brownfield site, subject to an agreed business case. The first Mayoral election would be in May 2024 and the new Mayor would take on the functions of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. There will be a locally run public consultation, and the secondary legislation to implement the deal is subject to consent from councils and Parliamentary approval.

- A Devolution Deal has been signed with Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire to create an East Midlands Mayoral Combined County Authority. The deal is subject to ratification by the councils, and to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill receiving Royal Assent. The deal includes a Mayor for the 2.2 million people of the area to be elected in May 2024. Both the Government and the four councils place great importance on the involvement of the 15 district and borough councils in the area. The deal establishes an investment fund of £1.14 billion over the next 30 years – the joint largest of any Devolution Deal so far, over £17 million to support brownfield development and further investment, subject to business cases, of £18 million to support local housing and Net Zero priorities. The deal also includes devolution of the Adult Education Budget and an integrated transport settlement. There will be a locally-run public consultation and the secondary legislation to implement the deal is subject to consent from councils and Parliamentary approval.

- Other deals named in the Levelling Up White Paper are progressing well, notably with councils in Suffolk and North East England, and with Cornwall, as well as additional trailblazer deals with the West Midlands and Greater Manchester.

- We have taken decisive action to restore good governance to councils in England that have let down local residents, in Slough, Liverpool, Nottingham and Thurrock. In making interventions we have established an approach that help from within the local area should be pursued wherever possible and we are grateful to Mayor Steve Rotherham for stepping forward to guide the future of Liverpool City Council and to Essex

County Council for leading the intervention in Thurrock.

- We have tightened rules to prevent councils in England from using creative accountancy to avoid the spirit of the financial frameworks which are there to protect taxpayers, and have advised consultancies that they should not facilitate such practices at the taxpayers' expense.
- We have published for consultation the draft Policy and Strategy Statement for the Electoral Commission required by the Elections Act 2022, in which combatting electoral fraud through so-called family voting in local and national elections is emphasised.

We have provided further opportunities to level up across the United Kingdom

- Round 2 of the £4.8 billion Levelling Up Fund was opened on 15 July and closed on 2 August. Over 500 applications have been made from every part of the United Kingdom. Analysis of the bids is currently taking place and results will be announced in due course.
- Over 50% of the allocations from the Future High Street Fund have now been made.
- On 1 September we published – with the Welsh Government – the Prospectus for a Freeport to be established in Wales.
- In addition to the 8 Freeports in England, good progress is being made towards the designation of Green Freeports in Scotland in a joint process with the Scottish Government.

We have delivered for our communities and faith groups and protected vulnerable people

- The British people have now welcomed over 120,000 refugees from Ukraine through the Homes for Ukraine and Ukraine Family schemes. We would like to pay tribute to the work of Lord Harrington of Watford who led the Homes for Ukraine programme.
- We have supported the next phase of the Welcome Programme to support people from Hong Kong with BN(O) visas in settling into the United Kingdom.
- With £1.3 million of new funding we announced a New Deal fund to support faith groups to support vulnerable people and communities.
- Nearly 90% of the £150 Council Tax rebate has been paid out by councils to residents.
- Because everyone deserves a home that is habitable, whatever its tenure, we have launched a consultation on setting a Decent Homes Standard for private rented properties.
- To help people with the cost of living during this time of high inflation, we have launched a consultation on setting a lower cap on maximum social housing rent increases in 2023-24.
- On 3 September the landmark Rough Sleeping Strategy to end rough sleeping by the end of this

Parliament was launched, on which a separate Ministerial Statement is being made.

We have accelerated moves to provide justice for leaseholders in buildings that are unsafe because of cladding

- We have reopened the Building Safety Fund for applications.
- We have worked with lenders who have agreed to restart lending on affected properties.
- We have issued contracts to developers to make good their pledge to remediate unsafe buildings for which they are responsible.
- We commenced the primary legislation that will enable us to establish an industry scheme to penalise developers who fail to discharge their responsibilities.
- We launched a call for evidence to enable us to address the specific problems of leaseholder-owned and commonhold buildings.

We have taken steps to increase the pace of development

- In order to accelerate development we have set out measures to speed up the planning process for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects like nuclear power stations and offshore wind farms.
- We have set out measures that will reduce the levels of nutrient pollution entering our most sensitive watercourses, thereby allowing stalled housebuilding to proceed whilst protecting the environment.

We have emphasised the importance of the beauty and the enjoyment of our built and natural environment

- We have strengthened the powers of councils to require takeaway restaurants to clear up litter they generate in our High Streets.
- We have launched the Levelling Up Parks fund in England to create or restore 100 green spaces in our urban areas with the least access to parks.
- A major planning application on the South Bank of London has been called in for public inquiry to assess, among other things, the impact of the proposed development on the historic environment.
- And we have extended the ability of cafes, pubs and restaurants to take advantage of the great British summer with al fresco dining.

I am proud of what has been delivered in 8 weeks, and I am grateful to my officials in government departments as well as to partners in local councils, businesses and voluntary organisations across the United Kingdom for their intense work this summer. It shows what can be achieved to the benefit of all our citizens when people work together in joint endeavour.

Home Office Update

[HLWS286]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My rt hon Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Priti Patel)

has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

Today I am updating Parliament on Home Office delivery since my statement of 31 March 2022. The Department is committed to delivering better outcomes for the public and will continue to work to deliver a safer, fairer and more prosperous United Kingdom.

Reducing Crime

The first job of any government is to keep its people safe, which is why we have made it our absolute priority to get more police on our streets, cut crime and protect the public. Over the last three years the Home Office has worked hard to achieve these priorities and improve confidence in policing.

In July 2021, my Department published the Beating Crime Plan which sets out our approach to driving down crime, restoring confidence in the criminal justice system and better supporting victims. It balances the prevention we need to keep our citizens safe, with the enforcement required to deliver swift and certain justice for those who choose to break our laws.

We are delivering the commitments we made in the plan. As of 30 June, police forces in England and Wales have recruited 13,790 additional police officers, 69% of the 20,000 officers targeted by March 2023 under the Police Uplift Programme. Moreover, we are focused on cutting crime in areas with the highest levels of crime.

As part of our commitment to excellence in the basics, every neighbourhood in England and Wales will have a named and contactable police officer and league tables have been introduced for 999 call answering times.

I removed restrictions on Section 60 searches that have been in place since 2014. These restrictions have limited when officers could use the vital power and decreased their confidence in deploying it. Since 2019, stop and search use has increased by around 85% and has contributed to over 70,000 deadly knives and offensive weapons being taken off our streets.

In January 2020, we launched the place based Safer Streets Fund, directing £120m of investment to the worst affected areas to tackling acquisitive crime, neighbourhood crime, anti-social behaviour, and violence against women and girls, and improving public safety for all.

Since 2019, we have invested £170 million into the multi-agency Violence Reduction Units and a further £170 million into bolstering the police response to serious violence in the areas most affected by serious violence. The Government will invest £130m in 2022-23 to tackle serious violence, including murder and knife crime. Together, these programmes have prevented 49,000 violent offences in their first two years of activity, providing a saving of £3.16 for every £1 spent.

We are continuing to invest in the future of young people and intervening early to divert them away from a life of crime, including through the £200 million, 10-year Youth Endowment Fund, which has supported 195

projects and already reached more than 64,097 at-risk young people.

We know that the drugs trade is at the heart of much of the homicide, serious violence and neighbourhood crime that blights our communities. Our 10-year Cross-Government Drug Strategy provides £300 million of dedicated investment over the next three years, to drive work on tackling drug supply and reduce drug demand.

Our work is achieving results on the ground. Under our County Lines Programme, between November 2019 and March 2022, the police closed 2,400 lines, made over 8,000 arrests, and safeguarded more than 9,500 people. Our work on Project ADDER, which focuses on the response to addiction, diversion, enforcement and recovery has supported over 700 Organised Crime Group disruptions, more than 12,500 arrests, 6,000 Out of Court Disposals started by police, more than 14,000 drug treatment interventions by outreach workers, and diverted people away from offending and into recovery support between January 2021 and February 2022.

Our work at the border has delivered consecutive annual increases in drug seizures in each of the past three years. Last year, thanks to our investment, the Police and Border Force made 223,106 drug seizures in England and Wales during 2020-21 – a 21% increase on the previous year. We have also launched the new Conflict Stability and Security Fund counter supply of Illicit commodities programme to enable priority countries to disrupt priority threats' supply chains more effectively, focused on Class A drugs, illicit firearms, and cash trafficking.

The Home Office has supported important legislation through Parliament, to reduce crime, support victims, and put the law-abiding majority first.

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 was passed in April. It doubles the sentences for assaults on emergency workers, introduces Harper's Law, and puts the Police Covenant in statute. It equips the police to combat crime and create safer communities, while overhauling sentencing laws to keep serious sexual and violent offenders behind bars for longer.

Meanwhile the Public Order Bill will further enhance the police's ability to deal with disruptive protests that prevent ordinary people going about their daily lives and divert police resources from communities where they are needed most to prevent serious violence and neighbourhood crime.

Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Act was passed in March. Hundreds of individuals and entities were designated within hours of it becoming law. The Government has sanctioned over 1,000 individuals and over 100 entities. The Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Bill will allow us to bear down further on kleptocrats, criminals, and terrorists who abuse our financial system, strengthening the UK's reputation as a place where legitimate business can thrive while dirty money is driven out.

Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls, including domestic abuse, has been supported by major funding and the landmark Domestic Abuse Act. It means action to prevent and raise awareness of these crimes, including investing £3m per annum in prevention projects, improved support for victims, directly supporting thousands of victims and children, and tackling perpetrators through an ambitious £25m package of behaviour change programmes and research to reduce further violence. The Home Office provides funding for a number of helplines and online services to support victims of VAWG, including domestic abuse. This includes specialist domestic abuse helplines for elderly, deaf and disabled, LGBT and male victims, as well as teachers and employers. In 2021/22, over 81,000 people used the national tackling VAWG helplines for support.

The Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy, published in January 2021, has driven improvements in education, social care, health, law enforcement, and industry. We are working with international partners, to ensure we are doing all that we can to keep children safe online and in our communities in the UK and around the world.

Reducing the risk from terrorism to the UK & UK interests overseas, securing a safe and prosperous UK

The threats we are responding to are becoming more complex and they increasingly overlap. In May, this year, the National Security Bill was introduced to Parliament. It completely overhauls and updates outdated espionage laws and provides updated investigative powers and capabilities so that our law enforcement and intelligence agencies can deter, detect, and disrupt a wide range of modern-day threats from hostile states.

The US Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco and I released a joint statement in July announcing that the UK-US Data Access Agreement will enter into force in October. It allows UK and US law enforcement to directly request data held by telecommunications providers in the other party's jurisdiction for the exclusive purpose of preventing, detecting, investigating, and prosecuting serious crimes such as terrorism and child sexual abuse and exploitation. It will have a transformative effect.

The Government is committed to tackling the threat from all forms of terrorism. In the last three years, I have proscribed four extreme right-wing terrorist groups, including Sonnenkrieg Division and Feuerkrieg Division. I also proscribed the Islamist group Hamas in its entirety and we supported the successful US prosecutions of two members of Daesh: Alexandra Kotev and Elshafee Elsheikh.

We opened the world-leading Counter-Terrorism Operations Centre in June 2021, including a cutting-edge counter-terrorism operations suite and state-of-the-art forensics laboratory. For the first time it brings together all the London-based elements of counter-terrorism policing to ensure they can discover and disrupt threats more quickly.

The Home Office delivered the first UK policing counter-drone capability, which was used effectively at

the G7, COP26 and the Commonwealth Games. A combination of deterrence communications, effective use of airspace restrictions, and new police equipment, powers and procedures is reducing the incidence of mis-used drones and facilitating their tracking and seizure.

We have passed key pieces of legislation such as the Terrorist Offenders (Restriction of Early Release) Act 2020 which ended the automatic early-release of terrorist offenders. In addition, the Counter-Terrorism and Sentencing Act was passed in 2021 and which ensures that sentences reflect the severity of the offence and strengthens the monitoring of suspects.

To enhance our ability to protect the UK we have also passed the Air Traffic Management and Unmanned Aircraft Act 2021, which provides the police powers to better protect the UK from malicious drone use. We completed a Call for Information last year on the Computer Misuse Act 1990, to ensure that our legislation and powers continue to meet the challenges posed by the threats in cyberspace.

Tackling illegal migration, removing those with no right to be here, and protecting the vulnerable

The Nationality and Borders Act is the cornerstone of the Government's New Plan for Immigration. Since receiving Royal Assent on 28 April 2022, I have wasted no time in implementing the Act – delivering a fair but firm system to ensure that we can better support those in genuine need of asylum; deterring illegal migration, especially dangerous small boat arrivals; breaking the business model of vile criminal gangs; and removing from the UK those with no right to be here.

We have already achieved significant changes in the system with the first raft of reforms, including: the introduction of fixes to the asylum system; new and tougher criminal offences for illegal entry and people smuggling; and nationality law changes that allow fairer access to British nationality.

The reforms will build towards a new National Age Assessment Board and Scientific Age Assessment methods to protect children, modern slavery reforms and a new one-stop process and appeals to stop repeated, unmeritorious and last-minute claims seeking to frustrate removal.

In July 2021, I signed a new agreement to strengthen UK-France cooperation on tackling illegal immigration across the Channel. Through our joint action with France, we prevented more than 23,000 crossings in 2021. So far in 2022, over 17,000 people have been prevented from crossing the Channel in small boats – around 70% more than to this point in 2021. In addition, the UK-France Joint Intelligence Cell, established in July 2020, has, with France, dismantled 21 small boat organised criminal groups, securing over 500 arrests. In the few months it has been operational, the NABA has already resulted in a further 82 arrests, 62 charges, 10 convictions with sentences handed down of 5.9 years following the introduction of the NABA legislation. This includes 38 arrests, 32 charges and 1 conviction for facilitation. Also

there has been 23 arrests for illegal entry, 17 charges and 7 convictions.

We successfully transferred primacy for operations in the Channel to the Ministry of Defence, as part of the whole of Government effort to counter Channel crossings by irregular migrants. This sees Border Force, Immigration Enforcement and Service Personnel working side-by-side to ensure the UK's borders are protected and to effectively manage pressures in the Channel.

In April 2022, I announced the world-leading Migration and Economic Development Partnership with Rwanda. It is part of a suite of measures under the New Plan for Immigration to tackle the increasing number of small boats arrivals since 2019 by deterring them from making dangerous crossings. The Partnership will see those travelling to the UK through illegal, dangerous and unnecessary methods considered for relocation to Rwanda, where they will have their asylum claim processed. While there are ongoing legal proceedings, the partnership arrangement fully complies with all national and international law and we prepare for delivery.

We deported 11,532 foreign national offenders between 2019 and March 2022. Since April 2020 we have used 151 charter flights and so far this year, we have returned 1,741 FNOs and other immigration offenders. To support this work, we have agreed new international returns agreements with international partners in Albania, Serbia, Nigeria, and most recently Pakistan.

In addition, since 2019, we have helped over 11,000 people return home through our Voluntary Return Service and other initiatives; offering practical support and assistance to those who wish to return to their home countries but have no means to do so.

The UK continues to welcome refugees and people in need of protection. Our safe and legal routes have resulted in over 320,000 people coming to the U.K. Since the Hong Kong BN(O) route was set up in January 2021, over 140,000 BN(O) status holders and their family members have chosen to take the UK up on this offer and have applied for the BN(O) route as of 30 June 2022.

In February 2021, the Home Office completed our commitment to resettle those 20,000 people fleeing conflict in Syria. An additional 1,838 refugees were resettled through the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme.

Through the UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS), we have expanded our geographical focus beyond the Middle East and North Africa to continue to offer safe and legal routes to the UK for some of the most vulnerable refugees around the world. 1,685 vulnerable refugees have been resettled through the UKRS since the launch of the scheme in March 2021 and since January 2019, 8,710 refugees have been resettled across all the Government's resettlement schemes (not including Afghan schemes).

We helped over 15,000 people to safety from Afghanistan in the biggest and fastest emergency evacuation in recent history. A further 5,000 more people

have been helped to enter since the evacuation. This January the Government launched the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme which will see up to 20,000 people from Afghanistan and the region resettled to the UK over the coming years. This is in addition to individuals relocated through the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy. In less than a year, almost 7,400 Afghan evacuees have been provided with permanent homes.

In response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine we set up some of the fastest and biggest visa schemes in UK history. The Ukraine Family Scheme had received 58,600 visa applications by 23 August 2022, of which 50,100 visas had been issued. We had received 149,900 Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme visa applications, and issued 128,800 visas, by 23 August 2022.

In June we also announced that the Homes for Ukraine scheme will also allow eligible children under the age of 18 who are not travelling with or joining a parent or legal guardian, to come to the UK in carefully defined circumstances.

This record of delivery demonstrates the efforts of the Home Office to get on with the job of protecting the public, keeping our borders secure and the British people safe from harm.

Enabling the legitimate movement of people and goods to support economic prosperity

In 2019, we had uncontrolled immigration from the EU. Since then, we have ended free movement and launched a points-based system, creating a single, global immigration system, attracting and retaining the brightest and best global talent, while realising the enormous potential of our domestic workforce.

We have made significant progress in digitising the immigration system, making further improvements to how applicants apply for, access and prove their immigration status to others.

In terms of operational processing, between January and July 2022, 96.4% of UK standard passport applications were completed within the published processing time of 10 weeks. The Passport Office is working hard to investigate and conclude the reducing number of cases which fall outside 10 weeks. We plan to recover Work in Progress (WIP) to base levels across all workstreams in time for year-end WIP target levels, so that we are prepared for the levels of intake next year which we anticipate will be similar to those of 2022.

We are currently facing extremely high pressure globally across our visa network, caused by a significantly increase in visa demand following the easing of travel restrictions and the prioritising of Ukraine Family Scheme and Homes for Ukraine applications in response to the humanitarian crisis caused by Putin's barbaric invasion of Ukraine. We are working hard to reduce the current processing times as quickly as possible by flexing staff resource and utilising agency across our visa routes as well as pursuing a programme of transformation and business improvement initiatives

which will speed up decision making, reduce the time people spend in the system and reduce the numbers who are awaiting an interview or decision. We have also recently reintroduced Priority and Super Priority services in a number of our visa routes to improve the customer experience.

Ahead of our exit from the European Union, Border Force recruited 1,570 new staff and trained a total of 8,000 in new policy and processes. We worked with HMRC to operationalise new inland border facilities, effectively creating 5 new ports; and delivered complex and interrelated change across a total of 125 ports.

We have further expanded our points-based immigration system to attract the most promising international talent to the UK and maintain our status as a leading international hub for emerging technologies. In May 2021, we expanded our Global Talent Route to allow recipients of international awards, including the Nobel Prize for Physics, to automatically qualify for the visa. In 2022 we introduced the Global Business Mobility, High Potential Individual and Scale-up visa routes.

Since 2019, we have continued to increase border efficiency through the increased use of eGates, expanding their use to passengers from Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea & USA, in addition to British, Irish and EU nationals, and with Border Force now operating 288 eGates at 15 ports. National rollout of the eGate upgrade, which has introduced a new operating system, Border Crossing, and upgraded the software, was completed six months early.

Since I overhauled the Windrush Compensation Scheme in December 2020, interim payments rose from £250 to £10,000. As at the end of June 2022, £53.8 million had been paid or offered under the Windrush Compensation Scheme, with £43.9 million paid out across 1,098 claims. Our One Home Office cultural transformation programme features an increased focus on ethical decision-making with new routes for colleagues to escalate concerns and think more about the 'Face Behind the Case'.

By 30 June 2022, we had concluded nearly 6.5 million EU Settlement Scheme applications, granting status in over 5.9 million applications. Over 450,000 individuals have been supported to apply to the EUSS by our network of grant-funded organisations across the UK. This includes victims of human trafficking and domestic abuse.

In 2021, we removed the ability for EU, EEA, and Swiss nationals to travel on an ID card, unless the holder is protected by the Citizens' Rights Withdrawal Agreements, given they were one of the most abused documents at the border.

All these achievements represent a record of delivering on the people's priorities – a record of which I am very proud.

Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse 2018-20: Past Reports

[HLWS280]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My hon Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Safeguarding (Amanda Solloway) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

Twelve past reports of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse have today been laid before the House, in compliance with the Inquiries Act 2005. These reports were published by the Inquiry between August 2018 and November 2020. The reports are also available on the IICSA website and will be published on www.gov.uk.

Infected Blood: Interim Compensation

[HLWS276]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: My Rt Hon Friend the Minister for the Cabinet Office and HM Paymaster General (Michael Ellis QC MP) has today made the following statement:

The Infected Blood Inquiry has heard first hand details of the terrible suffering experienced by the victims of infected blood over many years, and the urgent need to address the financial uncertainty faced by many.

This Government commissioned Sir Robert Francis QC to produce an independent study with options for a workable and fair framework of compensation for those infected and affected by the tragedy. A copy of Sir Robert's report is in the Library of this House.

Following Sir Robert's detailed evidence given to the Inquiry in July, the Chair of the Infected Blood Inquiry, Sir Brian Langstaff delivered an interim report to the government. In accordance with section 26 of the Inquiries Act 2005, a copy of Sir Brian's interim report has been laid before Parliament. In his report, Sir Brian made the following recommendations:

“(1) An interim payment should be paid, without delay, to all those infected and all bereaved partners currently registered on UK infected blood support schemes, and those who register between now and the inception of any future scheme; and

(2) The amount should be no less than £100,000, as recommended by Sir Robert Francis QC.”

On 16 August, I wrote to Sir Brian to confirm that the government has accepted his recommendation in full and that we will be making an interim payment of £100,000, by the end of October, to all infected beneficiaries and bereaved partners registered with the four national support schemes. The date of effect of the recommendation is 29 July 2022, the date that Sir Brian delivered his report. Any infected person or bereaved partner registered with one of the four schemes operating

in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland on that date will be eligible to receive the payments. Sir Brian's recommendation - which this government accepts - was careful not to exclude any eligible person who, for whatever reason, may have not registered themselves with their relevant national support scheme. Should they do so in future, before the inception of any future scheme, they will also be eligible for such a payment, subject to successful application to the scheme.

The intention is that payments will be tax-free and will not affect any financial benefits support an individual is receiving. In advance of the payments, the four support schemes will write to beneficiaries, confirming tax exemptions and benefit disregards, and provide practical details about how the payments will be made. The UK Government will provide the funding to ensure that those eligible, wherever they are living in the United Kingdom, will receive the payment.

As recognised by Sir Robert Francis and Sir Brian Langstaff, this group of victims is the immediate priority for the government because we recognise that, tragically, many of these individuals will not see the conclusion of the Inquiry.

However, I am mindful that there will be people deeply affected by this tragedy who will not benefit from these payments. Sir Robert's detailed Compensation Framework Study makes carefully considered recommendations about the further scope of compensation, including that carers and bereaved relatives (a cohort of affected people not currently supported by financial support schemes) should be compensated. In his interim report, Sir Brian makes specific reference to bereaved parents and children but notes the complexities in determining the approach to their compensation.

To those individuals and others who are out of scope of these payments, I would like to emphasise that the interim payments the government has announced are the start of the process and not the end. Sir Robert's study has been warmly welcomed by the Inquiry and, without prejudging the findings of the independent Inquiry, I fully expect his wider recommendations to inform the Inquiry's final report when it is published in mid-2023. Until that time, the government will continue work in consideration of the broader recommendations in the Compensation Framework Study so that we are ready to respond promptly when the Inquiry concludes its work.

Launch of the Public Sector Fraud Authority

[HLWS275]

Lord True: My Rt Hon Friend the Minister for Brexit Opportunities and Government Efficiency (Jacob Rees-Mogg MP) has today made the following statement:

Further to the written statement dated 7 July, I am writing to update the House that the Public Sector Fraud Authority (PSFA) launched on 3 August 2022.

The Chancellor's Spring Statement, issued on 23 March 2022, provided £25 million of funding to establish the PSFA which brings together experts from across sectors in an integrated way with the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury. Staffed by counter fraud experts and backed by leading data analytics tools and techniques, it will put a greater focus on performance and outcomes. It will also build deeper and broader expert-led services to support departments and public bodies to reduce the impact of fraud. The functions and services of the PSFA will be built over the next two years.

The Authority has launched with a target of detecting and preventing £180 million of fraud in its first year and will work with government departments and public bodies to agree longer-term targets by December.

The PSFA will modernise the government's counter fraud response by:

- Agreeing ambitious counter fraud plans for departments and public bodies and reviewing progress;
- Regularly and directly briefing Cabinet Ministers including HM Treasury and Cabinet Office on the latest fraud landscape;
- Providing expert support to departments and public bodies about the fraud risks and threats they face, then help to design defences against them and test their effectiveness;
- Building a new National Counter Fraud Data Analytics Service that will provide advanced data capabilities - such as social network analysis - to surface, fight and prevent fraud against taxpayers; and
- Enhancing the use of fraud intelligence across the public sector, and with other sectors, to combat specific threats.

Ahead of a permanently appointed Chief Executive Officer of the Authority, it is led by Interim Chief Executive Officer Mark Cheeseman OBE, an internationally recognised expert in public sector fraud who led the creation of the government's Counter Fraud Profession and the establishment of the International Public Sector Fraud Forum.

The PSFA will be supported by a cross-sector Advisory Panel that will provide expert advice and help shape the strategic approach to public sector fraud prevention and reduction. The Chair of the Advisory Panel will be announced in September.

Rough Sleeping Strategy

[HLWS278]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: My Rt Hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Levelling UP, Housing and Communities (Greg Clark) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

On 3 September Government published its new strategy to end rough sleeping in England.

This Government has made the unprecedented pledge to end rough sleeping within this Parliament and this strategy will help us to deliver that goal. Working with our partners across Government, in local authorities and the sector, we have delivered remarkable progress so far, with rough sleeping levels in the most recent Annual Rough Sleeping Snapshot at an 8-year low in England. However, we face significant challenges if we are to end rough sleeping for good and we must work across government and with local partners to step up our efforts.

The strategy will build on that progress and help us end rough sleeping for good by bringing forward a bold new approach backed by £2 billion of funding over the next three years to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping in England.

For the first time, we are defining what we mean by ending rough sleeping - that rough sleeping will be prevented wherever possible, and when it does occur, it will be rare, brief and non-recurrent. We will bring forward a new data framework which will enable us to track progress against the definition and ensure all local and central partners are doing their bit.

We will embed a 'prevention first' approach so that rough sleeping is better prevented before people reach the streets. This means ensuring the landmark changes in the Homelessness Reduction Act are fully embedded, to prevent more people from reaching a homelessness crisis, as well as bringing forward investment so that nobody leaves a public institution, such as prison or care, to the streets. As part of this, we will provide new funding over the next three years to expand the Accommodation for Ex-Offenders programme so that people at risk of homelessness including rough sleeping in all parts of England are supported into long-term, settled accommodation.

We will also empower local authorities by extending our flagship Rough Sleeping Initiative to 2025, with up to £500 million funding so that local areas can provide the tailored support needed to end rough sleeping over the next three years. We will complete delivery of the Housing First pilots in Greater Manchester, Liverpool City Region and the West Midlands, providing a further £13.9 million over two years on top of the £28 million already invested, and expand housing first more widely through £32 million within the Rough Sleeping Initiative.

This will sit alongside £200 million new funding for the Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme, which will deliver up to 2400 much-needed homes for vulnerable people at risk of homelessness or rough sleeping, including young people and those with the most complex needs, alongside expanding existing accommodation programmes which we know work.

We will act across the system to reduce rough sleeping. We will ensure new local Integrated Care Systems in the NHS consider the health and social care needs of those sleeping rough in their area in the development of their strategies. Jobcentres will work closely with local authorities to support people experiencing rough sleeping

to access benefits and employment advice. We will be launching a new homelessness employer covenant with Crisis to help employers recruit and support employees who have been homeless or rough sleeping.

A quarter of people sleeping rough nationally are not from the UK, rising to nearly half in London. Since the pandemic we have seen local authorities looking to exhaust all options to support this group away from the streets: we want to see this continue. For those here legally but with restricted eligibility for public funds, we want to see them get appropriate support so sustain a life away from the streets. For those here illegally, we want to ensure people return to their home country swiftly and receive the appropriate support to do this.

As part of the strategy we are announcing allocations for areas in England in a range of key initiatives including the Rough Sleeping Initiative, Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme, Rough Sleeping Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant and Housing First. Full details of allocations can be found on gov.uk.

Whilst we have taken the significant step of committing to repeal the Vagrancy Act in full, we must make sure the police, local authorities and other agencies have the powers and tools they need to respond effectively to begging, support vulnerable individuals and help communities feel safer. Government is currently consulting on the need for appropriate replacement legislation to ensure the police and other agencies remain able to protect the public, while also embedding rehabilitation and support at the heart of our approach.

The whole of Government is united in ending rough sleeping. In order to achieve this, all partners, across central and local Government, voluntary organisations, delivery partners and the public must work together as one.

We want our ambitious approach to be matched by bold local delivery and expect all those involved in ending rough sleeping to play their part. We want to ensure rough sleeping is ended in a way that is sustainable in the long-term, and this strategy lays the foundations for the long-term system change needed to support that.

This strategy shows that this Government is committed to ending rough sleeping, and we will continue to work with local and national partners to achieve this.

A copy of the Rough Sleeping Strategy will be deposited in the Library of the House.

Storm Overflows Discharge Reduction Plan

[HLWS277]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: My Right Honourable friend the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (George Eustice) has made the following Statement:

This government has been consistently clear that the failure of the water companies to adequately reduce the amount of storm sewage discharges is unacceptable. We

are the first government to set a clear requirement on water companies to reduce sewage discharges and set this in law.

Today, I have laid the Storm Overflows Discharge Reduction Plan in Parliament which sets out strict new targets to crack down on sewage discharges. This will start the largest investment in infrastructure ever undertaken by the water industry, an estimated £56bn of capital investment over the next 25 years. This will eliminate 80% of discharges by 2050.

Designated bathing waters will be the first sites to see change. By 2035, water companies must ensure that overflows affecting a designated bathing water are compliant with strict standards to protect public health. We will also see significant reductions in discharges at 75% of high priority nature sites. By 2050, no storm overflow covered in the plan will be permitted to operate where this will cause any adverse ecological harm.

The first steps in achieving these targets are already being taken. Water companies are investing £3.1bn already between 2020 and 2025 to deliver 800 improvements to storm overflows, which will deliver an average of a 25% reduction in discharges by 2025.

Storm overflows are a Victorian sewer system design feature. Achieving the targets will require large and complex infrastructure projects which will take time to deliver. It is right that we carefully balance our ambitions to improve and protect the environment with the need to limit the impact on consumers, particularly when households are facing pressures. If new evidence shows it is possible to go faster, without disproportionately affecting consumers, we will not hesitate to do so and we have set a review of the targets in 2027 for this purpose.

We will not hesitate to hold companies to account where discharges are happening illegally. This is happening now, with record fines and the largest ever criminal and civil investigation into water company sewage discharges being launched by Ofwat and the Environment Agency.

We have also made clear that water companies must be transparent about how executive pay and shareholder dividends align to the services they provide their customers. This government supports Ofwat's recent proposals to take further enforcement action against companies that don't link dividend payments to their environmental performance, or those failing to be transparent about their dividend pay-outs.

Water is one of our most precious commodities – water companies must now show their commitment to clean up our environment, protect public health and bring these harmful discharges to an end.

Student Loan Interest Rates

[HLWS283]

Baroness Barran: My honourable friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Skills, Further

and Higher Education for Education (Andrea Jenkyns) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

I am announcing today a temporary reduction in student loan interest rates effective as of 1 September 2022.

The Government announced on 13 June 2022 that the student loan interest rate would be set at 7.3% between 1 September 2022 and 31 August 2023, in line with the forecast prevailing market rates. The Government confirmed that should the actual prevailing market rate turn out to be lower than forecast, a further cap would be implemented to reduce student loan interest rates accordingly.

I am announcing today a temporary cap to the Post-2012 income contingent repayment undergraduate and postgraduate loan interest rates in line with the latest actual prevailing market rate. Subject to parliamentary approval, the cap will come into effect on 1 September 2022 and last for a period of three months.

The Post-2012 undergraduate and postgraduate income contingent repayment student loan interest rates will be 6.3% between 1 September 2022 and 30 November 2022.

From 1 December 2022, the Post-2012 and postgraduate income contingent repayment student loan interest rates will be 7.3%, as announced on 13 June 2022, to align with the forecast prevailing market rate. As before, should the actual prevailing market rate turn out to be lower than forecast, the Post-2012 undergraduate and postgraduate income contingent repayment student loan interest rates will be reduced accordingly.

Transport for London: Long Term Funding Settlement

[HLWS273]

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

Following my statement to the House on 13 July, I am writing to update the House that today we have agreed a new longer-term funding settlement between Transport for London and Government. The final extraordinary funding settlement expired on 3 August and I have agreed with the Mayor of London a new settlement until 31 March 2024 or until Transport for London reaches financial sustainability, whichever is the sooner.

This longer-term settlement includes over £1.1bn of additional grant funding until March 2024 for London transport, which will unlock almost £3.6bn worth of critical infrastructure investment, with a number of projects set to revolutionise travel across the capital.

As a result of our longer-term settlement, major upgrades will be delivered for Londoners, including new Piccadilly line trains and the modernisation of the District, Metropolitan, Hammersmith and City and Circle lines – maintaining the London Underground's world-class status. Further benefits include: supporting the long-awaited repair of Hammersmith Bridge; vital improvement to Elephant and Castle station and a London

Overground extension between Gospel Oak and Barking Riverside to service more than 10,000 new homes in east London.

As part of the settlement, the Mayor will be required to continue work on the introduction of driverless trains on London Underground, in use on the Dockland Light Railway for more than 35 years. At a time when strikes are crippling both the Underground and national rail systems, never has this work been more important.

Alongside all of this is Government's continued commitment to mitigate TfL's loss of passenger revenue from the ongoing uncertainty of demand following changes to travel patterns since the Covid-19 pandemic. None of this would have been possible without Government funding.

The settlement letter requires Transport for London to modernise and control its operating costs, to make it a modern, effective, efficient and financially stable operator. It is a settlement that is fair and proportionate to London whilst also taking into account funding provided elsewhere in the country and the cost to the national taxpayer, at a time of great pressure on national finances.

It comes on top of the over £5bn of funding support the Government has already provided to TfL since the beginning of the pandemic and Government's commitment to over £1 billion per year until 2025 for London transport through Business Rates Retention.

Through all of this, Government is continuing to work with the Mayor and TfL to ensure London's transport system delivers for the public and businesses and contributes to the country's economy.

UK-Ukraine Digital Trade Agreement

[HLWS289]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade (Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP) has today made the following statement:

On 24th August, The Government launched negotiations with Ukraine towards a bilateral digital trade agreement, the proposed 'UK-Ukraine Digital Trade Agreement'.

The UK is standing shoulder to shoulder with Ukraine in the face of unjustified aggression from Putin, and I remain committed to ensuring that trade policy plays its part in supporting Ukraine now and throughout its economic reconstruction. In addition to the immediate actions we have already taken to liberalise tariffs and starve Putin's war machine of funds, we need to put in place longer-term measures to support Ukraine and play our part in securing its future as a prosperous, stable, and democratic partner in Europe.

The UK is increasingly recognised as a global leader in digital trade, with a network of international agreements that drive productivity, jobs, and growth. In 2021, under its G7 Presidency, the UK brokered agreement on the ground-breaking G7 Digital Trade Principles, while earlier this year the UK-Singapore Digital Economy Agreement - the world's most innovative trade agreement - entered into force.

As a result, in my discussions with our Ukrainian partners, we have agreed that we should seek to negotiate a Digital Trade Agreement (DTA) to play an important role in supporting Ukraine's reconstruction objectives. Ukraine has strong digital ambitions, and they have identified greater digitalisation of the economy as one of their areas of focus.

Ukraine sees digital trade as part of their vision for the future, and the UK is ideally placed to help Ukraine benefit from the opportunities this presents.

In addition to furthering our vital support for Ukraine, this agreement will also be good for British businesses. The current UK-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement (FTA) contains limited digital and e-commerce provisions. Expanding these commitments will remove barriers to digital trade and enable UK exporters to service Ukrainian markets more easily.

As digital trade is now the foundation of modern global trade, securing this agreement will send a strong signal of the United Kingdom's support for our Ukrainian allies in response to the ongoing conflict, and further cement our position as a forward-thinking trading partner in the modern global economy.

I will continue to keep the House updated as negotiations develop.

Written Answers

Monday, 5 September 2022

Afghanistan: Refugees

Asked by **Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to have discussions with the government of the United States of America about the situation of the more than 40 former Afghan officials, held at Camp Bondsteel in Kosovo, who are reportedly not allowed to leave that camp. [HL1626]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have frequent discussions with our allies and partners, including the US Government, about our respective efforts to resettle eligible, vulnerable Afghan citizens. It is for each country to establish their own arrangements for processing those they deem eligible for resettlement, including crucial security checks.

African Swine Fever

Asked by **Baroness McIntosh of Pickering**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the current risk level of African swine fever for the UK. [HL2026]

Lord Benyon: Managing the threat of African swine fever remains a key UK priority. Whilst we have never had an outbreak in the UK, we continue to prepare for the eventuality of one. Given the deteriorating epidemiological situation in Europe, Defra has commissioned an update to the 2018 risk assessment which looked at the risk of African swine fever entering Great Britain from the European Union via movement of humans, animals or animal products.

The risk assessment has concluded that the overall level of risk to Great Britain has remained the same as in 2018. However, the risk of entry of contaminated goods into Great Britain via personal luggage or couriers has become high. The department is looking at a range of mitigations, including targeted interventions to prevent high-risk pork from coming into Great Britain from Europe.

African Swine Fever: Import Controls

Asked by **Baroness McIntosh of Pickering**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many times African swine fever has been identified in imported products in each of the last three years. [HL2027]

Lord Benyon: ASF virus can be present in the meat and bone marrow of contaminated products from infected animals. We have regionalisation in place for ASF for some countries, and there are rules in place for products from an ASF disease restriction zone or an ASF endemic country to be exported. Therefore, a non-processed

product from an ASF disease restriction zone or an ASF endemic country is usually considered to be a non-compliant import and should be destroyed.

Defra does not routinely test for ASF virus in imported commodities.

Agriculture: Animal Welfare and Environment Protection

Asked by **Lord Taylor of Warwick**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to introduce greater (1) environment, and (2) welfare, standards in farming. [HL927]

Lord Benyon: Food production and environmental protection must go hand in hand. We want sustainable agriculture, so we want to work with farmers to deliver some of the environmental ambitions that we have.

The Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) will incentivise farmers to look after the assets that protect our food security – like soil – and boost nature recovery. We have seen an explosion of interest in regenerative farming practices such as mob grazing, the use of herbal leys, companion crops in arable fields to help manage pests and diseases and the use of cover crops and green manures like phacelia and nitrogen fixing legumes to reduce fertiliser input costs. The SFI is a flexible support mechanism that will help fund whatever an individual farmer judges is right for their own holding in this space. We are starting the early rollout of the SFI with these soils standards because healthy soils are the foundation of sustainable farming and underpin a range of environmental benefits, as well as production. It will expand to cover integrated pest management, hedges and much more over the next few years. We will not tell farmers what they have to do in detailed prescriptions but we will support the choices they make.

Animal health and welfare, genetic resources and our native breeds are a public good and it is right that the Agriculture Act recognised this for the first time. This year we will open the Animal Health and Welfare Pathway starting with a funded annual vet visit for livestock enterprises so that a trusted vet can offer strategic advice on animal health and welfare; managing pressing endemic diseases which have a major impact on farm profitability; and making recommendations on grants, available next year, to further improve welfare on farms.

Many farms have a corner of their holding that is less productive and contributes little to food production or profit margins and where it is possible to create more space for nature. We already have over 31,000 farmers in our Countryside Stewardship schemes who are doing just that and being paid for it. This year we have bumped up the payment rates for many of the interventions by 30 percent both for those already in and those seeking to join and we are looking at the whole issue of what the EU termed “ineligible features” - the patches of scrub or the dew ponds in valleys that are actually an environmental

asset to be rewarded not an ineligible feature to be penalised. Almost half of farmers are already engaged in some way.

Agriculture: Subsidies

*Asked by **The Earl of Leicester***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of farm businesses in England have received the advance payment of their Basic Payment Scheme from the Rural Payments Agency. [[HL1738](#)]

*Asked by **The Earl of Leicester***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much money they have paid out to farm businesses in England in advanced payment of the Basic Payment scheme. [[HL1739](#)]

Lord Benyon: As of 22 July 2022, 42.74% of farm businesses have been issued with Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) advance payments. This equates to a total value of £54.7M released in advance BPS funding.

The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) is forecasting to have paid over 60,000 farmers (approx. 73%) by the end of the month. By the end of the second week of August, they expect to have paid 82,000 farmers who are eligible to receive a payment at this time. Prior to the payment run, RPA undertook preliminary checks to ensure the agreed funds were ready for release on schedule. There will inevitably be a small number of farmers who cannot be paid, for reasons such as: low claim value (under £1k); outstanding probate; and absence of bank details. RPA made efforts to contact all customers ahead of time where bank details were not held, in order to minimise the number of farmers whose payments could not be made. RPA will write to all farmers they believe are unlikely to receive their payment by the end of August.

Air Pollution: Monitoring

*Asked by **Baroness Merron***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to develop the fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) monitoring network in order to monitor the progress made towards achieving the air pollution targets set under the Environment Act 2021. [[HL1977](#)]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: As part of our work to assess progress towards the new PM_{2.5} targets, we have already invested £1m to expand the PM_{2.5} monitoring network in 2021/22, and have added 17 monitoring sites (as of July 2022) to the existing 63 (December 2021). By the end of 2025 we will have invested a further £10m to at least double the size of the original PM_{2.5} network.

Air Pollution: Urban Areas

*Asked by **Baroness Merron***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) pollution which is generated from vehicle tyres and breaks is controlled in towns and cities. [[HL1976](#)]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The development of regulations to limit emissions from tyre and brake wear depends on the development of an internationally recognised test procedure for measuring them. This issue is being examined by the UN ECE Particle Measurement Programme (PMP), which includes DfT officials, other international governments, and the automotive industry. DfT is one of the founders of PMP and has played a leading role since its inception.

To support the work of the PMP group further, DfT commissioned a 3-year research project in February 2021 aimed at understanding better the measurement techniques, material properties and control parameters of tyre and brake wear emissions from road vehicles. This project will inform policy and legislation aiming at reducing these emissions on a domestic and international level.

Furthermore, Government is continuing to invest through Innovate UK grants in emerging technologies which reduce non-exhaust emissions.

Aircraft Carriers

*Asked by **Lord Empey***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Royal Navy's two aircraft carriers can be reconfigured with catapult launch capability. [[HL1893](#)]

Baroness Goldie: Both Queen Elizabeth Class carriers could be reconfigured to operate a catapult launch system. They were built to allow for capability changes over the lifespan of the ships.

*Asked by **Lord Empey***

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect the Royal Navy's two aircraft carriers to have a full complement of aircraft. [[HL1894](#)]

Baroness Goldie: The composition and size of an embarked air group in a deploying Queen Elizabeth Class (QEC) carrier will be specifically tailored to meet the operational requirement.

The QEC carriers have been designed to be able to embark 40 aircraft, a mix of fixed wing and rotary wing, with both currently cleared to operate a spectrum of Ministry of Defence aircraft.

Airlines: Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they made an assessment in 2020 of whether limiting their support of UK airlines through access to furlough funding would have an impact on the airlines' staff numbers and post-pandemic capacity. [HL1905]

Baroness Penn: The economic impact of the pandemic was widespread across large parts of the economy. It was right that the Government made support available for all businesses that needed it for the whole of the UK. To clarify, any entity with a UK payroll, including airlines, was able to apply for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS).

When designing and implementing the scheme, the Government carefully considered its impacts on individual sectors and on the economy as a whole, and adapted its approach in response to the changing health and economic context.

In addition to CJRS, the Government provided unprecedented support to the aviation and aerospace sectors throughout Covid-19, with over £12 billion made available through loan guarantees, support for exporters, the Bank of England's Covid Corporate Financing Facility, and grants for research and development.

Airports

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the condition of runways at UK airports and their ability to withstand climate change-related weather conditions. [HL1906]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Safety is our utmost priority in aviation and therefore in extreme heat UK airports have increased monitoring of operations, including runway inspections.

There are a number of factors that can impact wear of runways. To mitigate these risks, regular rehabilitation and resurfacing works are scheduled by all major airports to keep their runways in the best condition to support aircraft movements safely. In addition, the Civil Aviation Authority requires all certified airports to inspect their runway a minimum of two times a day along the standard international guidelines for inspection.

HM Government recognises that the fight against climate change is one of the greatest and most pressing challenges facing the modern world. The third National Adaptation Programme is due in 2023. It will showcase the government's strategy and plans to tackle the effects of climate change, including how to protect people, infrastructure and the environment in heatwaves.

Airports: Standards

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure the continued resilience of UK airports for both (1) passengers, and (2) freight operators. [HL2050]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: We have been extensively engaging with industry at both ministerial and official level since the beginning of the year. During these meetings we have been clear that the volume delays and late notice cancellations are unacceptable, and airlines must have realistic schedules they can deliver.

On 30 June, the Secretary of State announced 22 measures the Government is taking to support the aviation industry, including: to help recruit and train staff; ensure the delivery of a realistic summer schedule through a slots amnesty; minimise disruption; and support passengers when delays and cancellations are unavoidable. We are now clear that industry needs to manage their operations effectively.

The Aviation Minister is also chairing a Strategic Risk Group which meets weekly to bring together senior executives from across the sector to highlight issues, assess mitigations, and encourage collaborative working.

Airports: Weather

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure airports are resilient to rising temperatures in the UK. [HL1985]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Aviation operates in the private sector and it is therefore for airports to consider the impacts of periods of extreme heat on their operations.

Safety is an utmost priority and therefore in extreme heat airports have increased monitoring of operations, including the aerodynamics of an aircraft, runway temperatures and the operational environment for staff and passengers. The sector has well-rehearsed plans in place to manage with heat and mitigate the effect upon operations.

Animal Products: Import Controls

Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many seizures of imported (1) products of animal origin, and (2) pig meat, have been made in the last three years. [HL2028]

Lord Benyon: Border Force holds the data on seizures of imported products of animal origin, including meat. Data on seizures of pig meat specifically is unavailable.

Antimicrobials: Pollution Control

Asked by **Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what (1) monitoring, and (2) mitigation, strategies they have put in place for environmental pollution by (a) metal nanoparticles, and (b) the bacteria resistant to these antimicrobial metal nanoparticles. [HL1417]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Whilst the Environment Agency (EA) does not have environmental monitoring in place specifically targeting metal nanoparticles, it is keeping a watching brief on innovative monitoring approaches and environmental effects. Although the science associated with environmental analysis for nanoparticles (and their associated effects) is in development, the EA has considered a number of nanoparticles through its Prioritisation and Early Warning System (PEWS). To date, the EA has considered titanium dioxide, zinc oxide, cerium dioxide, copper oxide and copper carbonate nanoparticles through PEWS.

Asked by **Lord Berkeley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Vere of Norbiton (HL1417), in respect of properties in Park Village East which may be subject to settlement due to tunnelling or other construction works in the vicinity, what information has been provided by HS2 Ltd in its engagement "with affected parties in the development of the current design"; and whether they will place all relevant papers, including any independent reports on ground movement, in the Library of the House. [HL1834]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: HS2 Ltd has kept local residents informed about the plans for the HS2 Euston Approaches through (i) a series of regular online and face to face information sessions; and (ii) online materials made available on the HS2 Ltd website.

Most recently, in Spring 2022, HS2 Ltd hosted a series of information sessions, where updates were provided on the development of the design of the Euston Approaches, including the proposed tunnels. These virtual and in person information sessions were attended by Park Village East residents. The online materials include a Frequently Asked Questions document, which includes details of the developing designs, along with detailed responses to regular questions received from Park Village East residents about tunnelling and excavations.

In parallel, HS2 Ltd has been in regular contact with relevant residents to arrange property surveys and other investigations to inform ground movement assessments associated with the proposed major excavations and tunnelling. As the detailed design of the tunnels progresses, HS2 Ltd will carry out further assessments and provide updates to relevant property owners. Property owners within the settlement buffer zone are able to apply for a settlement deed under the HS2 Act.

Details of the final design are expected to be available to share. HS2 plan to finalise and share the tunnel design in spring 2023 and will keep the community informed if dates change, with tunnelling due to start in mid to late 2023.

Apprentices: Taxation

Asked by **Lord Gilbert of Panteg**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the (1) total amount raised from employers, (2) total value of unspent funds in employers' digital voucher accounts at year end, and (3) total value of funds which expired unspent, in each financial year since the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy. [HL1896]

Baroness Barran: Details of the total value of apprenticeship levy paid by employers each month is published by HMRC in their Tax & National Insurance Contributions receipts publication, which can be found online [here: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hmrc-tax-and-nics-receipts-for-the-uk](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hmrc-tax-and-nics-receipts-for-the-uk).

Employers in England who pay the apprenticeship levy don't use digital vouchers, but access funds for apprenticeship training by registering for an apprenticeship service account. The funds in employers' accounts reflect the 'English percentage' of an employer's levy contribution and include a 10% top-up from the government. Figures for the total value of levy balances in employers' apprenticeship service accounts at the financial year end can be found in the table below:

Total value of levy balances at financial year (FY) end (Rounded £Million)

FY 2017-18	FY 2018-19	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21	FY 2021-22
£1,988	£3,745	£4,430	£4,706	£4,987

The funds in apprenticeship service accounts are available for levy-paying employers to use for 24 months before they begin to expire on a rolling, month-by-month basis. Employers began to pay the apprenticeship levy in April 2017 and unused levy funds began to expire in May 2019. Figures for the funds which have expired from employers' levy accounts are shown in the table below:

Expired (Rounded £Million)

FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21	FY 2021-22
£847	£1,314	£1,315

The department's annual apprenticeship budget for England is set by HM Treasury and, although closely linked, is distinct from the total levy income collected. The levy has been set at a level to fund demand for apprenticeships in employers of all sizes.

We do not anticipate that all employers who pay the levy will need or want to use all the funds available to them, but they are able to if they wish. As well as funding new apprenticeships in levy-paying employers, income from the levy funds new apprenticeships in employers

that do not pay the levy, existing apprentices that started in previous years, English and maths tuition for apprentices and additional payments to employers, providers and apprentices.

Armed Forces: Housing

Asked by Lord Goddard of Stockport

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the status of their Single Living Accommodation Modernisation (SLAM) programme. [HL1854]

Baroness Goldie: The Single Living Accommodation Modernisation (SLAM) Programme is complete.

The SLAM Programme was a 10 year contract awarded by the Ministry of Defence in 2002. In late 2012, during the last six months of the contract, 14 new build projects were added. Design and construction of these projects followed with completion in 2016. The Final Account of the SLAM Programme took place in 2017.

The SLAM Programme was one of the largest new build and refurbishment programmes in the UK and delivered successful renovations and constructions on 52 locations from Scotland to Cornwall. 121 separate projects improved or created more than 22,000 bedspaces.

Asked by Lord Goddard of Stockport

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much money they invested in improving and replacing living accommodation in barracks and married quarters for Armed Forces personnel in 2021/22. [HL1855]

Baroness Goldie: £284.875 million has been invested in improving and replacing Single Living Accommodation and Service Family Accommodation for Armed Forces personnel across the UK Defence Estate in Financial Year 2021-22.

Asked by Lord Goddard of Stockport

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much money they plan to invest in improving and replacing living accommodation in barracks and married quarters for Armed Forces personnel in 2022/23. [HL1856]

Baroness Goldie: £460.358 million of investment is planned to improve and replace Single Living Accommodation and Service Family Accommodation across the UK Defence Estate for Armed Forces personnel in Financial Year 2022-23.

Asked by Lord Goddard of Stockport

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people leaving the Armed Forces last year cited the quality of accommodation as one of the reasons for leaving. [HL1857]

Baroness Goldie: The requested information can be found on page 12 of the 2022-Armed Forces Continuous Attitudes Survey (AFCAS) results:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1075579/Armed](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1075579/Armed_Forces_Continuous_Attitude_Survey_2022_Main_Report.pdf)

[d_Forces_Continuous_Attitude_Survey_2022_Main_Report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1075579/Armed_Forces_Continuous_Attitude_Survey_2022_Main_Report.pdf)

26 per cent of personnel cited accommodation provision as a factor influencing their intention to leave versus 37 per cent citing it as a factor influencing their intention to stay.

Armed Forces: Ministers of Religion

Asked by Baroness Massey of Darwen

To ask Her Majesty's Government which professional qualifications relating to non-religious world views such as humanism are undertaken by the Armed Forces Chaplaincy; and which body accredits any such qualifications. [HL1744]

Baroness Goldie: All military Chaplains are accredited by Defence-endorsed sending churches or faith authorities which have committed their Chaplains to appreciate and understand the world views of all personnel irrespective of faith background. The vast majority of Chaplains are, additionally, university graduates whose professional studies will have included study of world views from a variety of spectrums, including humanism. Exact content will vary by institution, and is accredited by the relevant university, or institution.

Armed Forces: Pastoral Care

Asked by Baroness Massey of Darwen

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Goldie on 13 July (HL1351), what proportion of those using chaplaincy provided by their service identified as non-religious; what reasons were given for dissatisfaction with or a neutral stance towards the service received; what steps have been taken to improve the service in response to the 30-40 per cent of respondents who declared themselves either neutral towards or dissatisfied with the service they had received; and what resources, including funded posts comparable to religious chaplaincy, are provided to the various staff networks, including the Humanist And Non-religious in Defence Network, to provide support to those Service personnel who do not wish to talk to a Chaplain. [HL2029]

Asked by Baroness Massey of Darwen

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the service provided to armed forces personnel by the chaplaincy is prioritised according to the religion or belief of the individual seeking pastoral support. [HL2030]

Baroness Goldie: Information regarding how many users of the chaplaincy identified as non-religious is not held. Data regarding any protected characteristics of individuals seeking confidential pastoral support is not normally recorded, nor will they necessarily even arise or be disclosed unless they have a direct bearing upon the issues at hand.

Where dissatisfaction or a neutral stance is expressed in the Armed Forces Continuous Attitudes Survey (AFCAS), the specific reasoning behind each survey response is not recorded. AFCAS does not go into that level of detail, however, local evaluations in-Unit routinely show high levels of satisfaction with the teaching and pastoral care that chaplaincy provides.

Neutral responses with the AFCAS survey are often in effect a “not applicable (N/A)” response. In this case the respondents are not likely to have sought direct support from the chaplaincy in the time frame of the AFCAS survey. As they are unlikely to have accessed or used the service provided, there are no specific measures targeting improvement for this cohort of respondents. Information regarding a breakdown of resources comparing the chaplaincy to the various staff networks that provide support to Service personnel is not held in the format requested.

The question of the religion, belief, or any other protected characteristics of an individual in contact with chaplaincy has absolutely no bearing on priority of access for pastoral support. Pastoral support is delivered according to need and open to all.

Artificial Intelligence: Copyright

Asked by Lord Clement-Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many respondents to the Intellectual Property Office consultation Artificial Intelligence and IP: Copyright and Patents gave a first preference to Option 4 regarding expanding the text and data mining exception. [\[HL1725\]](#)

Lord Callanan: Of the responses to the consultation on Artificial Intelligence and Intellectual Property, 16 indicated that option 4 for a broad text and data mining exception was their preferred option; their joint-preferred option; or one of the preferred options within a mixed membership. 3 had a general preference for an exception, 17 preferred another type of data mining exception, 21 preferred no change, and 20 preferred changes to licensing.

Arts and Humanities: Higher Education

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Coventry

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure sufficient funding for arts and humanities subjects in higher education in the (1) short, and (2) long, term; and what assessment they have made of (a) the potential shortfall in funding after the cessation of funding from the European Research Council ceases, and (b) general pressures on funding for arts and humanities subjects in higher education. [\[HL1731\]](#)

Baroness Barran: The government recognises the importance of the creative arts to the economy and the UK's soft power. High-quality provision in a range of

subjects is critical for our workforce and our public services and is culturally-enriching for our society.

For the 2022/23 academic year, the Office for Students has increased the high-cost subject funding rate per student for performing and creative arts and media studies to £125.76, a rise of 3.51%, and for archaeology to £264.50, a rise of 4.75%, from the previous year. The department has also increased funding for world-leading specialist providers, including 11 providers specialising in the arts, by an additional £5 million in the 2022/23 financial year, on top of the increase of £10 million provided in the 2021/22 financial year. The department wants to ensure that such providers receive additional support, and that grant funding is used effectively to support students, including those with an interest in the cultural and creative sectors.

UK Research and Innovation is also providing significant investment over the current Spending Review period, with funding for the Arts and Humanities Research Council totalling £207 million for the 2022/23 to 2024/25 financial years.

Research England has published its funding decisions for university research and knowledge exchange, expected to be £8 billion over the Spending Review period. Proportional allocations across disciplinary areas have been maintained, recognising the significant contribution to culture and quality of life from the arts and humanities.

Arts: Education

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the article 'News & campaigns' in the Incorporated Society of Musicians July/August 2022 music journal; and what assessment they have made of the concerns expressed in that article that the Schools White Paper "suggests a possible narrowing of focus away from creative subjects such as music". [\[HL1694\]](#)

Baroness Barran: The department is grateful to the Incorporated Society of Musicians (ISM) for providing us with a copy of this issue of the Music Journal, which we understand is normally made available solely to its members.

Whilst the department acknowledges that there are challenges to delivering high quality music education in every school, schools the length and breadth of the country are doing just that. The White Paper is clear that 'as part of a richer school week, all children should be entitled to take part in sport, music and cultural opportunities and that these opportunities are an essential part of a broad and ambitious curriculum', a point that the ISM itself acknowledged in its response to the White Paper.

The department was pleased to note that the ISM has welcomed the refreshed National Plan for Music Education, which we published in June 2022 and in particular its restatement of the importance of music as an

essential part of a broad and ambitious curriculum for all pupils.

Arts: Higher Education

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the article 'News & campaigns' in the Incorporated Society of Musicians July/August 2022 music journal; and what assessment they have made of the concerns expressed in that article that proposals to reform Higher Education courses "will cause particular harm to arts courses, as well as damaging the government's own levelling-up agenda". [[HL1695](#)]

Baroness Barran: The higher education (HE) reforms, to which the Incorporated Society of Musicians article refers, were subject to consultation earlier this year. The consultation outlined proposals for controls to prevent the growth of low-quality courses with poor outcomes and sought views on what was a fair and appropriate level at which to potentially set a minimum eligibility requirement for access to student finance for degree-level study. The consultation period has now concluded and we are considering the views submitted. The government will respond in due course.

The article concentrates on the government's proposal to prevent the growth of low-quality courses. If implemented, all areas of HE would be considered, including creative arts, humanities, and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) courses, to inform an assessment of which provision offers the best outcomes. Our focus would be on courses which are of the lowest quality. Supporting students onto high-quality HE courses, that will offer them good outcomes, ensures that students, of all backgrounds, are not misdirected or encouraged towards courses that are unlikely to provide high-quality outcomes and good value for money. This will support levelling up.

Asylum

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 14 July (HL1286), when details of the new model for dispersal of asylum seekers will be published. [[HL1922](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: We are committed to working collaboratively with Local Authorities on the redesign of the asylum dispersal system, to deliver a system which houses asylum seekers more fairly and equitably across England, Wales and Scotland.

An informal consultation with partners shapes the redesign of the asylum dispersal system closed on 1 July.

We have taken on board the representations made during the informal consultation period and are building the feedback into our plans for regional allocations. We will communicate these to Local Authority partners shortly.

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 11 July (HL1285), what assessment they have made of (1) the number of asylum seekers attracted to the UK because of the asylum system in place prior to the Nationality and Borders Act 2022, and (2) the number of asylum seekers expected to be attracted to the UK because of the asylum system in place after the Act has been enacted. [[HL1925](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Through our New Plan for Immigration, we are fixing the broken asylum system to make it firm and fair, ensuring it is compassionate towards those who need our help, whilst seeking to stop abuse of the system

The number of asylum seekers who claimed asylum prior to the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 being enacted stood at 55,146 for the year ending March 2022 for main applicants only.

The Home Office are not able to provide the numbers expected to be lodged with the UK asylum system now the Act has been enacted. All asylum claims lodged in the UK are carefully considered on their individual merits against a background of relevant case law and up to date country information.

Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 19 July (HL1503), when support for organisations through the EU's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund is expected to end. [[HL2040](#)]

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 19 July (HL1503), what assessment they have made of their commitments to (1) "be a EU leader in integration and mitigation initiatives" when support from the EU's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund ends, and (2) "proactively support national and international initiatives for joint co-operation between EU Member States", as set out in their guidance published on 8 February. [[HL2041](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: To date AMIF has funded 46 external Integration projects to a value of £71m.

The Integration percentage of the total UK's allocation is 26%.

All external projects are entirely independent from the Home Office and the AMIF UK Responsible Authority.

Asylum: RAF Linton-on-Ouse

*Asked by **Baroness Hamwee***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 4 July (HL1093), which stated that the experience and lessons learnt from Napier Barracks would be applied to the provision of health services at the Linton-on-Ouse reception centre, what lessons were learnt. [HL2013]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The lessons learnt from the provision of healthcare at Napier were of the benefits to service users of having easy access to healthcare based on site. This model prevents strain on the provision of services and healthcare for local residents.

The Home Office are working closely with NHS colleagues to design an appropriate healthcare model for the Linton-on-Ouse Accommodation Centre should a decision be taken to use the site. Furthermore, the Service Provider will be required to have a Partnership Manager on site who will oversee safeguarding and wellbeing, working in collaboration with their onsite Risk & Assurance Manager, who will be responsible for the risk and safety elements of welfare.

*Asked by **Baroness Hamwee***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 4 July (HL1093), which stated that the Home Office is liaising with the Ministry of Justice and the Legal Aid Agency to finalise details of the provision of legal advice and representation for asylum seekers accommodated at Linton-on-Ouse, what consultation has taken or will take place with specialist immigration lawyers as to such provision. [HL2014]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The proposed site at Linton-on-Ouse is designed to facilitate and support interaction between Asylum Seekers and their chosen legal advisors, whereby those accommodated at Linton-on-Ouse will have the ability to access the support of legal representation, either face-to-face or remotely.

If a decision is made to use the site, there will be dedicated private rooms where remote asylum case interviews and conversations between asylum seekers and their legal reps along with access to printers and scanners. The Service Provider will be the point of contact for support on-site for asylum seekers, legal reps and Case Workers. Additionally, individuals will also have 24/7 access to the Migrant Help hotline via the provision of phones which will enable issue reporting and complaints, plus signposting to legal aid.

The Home Office continues to liaise with colleagues in the Ministry of Justice and Legal Aid Agency to finalise the details of this provision at Linton-on-Ouse.

*Asked by **Baroness Hamwee***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 4 July (HL1091), which stated that the policy guidance for the assessment of the suitability of individual asylum seekers to be accommodated at Linton-on-Ouse will be reviewed as part of preparations to open the accommodation, what consultations have been undertaken or will take place with medical and other experts regarding the review; and what is the expected timetable for the review and the publication of new guidance. [HL2015]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Internal considerations are ongoing.

The guidance will be published once a final decision is taken on Linton-on-Ouse.

*Asked by **Baroness Hamwee***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports of far-right extremist activity in relation to proposed asylum accommodation at Linton-on-Ouse; what steps they are taking to address the issue; what support they are providing to people affected by any such activity; and what additional policing costs are anticipated in light of such activity. [HL2016]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The safety and security of the local community, asylum seekers, staff and visitors to potential future sites is of paramount importance. We are committed to engagement with local authorities and local partners to understand and mitigate risks and concerns of the wider community. This includes working closely with the police in matters relating to the operation of the site, safety and security and the handling of any protests. The Home Office will work closely with the Counter Extremism Unit as well as the Community Tensions Team to discuss and inform any developments at Linton-on-Ouse. These partnerships will ensure the site, if the decision is made to progress, is fit for purpose and operates safely and securely, whilst minimising impacts on local services.

*Asked by **Baroness Hamwee***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the announcement by the Prime Minister on 2 May, what were the reasons why the proposed asylum reception centre at Linton-on-Ouse was "pivotal" to the plan to send people seeking asylum to Rwanda. [HL2017]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: There is no link between the proposed non-detained site at Linton-on-Ouse and the Migration and Economic Development Partnership (MEDP) with Rwanda.

*Asked by **Baroness Hamwee***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the UNHCR has visited the proposed asylum reception centre at Linton-on-Ouse; and whether they will publish the report made following any such visit. [[HL2018](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The UNHCR have visited the proposed site on 19 May and advised they would be writing a report.

Asylum: Rwanda

*Asked by **Lord Roberts of Llandudno***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the total number of asylum seekers who have been deported to Rwanda to date. [[HL1812](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: There have not been any returns charter flights operated from the UK to Rwanda.

The Migration and Economic Development Partnership intends to deter dangerous journeys and illegal entry to the UK, break the business model of people smugglers and protect the lives of those they endanger.

*Asked by **The Earl of Sandwich***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what evidence they have that removal to Rwanda will be a deterrent to would-be economic migrants. [[HL1932](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Migration and Economic Development Partnership with Rwanda is intended to break the business model of people smuggling gangs. Access to the UK's asylum system should be based on need, not on the ability to pay people smugglers. By refusing those who arrive in the UK by unnecessary, illegal and dangerous methods to remain, the scheme breaks the people smugglers' business model by not giving them the prospect of gaining entry to the UK to 'sell'.

Recognising that the policy is still at an early stage, we are currently working on a monitoring and evaluation plan which will be a cornerstone in measuring the effectiveness of this innovative arrangement. We will be able to set out more details on this in due course.

This arrangement between the UK and Rwanda is part of a suite of measures aimed at breaking the business model of people smuggling gangs, and as with all policies its impact will be kept under review.

*Asked by **The Earl of Sandwich***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have carried out any research into alternative destinations to Rwanda as safe countries for migrants and asylum-seekers; and if so, with what conclusions. [[HL1933](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: We are unable to comment on discussions that have been held with other countries. We are however committed to working closely with international partners as we act on fixing our broken

asylum system. This ground-breaking Partnership is a model that could be replicated elsewhere, and we are always willing to work with partners around the world to tackle this joint challenge.

Autonomous Weapons

*Asked by **The Lord Bishop of Oxford***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to their policy paper *Ambitious, Safe, Responsible: Our approach to the delivery of AI enabled capability in Defence*, published on 15 June, which says that "We do not rule out incorporating AI within weapon systems" and that real-time human supervision of such systems "may act as an unnecessary and inappropriate constraint on operational performance", when this would be seen as a constraint; and whether they can provide assurance that the UK's weapon systems will remain under human supervision at the point when any decision to take a human life is made. [[HL2032](#)]

Baroness Goldie: The 'Ambitious, Safe, Responsible' policy sets out that the Ministry of Defence opposes the creation and use of AI enabled weapon systems which operate without meaningful and context-appropriate human involvement throughout their lifecycle. This involvement could take the form of real-time human supervision, or control exercised through the setting of a system's operational parameters.

We believe that Human-Machine teaming delivers the best outcomes in terms of overall effectiveness. However, in certain cases it may be appropriate to exert rigorous human control over AI-enabled systems through a range of safeguards, process and technical controls without always requiring some form of real-time human supervision. For example, in the context of defending a maritime platform against hypersonic weapons, defensive systems may need to be able to detect incoming threats and open fire faster than a human could react.

In all cases, human responsibility for the use of AI must be clearly established, and that responsibility underpinned by a clear and consistent articulation of the means by which human control is exercised across the system lifecycle, including the nature and limitations of that control.

Autonomous Weapons: Ethics

*Asked by **The Lord Bishop of Oxford***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to their policy paper *Ambitious, Safe, Responsible: Our approach to the delivery of AI enabled capability in Defence*, published on 15 June, what assessment they have made of the specific ethical problems raised by autonomous weapons that are used to target humans and which have been raised by the International Committee of the Red Cross. [[HL2031](#)]

Baroness Goldie: We're very aware of the ethical concerns raised by numerous stakeholders including the

ICRC around the potential misuse of AI in Defence, including its impact on humans and the potential use of autonomous systems in ways which might violate international law. We published the Ambitious, Safe, Responsible specifically in order to ensure clarity and support ongoing conversations around the UK approach.

With respect to autonomous weapons systems: the UK's focus is on setting clear international norms for the safe and responsible development and use of AI, to ensure compliance with International Humanitarian Law through meaningful and context-appropriate levels of human control. We propose development of a compendium of good practice mapped against a weapon systems' lifecycle which would provide a clear framework for the operationalisation of the eleven guiding principles agreed by the UN Group of Government Experts on Certain Conventional Weapons 2017-19.

We are keen to continue extensive discussions on this issue with the international community and NGOs on this issue, including through discussions at the UN.

Autonomous Weapons: Treaties

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Oxford

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to their policy paper Ambitious, Safe, Responsible: Our approach to the delivery of AI enabled capability in Defence, published on 15 June, which states that weapons that identify, select and attack targets without context-appropriate human involvement "are not acceptable", whether they will be supporting the negotiation of a legally binding international instrument that both (1) prohibits autonomous weapons that identify, select and attack targets without context-appropriate human involvement, and (2) regulates other autonomous weapons systems to ensure meaningful human control over the use of force. [HL2033]

Baroness Goldie: The UK does not support calls for further legally binding rules that prohibit autonomous weapons that identify, select and attack targets without context-appropriate human involvement and regulate other autonomous systems. International Humanitarian Law already provides a robust, principle-based framework for the regulation of development and use of all weapons systems including weapons that contain autonomous functions.

Without international consensus on the definitions or characteristics of weapons with levels of autonomy, a legal instrument would have to ban undefined systems, which would present difficulties in the application of any such ban and which could severely impact legitimate research and development of AI or autonomous technologies.

Avian Influenza

Asked by Lord Randall of Uxbridge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the current outbreak of avian flu on wild bird populations. [HL2036]

Lord Benyon: Defra is working with Devolved Administrations, Arm's Length Bodies and NGOs to monitor and respond to the effect of avian influenza on wild birds. This includes providing advice on mitigation measures that can be put in place to both protect public health and the impact on wild birds where possible. However, avian influenza is a natural transmission process in wild birds and there is limited evidence that mitigation measures are effective at reducing transmission of avian influenza between wild birds. We will, however, continue to take whatever action we can, in accordance with international best practice and the latest evidence.

The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) operates a robust programme of wild bird surveillance across Great Britain and engages in year-round avian influenza surveillance of dead wild birds submitted via public reports and warden patrols. Between 25 October 2021 and 22 July 2022, over 3,000 wild birds have been tested. Of these, 1454 have tested positive for H5 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). There have been findings in 347 different locations in 61 different species in 79 different counties. A report (updated weekly) of findings of HPAI in wild birds is published by APHA on GOV.UK together with [outbreak and risk assessments](#). A copy of the 18 July outbreak assessment is attached to this answer.

Unprecedented outbreaks of avian influenza are being seen in both Great Britain and Europe as well as North America. In Great Britain there have been large numbers of deaths associated with positive findings of avian influenza in breeding populations of seabird species. Including those listed as [GB Birds of Conservation Concern \(BoCC5\)](#) (copy attached). The impact on Roseate Terns (red-listed BoCC5 species) and Sandwich Terns (amber-listed BoCC5 species) colonies in particular are of significant concern.

The UK's seabirds are an important part of our natural heritage, and their protection is a high priority for the government. Defra recognises the significant threat HPAI is posing to our seabird populations. Further to the existing Joint Nature Conservation Committee Seabird Monitoring Programme, Natural England has set up a seabird reporting system to collate records of mortality levels in key seabird colonies which will be used to support assessments of the impact on populations and inform recovery programmes. Equivalent systems have been established in Wales and Scotland enabling data to be readily compared across the administrations.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Birds of Conservation Concern Dec 2021 [BB 2021 DECEMBER (Med-res).pdf]

HPAI outbreak assessment 18 July 2022 [Updated Outbreak Assessment #30 HPAI in the UK and Europe 18 July 2022.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-07-21/HL2036>

Avian Influenza: Disease Control

Asked by Lord Selkirk of Douglas

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking (1) to coordinate a response to the outbreak of avian influenza in seabird colonies across Britain, (2) to put in place a surveillance programme that will improve the early detection of avian flu in wild bird populations in the future, and (3) to (a) plan for, and (b) mitigate the risk of, the spread of avian flu to other species, including marine mammals such as grey seals. [HL1713]

Lord Benyon: The UK's seabirds are an important part of our natural heritage, and their protection is a high priority for the Government. We recognise the significant threat highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) poses to our seabird populations.

Defra is working with Devolved Administrations, Arm's Length Bodies and charities to monitor and respond to the effect of avian influenza on wild birds. This includes providing advice on mitigation measures that can be put in place to both protect public health and the impact on wild birds where possible. However, avian influenza is a natural transmission process in wild birds and there is limited evidence that mitigation measures are effective at reducing mortality or morbidity in seabird colonies.

The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) operate a robust programme of wild bird surveillance across Great Britain and engages in year-round avian influenza surveillance of dead wild birds submitted via public reports and warden patrols. Between 25 October 2021 and 8 July 2022, over 3,000 wild birds have been tested. Of these, 1422 have tested positive for H5 HPAI. There have been findings in 343 different locations in 61 different species in 78 different counties. A report (updated weekly) of findings of HPAI in wild birds is published on GOV.UK together with outbreak and risk assessments (www.gov.uk/government/publications/avian-influenza-in-wild-birds).

Last month a new consortium was launched, led by Defra and APHA, to fund research to look into how avian influenza viruses are emerging in wild populations and help us understand the risk posed to both domestic and wild birds.

While avian influenza viruses are predominantly considered a pathogen of birds, the virus can infect

mammals. While there is no routine surveillance for avian influenza in seals in Great Britain, causes of death of stranded marine mammals are monitored and investigated through the Cetacean Stranding Investigation Programme and Scottish Marine Animal Stranding Scheme. Where appropriate, stranded seals are tested for avian influenza in collaboration with the APHA avian influenza National Reference Laboratory.

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to increase monitoring of wild bird populations in light of the influx of H5N1 avian flu infections; and what steps they are taking to protect (1) vulnerable, and (2) threatened, populations. [HL1786]

Lord Benyon: Defra is working with Devolved Administrations, Arm's Length Bodies and NGOs to monitor and respond to the effect of avian influenza on wild birds. This includes providing advice on mitigation measures that can be put in place to both protect public health and the impact on wild birds where possible. However, avian influenza is a natural transmission process in wild birds and there is limited evidence that mitigation measures are effective at reducing transmission of avian influenza between wild birds.

In addition to the existing avian influenza biosecurity stakeholder meetings that have been running since 2020 and have included ornithological NGO participation, Defra will convene a stakeholder working group to consider additional actions that can be taken to support the recovery of wild bird populations that have been significantly impacted by the disease. Defra is also engaging with OSPAR Heads of Delegation to share best practice, mitigation measures and lessons learnt from current and previous outbreaks.

The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) operates a robust programme of wild bird surveillance across Great Britain and engages in year-round avian influenza surveillance of dead wild birds submitted via public reports and warden patrols. Between 25 October 2021 and 8 July 2022, over 3,000 wild birds have been tested. Of these, 1422 have tested positive for H5 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). There have been findings in 343 different locations in 61 different species in 78 different counties. A report (updated weekly) of findings of HPAI in wild birds is published on GOV.UK together with [outbreak and risk assessments](#). A copy of the 18 July assessment is attached to this answer.

Last month a new consortium was launched, led by Defra and APHA, to fund research to look into how avian influenza viruses are emerging in wild populations and help us understand the risk posed to both domestic and wild birds.

Additionally, Defra has commissioned Natural England to assess the vulnerability of seabird species in light of the pressures they are facing, including avian influenza, and propose actions to address them.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

HPAI outbreak assessment 18 July 2022 [Updated Outbreak Assessment #30 HPAI in the UK and Europe 18 July 2022.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-07-15/HL1786>

Aviation: Air Traffic Control

Asked by Lord Soley

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether either the (1) Civil Aviation Authority, or (2) individual airport air traffic control systems, have responsibility for recording details of flight delays and cancellations. [HL2046]

Asked by Lord Soley

To ask Her Majesty's Government how disputes between airlines and air traffic control systems over the reasons for delays and cancellations are recorded. [HL2047]

Asked by Lord Soley

To ask Her Majesty's Government how a (1) passenger, or (2) other member of the public, can identify whether (a) an airline, or (b) air traffic control, are responsible for the delay or cancellation of a flight. [HL2048]

Asked by Lord Soley

To ask Her Majesty's Government how a passenger whose flight has been delayed or cancelled can ascertain whether that cancellation or delay has been caused by air traffic control problems. [HL2049]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Under the Civil Aviation Act 2012, airports report to the CAA punctuality of flights. This data is collated and published on the CAA's website on a monthly basis.

In addition, airlines, airports and air traffic providers also input delays and the reason for delays into the EUROCONTROL system, as part of a well-established and accepted industry process.

Passengers' rights are primary and when passengers are delayed or face cancellations, they deserve explanations and refunds.

Passengers have the ability to claim for delayed and cancelled flights through UK261. Through this process they are able to request an Air Traffic Control (ATC) statement, that will outline any ATC delays their flight experienced.

Moreover, if passengers feel they have not received adequate details from their airline, they are able to raise this with either the CAA's Passenger Advice and Complaints Team (PACT) or with the Alternative Dispute Resolution scheme approved by the CAA.

On 17 July, the Secretary of State announced the new Aviation Passenger Charter which helps passengers

understand their rights and responsibilities, including when there is disruption.

We continue to be clear that any delays and cancellations should be avoided by the aviation sector but when these happen, and passengers are affected they should be in a position to rightly claim refunds or compensation.

Aviation: Fuels

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they plan to secure Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) development in the UK. [HL2052]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) will have a key role in driving down carbon emissions in the UK aviation sector and the Government is fully committed to accelerating its development. The UK Government's SAF programme is already one of the most comprehensive in the world. This includes £62m of previous funding made available to support the early development of SAF revenue support under the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation, and the development of a SAF clearing house for fuel testing and certification. On top of this, last year the Government announced a £400m partnership with Breakthrough Energy Catalyst, which will allow SAF projects to apply for further capital funding.

Last week the Government announced that it will introduce a SAF mandate. By prescribing mandatory SAF use, we will generate secure and growing UK SAF demand. The SAF mandate will require at least 10% (c1.5bn litres) of fuel to be made from sustainable sources from 2030.

Alongside this announcement, the Government launched the £165 million Advanced Fuels Fund to drive our new commitment to have at least five commercial SAF plants under construction in the UK by 2025. Building on the success of the previous competitions, the grant funding will support projects looking to develop large scale advanced fuel production facilities in the UK.

The Government also continues to work in partnership with industry and investors to build long term supply. We're actively looking at how to create the long-term conditions for investable projects in the UK, by demonstrating technology that works at scale, ensuring demand via the mandate, looking at an overarching strategy for sustainable feedstocks and sources and considering what further measures might be needed, from both industry and government.

Birds: Gun Sports

Asked by Lord Randall of Uxbridge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to review the close season for woodcock. [HL1705]

Lord Benyon: The woodcock has been on the red list of Birds of Conservation Concern in the UK since 2015 due to a breeding range decline which is most likely to include disturbance and habitat loss because of land drainage and changes in woodland management.

The woodcock will benefit from a number of woodland grant schemes funded by both the Countryside Stewardship scheme and the Nature for Climate Fund, some of which specifically target management for declining woodland birds. These grants include the Woods into Management Forestry Innovation Funds which aim to restore vulnerable woodland habitats, improve biodiversity and conserve threatened species, and the England Woodland Creation Offer, which provides an additional nature recovery contribution for woodlands which restore nature and species.

Borders: Personal Records

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the Digital Services at the Border programme will be completed; and how much that programme has cost. [\[HL1778\]](#)

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Digital Services at the Border (DSAB) programme's primary objective is to replace the Warnings Index (WI) and associated systems; this is complex, legacy Critical National Infrastructure (CNI).

DSABs timeline for delivery is Quarter 4 of 2022/23.
The programme has cost (June 22) £692.8m.

Botswana: South Africa

Asked by Lord Hain

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have for (1) Her Majesty's High Commissioner in Pretoria, and (2) the Prime Minister, to meet former President of Botswana Ian Khama to discuss why he was forced to flee to South Africa. [\[HL1858\]](#)

Asked by Lord Hain

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assistance they will offer to the former President of Botswana, Ian Khama, in response to the treatment he has received from his successor. [\[HL1859\]](#)

Asked by Lord Hain

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Government of Botswana's use of AfriForum. [\[HL1860\]](#)

Asked by Lord Hain

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Minister for Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean, during her visit to Pretoria on 11 and 12 July, discussed with the government of South Africa former President of Botswana Ian Khama taking refuge in South Africa. [\[HL1861\]](#)

Asked by Lord Hain

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the reported attacks by the government of Botswana on the South African Reserve Bank and the South African banking system, including RBS/NatWest and Ambassador Bridgette Motsepe. [\[HL1862\]](#)

Asked by Lord Hain

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether Her Majesty's Global Ambassador for Human Rights and Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva will engage with Botswana's Permanent Mission in Geneva on how the government of Botswana intends to comply with UN Special Rapporteurs' recommendations regarding the threat to former President of Botswana Ian Khama's life. [\[HL1863\]](#)

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: There have not been, nor are there any planned discussions between former President Khama and representatives of the UK Government on these issues. We are aware of the correspondence between the UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial Killings and the Government of Botswana regarding former President Khama. These communications form part of the range of direct interactions between the United Nations and a sovereign State, and other States do not tend to intervene in this process. It would not be appropriate for us to comment on the Government of Botswana's choice of legal representation, or its bilateral relationship with the South African institutions referred to. Former President Khama has not sought the assistance of the UK Government.

Brexit

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to publish quarterly lists of the identified benefits arising from the UK's departure from the EU. [\[HL1904\]](#)

Lord True: We will not be publishing quarterly lists of the identified benefits. Outside the European Union, Parliament is now able to take advantage of a whole host of regulatory opportunities, spanning from agriculture to financial services, and immigration reform to improved medical regulations. The government has legislated to deliver many of these benefits already.

On 22 June 2022, we published an interactive dashboard cataloguing over 2,400 pieces of retained EU law (REUL), spanning across 300 unique policy areas. The Brexit Freedoms Bill, announced in the Queen's Speech, will strengthen the Government's ability to amend, repeal and replace REUL and will support the Government's ambition to ensure that, now that we have left the EU, the UK can be the "best regulated economy in the world" and move away from the EU's obsolete "one size fits all" regulatory model.

To ensure that the public knows how much EU-derived law there is on the UK statute book and how much progress the Government is making to reform it, we will be updating the catalogue of REUL on a quarterly basis.

British Association for Shooting and Conservation: Schools

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of schools attending events run by the British Association of Shooting and Conservation and Gamekeepers and Landowners, as has occurred in Sheffield; and whether this has occurred in schools in other areas throughout England. [HL1828]

Baroness Barran: The department does not collect information on educational visits and has not, therefore, made any assessment on schools attending events run by the British Association of Shooting and Conservation and Gamekeepers and Landowners.

The decision to undertake educational visits is entirely a matter for individual schools. However, the department provides guidance to help schools understand their obligations when undertaking educational visits and other out of school activities. Among other things, this includes advice on carrying out risk assessments and on seeking consent from parents.

British Nationality: Assessments

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for the Home Office on 8 February 2021 (HC 144733), how it was possible for an individual to take the Life in the UK test 118 times in 2015 and 2016 when government guidance says that applicants must wait 7 days before taking the test again. [HL1710]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Life in the UK testing is provided and hosted by PSI Services (UK) Limited who operate a self-booking process and candidates are able to book tests in multiple slots; they are not limited by the system as to how frequently a test can be taken.

We are aware the guidance on gov.uk advises candidates:

You must wait 7 days before taking the test again, but you can take the test as many times as you need to.

However, this is guidance and not a requirement so we will update the wording to reflect this.

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much has been paid out in refund requests after people submitted a 'Life in the UK' test (1) refund request, or (2) complaint form, since March 2014. [HL2038]

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many 'Life in the UK' test (1) refund, and (2) complaint, forms have been received; and how many refund requests have been (a) received, and (b) paid out, in each month since March 2014. [HL2039]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The information requested is not available in a reportable format and is locally held management information which has not been quality assured. Obtaining it would require a manual trawl which would exceed the disproportionate cost threshold.

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 19 July (HL1506), whether the 'Life in the UK' test includes any questions about out-of-date information included in the current 'Life in the UK' test handbook. [HL2042]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Life in the UK (LitUK) test and supporting handbook are updated annually. Where an event means some test content is incorrect, related questions will not be asked and the content will be updated accordingly as per the scheduled updates.

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 19 July (HL1506), in what month unannounced inspections of LitUK test centres will resume; why those inspections have not already been resumed; and what was the date of the last unannounced inspection of a LitUK test centre before inspections were suspended. [HL2043]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Unannounced audits of LitUK test centres are expected to resume in September 2022.

Unannounced audits were suspended due to Covid restrictions and the last unannounced audits before suspension took place in February 2020.

Bus Services: Concessions

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the (1) funding allocation, and (2) distribution, of free bus passes for Ukrainian refugees residing in the UK. [HL1913]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Government is working hard to ensure that Ukrainians escaping conflict are received in a professional and compassionate manner. Since mid-March, all Ukrainians entering the UK with the appropriate visa can travel on public transport, from their port of entry to their end destination, at no cost where travel occurs within 48 hours of arrival. This offer includes many bus and coach operators.

Cannabis: Prescriptions

Asked by Lord Field of Birkenhead

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many prescriptions for cannabis have been issued each year since 2018 in England [HL1593]

Lord Kamall: The following table shows the number of items for licensed and unlicensed cannabis-based medicines prescribed on a National Health Service prescription, dispensed in the community and submitted to the NHS Business Services Authority in England between January 2018 and April 2022, the latest data available. We are unable to provide data on NHS prescriptions for unlicensed cannabis-based medicines, due to the number of items attributed to fewer than five patients which could identify individuals.

<i>NHS prescription items</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022 January to April</i>
Licensed cannabis-based medicines	2,591	2,636	2,681	2,981	1,171

The following table shows the number of items for licensed and unlicensed cannabis-based medicines prescribed on a private prescription, dispensed in the community and submitted to the NHS Business Services Authority between January 2018 and April 2022, the latest data available. Data on unlicensed prescriptions in 2018 is held for November and December only and January in 2022.

<i>Private prescription items dispensed</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022</i>
Licensed cannabis-based medicines	24	35	29	28	17
Unlicensed cannabis-based medicines	0	278	4,469	42,393	385

Data licensed cannabis-based medicines prescribed in secondary care since 2018 is not collected centrally.

Capital Punishment

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent discussions they have had with the governments of (1) the United States of America, (2) Saudi Arabia, (3) China, and (4) Malawi, regarding abolishing the death penalty in those countries. [HL1630]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The United Kingdom strongly opposes the death penalty in all countries and in all circumstances, as a matter of principle. We work

through multilateral organisations, such as the UN Human Rights Council and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to raise concerns about the use of the death penalty, as well as through direct conversations with states that continue to retain the death penalty, including with the US, Saudi Arabia, China and Malawi.

Carbon Emissions

Asked by Baroness Sheehan

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the data presented in the Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener, published on 19 October 2021, showing that they anticipate the UK emitting 2073 MtCO₂e over the period covered by Carbon Budget 4 (2023–2027), how they intend to meet their binding commitment of 1950 MtCO₂e set out in the Carbon Budget Order 2011. [HL2044]

Lord Callanan: The Government's Net Zero Strategy sets out a decarbonisation pathway to meet all carbon budgets. The figure quoted includes emissions from international aviation and shipping, which are not in scope for Carbon Budget 4 (CB4). Table 9 of the technical annex shows emissions contributing to CB4 (which does not include international aviation and shipping emissions) would be 359 MtCO₂e on average per year, equivalent to 1793 MtCO₂e over the five-year budget. This figure also uses the global warming potential methodology which was agreed internationally at COP 26.

Asked by Baroness Sheehan

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether clause 111 of the Energy Bill, which seeks to amend the definition of carbon removals in section 29 of the Climate Change Act 2008, would allow the meeting of emission reductions targets by the purchase of offsets or other traded instruments. [HL2045]

Lord Callanan: The clause does not have this effect. The intention behind clause 111 is to broaden the definition of "removals" of greenhouse gases beyond nature-based greenhouse gas removal methods (GGRs), such as tree planting, to include those achieved by engineered GGRs, such as Bioenergy with Carbon Capture and Storage.

The Government does not currently intend to purchase offsets to set towards its carbon budgets, although it has retained the option to do so in the future if appropriate, as permitted by the Climate Change Act 2008.

Cars: Hire Services

Asked by Lord Soley

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether car hire companies are legally permitted to refuse a car rental to a full licence holder on the basis of age. [HL1939]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: I refer the Noble Lord to my previous answer to question HL1125 of 4 July 2022.

Central Bank Digital Currencies

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide an update on the progress of evaluating the potential benefits of a UK Central Bank Digital Currency. [HL1945]

Baroness Penn: The UK, like many other countries globally, is actively exploring the potential role of Central Bank Digital Currencies. A range of factors motivate the exploratory work, which the Bank of England has explored in their discussion paper, including: improving access to central bank money; increasing the resilience of payments; and developing more efficient, cheaper payments.

No decision has yet been made on the issuance of a CBDC, which would be a major national infrastructure project, however; as part of the process of research and exploration, HM Treasury and the Bank of England will publish a consultation later in 2022 setting out their assessment of the case for a UK CBDC, including the merits of further work to develop an operational and technology model for a UK CBDC.

Central Criminal Court: Judges

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of gender balance amongst the judges sitting to hear criminal cases in the Central Criminal Court. [HL1878]

Lord Bellamy: As of 1 April 2022, the Central Criminal Court had 8 female and 9 male judges which includes Circuit Judges, Recorders, the Recorder of London and the Common Serjeant of London.

The statistics published in the [Diversity of the Judiciary: Legal professions, new appointments and current post-holders- 2022](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/diversity-of-the-judiciary-2022-statistics) www.gov.uk/government/statistics/diversity-of-the-judiciary-2022-statistics - do not include specific statistics for the Central Criminal Court.

Overall, as of 1 April 2022, the proportion of women in the England and Wales courts judiciary is 35%, an increase from 24% in 2014. The Government recognises the importance of gender and diversity in our courts, which is why the Ministry of Justice, as a member of the Judicial Diversity Forum (JDF), works closely with the judiciary, the Judicial Appointments Commission, the Legal Services Board and the legal professions to take actions to increase judicial diversity.

Cereals: Exports

Asked by Lord Farmer

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to help farmers maximise cereal production for

export to offset global supply shortages due to the war in Ukraine. [HL2004]

Lord Benyon: To support our farmers we are bringing forward half of this year's BPS payment as an advance injection of cash to farm businesses and have delayed changes to the use of urea fertiliser until at least spring 2023. Farmers will be further supported through new slurry storage grants as of this year, helping meet the Farming Rules for Water and reducing dependence on artificial fertilisers by improving storage of organic nutrients.

UK cereals are mainly produced for the domestic market, and whilst the UK is 88% self-sufficient in domestically produced cereals, we do also export. It is not for the Government to dictate to farmers, who are free to react to market signals, what crops to plant, or where that produce should be sold or exported.

We continue to keep the market situation under review through the UK Agriculture Market Monitoring Group, which monitors UK agricultural markets including price, supply, inputs, trade and recent developments. We have also increased our engagement with industry to supplement our analysis with real-time intelligence and to identify where mitigations are available.

Children: Day Care

Asked by Baroness Eaton

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many parents claimed (1) tax free childcare payments, (2) the universal 15 hours free childcare offer for three and four year olds, and (3) the extended childcare offer for three and four year olds, for the last three years. [HL2000]

Asked by Baroness Eaton

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much was spent on (1) tax free childcare, (2) the universal 15 hours free childcare offer for three and four year olds, and (3) the extended childcare offer for three and four year olds, in the last year for which figures are available. [HL2001]

Baroness Barran: Tax-Free Childcare is for working parents of children aged 0-11, or 0-16 for disabled children, and has the same income criteria as 30 hours free childcare. In the 2021/22 financial year the government spent £411.3 million on Tax-Free Childcare.

The numbers of families and children who have used Tax-Free Childcare between 2020 and 2022 are as follows:

- 2019-20: 315,040 families used this entitlement for 396,365 children.
- 2020-21: 374,135 families used this entitlement for 461,705 children
- 2021-22: 512,410 families used this entitlement for 646,940 children

The universal 15 hours free early education entitlement is available to all three and four-year-olds regardless of parental circumstances. The government spent £2,212,241,262 on the universal entitlement in financial year 2021/22.

The numbers of children registered for the universal 15-hour entitlement between 2020 and 2022 are captured annually, as follows:

- 2020: 621,351 three-year-olds and 650,193 four-year-olds
- 2021: 574,845 three-year-olds and 637,146 four-year-olds
- 2022: 582,295 three-year-olds and 629,939 four-year-olds

The extended 15 hours entitlement, also known as 30 hours free childcare, is available for eligible working parents of three and four year olds, on top of the universal 15 hours free early education entitlement. The government spent £837,497,401 on the extended 15 hour entitlement in the 2021/22 financial year.

The numbers of children registered for the 30 hours free childcare between 2020 and 2022 are as follows:

- 2020: 248,399 three-year-olds and 97,305 four-year-olds
- 2021: 234,996 three-year-olds and 93,666 four-year-olds
- 2022: 249,388 three-year-olds and 98,738 four-year-olds

The department does not collect data on parents who apply for the entitlements, only children who have registered.

China: Organs

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the recent evidence, presented by the Hudson Institute at the International Religious Freedom Summit 2022, concerning ongoing organ harvesting in China and the facilitation of the practice by medical institutions in the West. [\[HL1763\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We continue to closely monitor and review evidence relating to reports of forced organ harvesting in China and maintain a dialogue with leading NGOs and international partners on the issue.

We regularly raise our concerns about the human rights situation in China directly with the Chinese authorities at the highest levels. Most recently, the Prime Minister did so in a telephone call with President Xi on 25 March.

China: Politics and Government

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the current foreign and domestic policy of the People's Republic of China. [\[HL1662\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Integrated Review sets out the UK's strategic approach to its international policy. It notes that China's growing economy, technological advancement and ambition to project influence will have profound implications worldwide. China's increasing international assertiveness and the growing importance of the Indo-Pacific will be among the most significant geopolitical and geoeconomic shifts in the 2020s.

Climate Change

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to consult with local authorities on a long-term plan for dealing with future climate change events causing (1) extreme heat, and (2) flooding. [\[HL1903\]](#)

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: We are consulting local authorities on the development of the UK's third National Adaptation Programme (NAP3). This is our long-term plan for building a more climate resilient country and our response to the latest assessment of UK climate risks, which is due for publication in 2023 and will run until 2028. This programme will address the advice contained in the third and latest assessment of UK climate risk (CCRA3) from January 2022, which included 61 climate risks and opportunities to the UK, including those related to overheating and floods.

We are primarily consulting local authorities through the Local Adaptation Advisory Panel, a Defra-hosted forum focused on climate adaptation issues that brings together central and local government, as well as via the Local Government Association. We are also engaging with groups like the Environment Board of the local representative organisation the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport (ADEPT).

This work builds on previous central-local government collaboration on the development of previous NAPs, including NAP2. NAP2, published in 2018 and running until 2023, includes actions for local government.

Climate Change Convention: Egypt

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken, if any, to ensure that delegates to the COP27 conference in Sharm el Sheik are able to travel by land/sea routes and otherwise minimise carbon emissions from their journeys to and from the conference. [\[HL1993\]](#)

Lord True: It is unclear which specific land routes and land transport modes to Sharm el Sheik the Noble Baroness is recommending. To demonstrate our commitment to sustainability, we will continue to offset the carbon emissions associated with COP Unit staff and the COP26 President travelling on official business. This will include travel to COP27.

The 'COP26 Sustainability Report' sets out the measures we took to deliver a sustainable summit, including those relating to attendee travel. The 'Carbon Management Plan: PAS 2060 Qualifying Explanatory Statement' details our commitment to carbon neutrality and the steps we took to achieve and verify it. Both documents are available to view on the [sustainability section](#) of our website.

Coastal Areas: Investment

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to unlock private investment in coastal communities not covered by a freeport. [\[HL1868\]](#)

Lord Harrington of Watford: My Government places great emphasis on ensuring Coastal Communities are at the forefront of the Levelling Up agenda. Our £4.8 billion Levelling Up Fund will invest in every part of the UK, including coastal areas and I am keen to see bids come forward from coastal communities in the second round of the Fund. Regeneration and Infrastructure projects - which have the potential to boost private investment - will be a key focus of this work.

Furthermore, the UK Shared Prosperity Fund will provide £2.6 billion of investment across the whole of the United Kingdom by 2025, with building pride in place, including in coastal communities, a key theme of the Fund's work. Every coastal community in the UK will receive an allocation and places will be empowered to identify and build on their own strengths and needs at a local level.

Levelling Up funding will unlock the potential of coastal communities by regenerating town centres and getting infrastructure match fit, making coastal communities a more attractive place to do business and boosting private investment.

Commonwealth Games 2022

Asked by Baroness Benjamin

To ask Her Majesty's Government how the UK's diversity will be reflected in the opening and closing ceremonies of the Commonwealth Games. [\[HL1822\]](#)

Asked by Baroness Benjamin

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the make-up of the Commonwealth Games creative delivery team reflects the diversity of the UK. [\[HL1823\]](#)

Asked by Baroness Benjamin

To ask Her Majesty's Government how the Commonwealth Games creative delivery team will ensure that content reflects diversity and avoids stereotypical imagery. [\[HL1824\]](#)

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games ceremonies have been developed by a diverse group of some of the finest creative talents the UK has to offer. This consists of Iqbal Khan as Artistic Director; Maeve Clarke as Writer; Joshua 'RTKal' Holness as Music Director; Misty Buckley as Production Designer; Hamish Hamilton as Broadcast Director and Steven Knight CBE as Executive Producer.

They are bringing together some of the city's most celebrated artists and promoting its emerging talent on a global stage. From Black Sabbath's Tony Iommi to vocalists Indigo Marshall and Gambini, they will welcome the Commonwealth to Birmingham and showcase the very best of the West Midlands and the whole of the UK to a global audience.

Community Councils: Reviews

Asked by Baroness Scott of Needham Market

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to launch the review of neighbourhood governance referred to on page 215 of their Levelling Up the United Kingdom white paper, published on 2 February. [\[HL1936\]](#)

Lord Harrington of Watford: As set out in the Levelling Up White Paper, the UK Government is committed to making it easier for local people to come together to set local priorities and improve their places. The Review of Neighbourhood Governance in England will examine the effectiveness of current arrangements including the role and functions of parish councils, and how to make them quicker and easier to establish. As part of the review, we will engage with communities and representative bodies. Further detail on plans for the review will be made available in due course.

Companies: Telephone Services

Asked by Baroness Stowell of Beeston

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will lay regulations to update the Consumer Rights Act 2015 to give regulators such as Ofgem, the Financial Conduct Authority, and Ofcom, the power to fine firms who do not answer the telephone to customers within 10 minutes. [\[HL1752\]](#)

Lord Callanan: The Government expects all firms to treat their customers fairly at all times. Business should be free to compete on matters such as price, quality and service. Provided consumers are not misled and able to make informed decisions, companies offering goods and services are free to offer their products and services under conditions of their choosing. The Government has no plans to amend the Consumer Rights Act 2015 on this issue.

Conservative Party

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether (1) civil servants, and (2) special advisers, in 10 Downing Street are restricted from commenting on the process to elect a new leader of the Conservative Party. [HL1623]

Lord True: The Civil Service should act as it did during previous periods in 2016 and 2019. Official resources must not be used to support leadership campaign activity.

As at all times, the Civil Service must serve the Government in a way which maintains political impartiality and retains the confidence of Ministers, while at the same time ensuring it will be able to establish the same relationship with those who may go on to lead the Government.

Special advisers are exempt from the Civil Service Code requirement of political impartiality. Therefore, as laid out in the Special Adviser Code of Conduct, their involvement in political activity does not need to be restricted in the same way as it is for other civil servants. All Special Advisers have been made aware of the expectations regarding their role and conduct during this period. If they wish to take part in leadership campaign activity, they must do so in their own time, out of office hours or via unpaid leave, and not involve the use of departmental resources.

Conservative Party: Elections

Asked by Lord Lamont of Lerwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Cabinet Secretary has issued any new guidelines to Special Advisers in 10 Downing Street relating to their role during the period in which the new leader of the Conservative Party is being elected. [HL1640]

Lord True: The Civil Service should act as it did during previous periods in 2016 and 2019. Official resources must not be used to support leadership campaign activity.

As at all times, the Civil Service must serve the Government in a way which maintains political impartiality and retains the confidence of Ministers, while at the same time ensuring it will be able to establish the same relationship with those who may go on to lead the Government.

Special advisers are exempt from the Civil Service Code requirement of political impartiality. Therefore, as laid out in the Special Adviser Code of Conduct, their involvement in political activity does not need to be restricted in the same way as it is for other civil servants. All Special Advisers have been made aware of the expectations regarding their role and conduct during this period. If they wish to take part in leadership campaign activity, they must do so in their own time, out of office hours or via unpaid leave, and not involve the use of departmental resources.

Controlled Burning

Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to investigate the data from the monitoring reports by the RSPB and Unearthed which suggest that over 50 burns in protected areas have taken place that may be in breach of the Heather and Grass Etc. Burning (England) Regulations 2021. [HL1609]

Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will review the effectiveness of the Heather and Grass etc. Burning (England) Regulations 2021 given evidence from the RSPB and Unearthed suggesting widespread breaches. [HL1610]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Reports of suspected unlawful burning received by Defra are being assessed and reviewed. Early indications are that only a small number of those presented to us may represent a potential breach of the regulations.

Suspected breaches will be investigated, with the outcomes forming part of our ongoing review of the effectiveness of the Regulations.

Copyright

Asked by Lord Clement-Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the conformity of their proposed expansion of the text and data mining copyright exception with their wider policies on the UK copyright framework; and what plans they have, if any, to amend these wider policies to reflect this decision. [HL1726]

Lord Callanan: An effective intellectual property system is a fundamental driver for creativity and innovation and is central to a modern, vibrant economy. Any reforms to UK copyright law aim to effectively balance the copyright framework for both rights holders and users and comply with our international obligations. The Government reviews aspects of copyright law, when appropriate, in light of its priorities. The decision on text and data mining followed one such review. We do not plan to consequently amend wider policies or to conduct a wider review of copyright law.

Coronavirus: Databases

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the complete list of 'Purposes' currently active in the COVID-19 Data Store's National Data Platform, as defined by the 'Purpose-Based Access Control' feature in Palantir's Foundry software. [HL1602]

Lord Kamall: A copy of the 'purposes' and the associated work areas or 'capabilities' contained in NHS

England's COVID-19 Data Store National Data Platform is attached, due to the size of the data.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Table [FORMATTED TABLE FOR MINISTERIAL
CLEARANCE COVID-19 Data Store List of Purposes reformat
(1).xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-07-08/HL1602>

Coronavirus: Disease Control

Asked by Lord Farmer

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have plans to publicise findings from the SIREN study, and data from this and other studies about the protective effects against reinfection and serious illness of infection-acquired immunity (unboosted by vaccination). [HL2009]

Lord Kamall: Scientific papers and reports from the SIREN study are being publicised online through the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and in scientific journals. In addition, the study's participant retention programme includes regular webinars, newsletters and videos to share its results and findings.

On 22 July 2022, the UKHSA published SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern and variants under investigation in England Technical briefing 44 with data on trends in primary infections and reinfections. A copy of the technical briefing is attached.

The Office for National Statistics' COVID-19 Infection Survey publishes analysis on re-infections and the associated risk factors and symptoms. An updated assessment, Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection Survey, characteristics of people testing positive for COVID-19, UK: 20 July 2022. Characteristics of people testing positive for COVID-19 from the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection Survey, was published on 20 July 2022. A copy of the assessment is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Sars [SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern and variants under investigation_ technical briefing 44 (22 July 2022) (1).pdf]

Survey [Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection Survey, characteristics of people testing positive for COVID-19, UK - Office for National Statistics (1).pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-07-21/HL2009>

Coronavirus: Vaccination

Asked by Baroness Taylor of Bolton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they made of the impact on (1) the health and wellbeing of school staff, (2) the manner in which COVID-19 is transmitted in education settings, and (3) the health of

children and young people at school, when deciding not to include school staff, teachers and support staff in the list of eligible categories for the COVID-19 booster vaccine. [HL1941]

Lord Kamall: In considering the eligible categories for the COVID-19 booster vaccine, the Government is guided by the independent expert Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) on COVID-19 vaccinations. On 15 July 2022, the Government accepted advice from the JCVI on the eligibility criteria for the autumn booster vaccination programme in 2022.

The JCVI advised that the primary objective of the booster vaccine programme is to increase immunity in those at higher risk from severe illness, hospitalisation and death in winter 2022/23. The JCVI's assessment of eligibility considered that while the vaccines offer good protection against severe outcomes in vulnerable individuals, it provides relatively brief protection from non-severe symptomatic disease. Therefore, the JCVI advised that the following should be eligible for an autumn booster dose: all adults aged 50 years old and over; those aged five to 49 years old in a clinical risk group, including pregnant women; those aged five to 49 years old who are household contacts of people with immunosuppression; those aged 16 to 49 years old who are carers; residents in a care home for older adults and staff working in care homes for older adults; and frontline health and social care workers.

The JCVI's current advice is that only school staff, teachers and support staff at higher risk from severe COVID-19 illness in these eligible groups will be offered a COVID-19 booster vaccination, in addition to children aged five years old and over who are at clinical risk.

Coroners: Standards

Asked by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether there is a backlog for holding inquests as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic; and if so, how this varies across the regions of the country. [HL2019]

Asked by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether there is a backlog for inquests in the Isle of Wight; and if so, what steps they are taking to clear that backlog. [HL2020]

Asked by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the average time it takes from death to holding an inquest, where necessary. [HL2021]

Asked by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the experience of families waiting for an inquest to take place; and what bereavement support they are providing to these individuals. [HL2022]

Lord Bellamy: The [Coroner Statistics 2021: England and Wales](#), published on 12 May 2022, indicate that, on average in 2021, the time between the report of a death to the coroner and the completion of an inquest increased to 31 weeks (up from 27 weeks in 2020), although almost a third of coroner areas completed inquests within 24 weeks. Figures are also published by coroner area: for the Isle of Wight coroner area, the average time for completion of an inquest was 56 weeks (from 40 weeks in 2020).

Coroner services are locally based and funded and administered by the relevant local authorities. The Government recognises that local authorities have experienced a number of pressures as a result of the pandemic. During 2021, coroners dealt with both the impacts of the early stages of the pandemic and the ongoing effect of Covid, including a second lockdown and continued social distancing measures which, in particular, affected the ability to hold jury and other large and complex inquests.

We have provided £6.15 billion in unringfenced grant funding to local authorities in England to support the cost of pandemic pressures which could include additional costs incurred in the administration of coroner services. Funding for local authorities in Wales is a devolved matter. The Chief Coroner has issued guidance to coroners on how their services can best recover from the pandemic, including engagement with local authorities on any additional resources required. He is also undertaking a tour of all coroner areas to engage with them on their post-pandemic recovery plans.

In addition, we included a package of measures in the Judicial Review and Courts Act 2022 to streamline coroners' court processes and support the coronial system with post pandemic recovery plans.

The Government's priority is to ensure that the bereaved remain at the heart of the coroner system. In January 2020, we published a revised Guide to Coroner Services for Bereaved People which provides support and information for the bereaved about what they should expect from coroners' investigations and inquests, and includes information on sources of bereavement support. The Guide is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guide-to-coroner-services-and-coroner-investigations-a-short-guide>.

Corporation Tax

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to suspend corporate income tax for a limited period of time. [HL1756]

Baroness Penn: The Government is not currently planning to suspend Corporation Tax. Any future changes to Corporation Tax will be set out to Parliament in the usual way.

Cost of Living: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the implications of the increased cost of living in Northern Ireland in the absence of a functioning Executive that could distribute public funding in response. [HL2003]

Lord Caine: The Government has taken decisive action to support people right across the UK, including support for the most vulnerable households across Northern Ireland who will receive up to £1,000, including a one-off £650 cost of living payment. The Government has provided significant resources to the NI Executive and it's now vital a new Executive is formed to ensure all the funding available to Northern Ireland is used to maximum effect. In the absence of a fully functioning NI Executive, the Government continues to work with the relevant NI departments to ensure that people in NI benefit from UK support schemes.

Cryptocurrencies: Regulation

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to create a bespoke regulatory framework for the UK cryptoasset sector. [HL1885]

Baroness Penn: At Fintech Week 2022, the Government set out our firm ambition to make Britain a global hub for cryptoasset technology and investment. The UK is committed to creating a regulatory environment in which firms can innovate, while crucially maintaining financial stability and regulatory standards so that people can use new technologies both reliably and safely.

The UK is taking a dynamic approach to engagement with the industry, and the government has committed to consult later this year on the broader regulation of cryptoassets, as part of a staged approach to developing a world-leading regime for cryptoasset activities.

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to discuss an approach to crypto-asset regulation with other countries and international bodies. [HL1986]

Baroness Penn: As set at out Fintech Week in April, the UK is committed to establishing a world-leading regulatory regime for cryptoassets. Given the cross-border nature of cryptoassets, the UK is committed to working with other jurisdictions and through the international standard-setting bodies to support harmonisation of treatment as far as is feasible.

HM Treasury is engaging extensively with international partners on cryptoasset regulation on a bilateral basis. For example, HM Treasury hosted the Regulatory Pillar of the Financial Innovation Partnership with the US Treasury in June. Attendees exchanged views on cryptoasset regulation and market developments, including recent

developments in relation to stablecoins and the exploration of central bank digital currencies (CBDCs).

The UK is also active in international work on cryptoassets being carried out through global fora, including the G7, G20, OECD, IMF and the Financial Stability Board (FSB).

Cybercrime

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to stop cyber criminals. [HL1654]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Tackling cyber crime is at the heart of the Government's new National Cyber Strategy which is supported by £2.6bn of new investment over the three year Spending Review period. The [National Cyber Strategy](#) (2022-2025) has set the direction and ambition for investment and efforts in UK Cyber. Delivery of the Strategy is being supported by the National Cyber Fund. This programme has allocated investment to lead government departments to support delivery of the objectives set out in the strategy.

We are continuing to invest in law enforcement capabilities at the national, regional and local levels to ensure they have the capacity to deal with the increasing volume and sophistication of cyber crime, which includes ensuring officers are being trained and upskilled.

The Cyber Aware campaign is a major national advertising campaign that aims to help businesses (as well as individuals) to protect themselves online. The campaign empowers and enables the public and micro businesses to understand the best ways to stay secure online and take the necessary protective actions; and supports wider efforts to combat the threat at source via the Suspicious Email Reporting Service (SERs), and through partnership interventions. This year's campaign was launched on 18 March and is focusing on empowering citizens, microbusinesses and sole traders to keep their email accounts secure. [Cyber Aware - NCSC.GOV.UK](#)

The Governments' Cyber Essentials Scheme provides the basic controls all businesses should implement to protect themselves. [About Cyber Essentials - NCSC.GOV.UK](#)

Cyber Prevent is an important part of our response to tackling cyber crime. This is an early intervention programme aimed at deterring individuals from getting involved in cyber crime in the first place, moving deeper into cyber crime or reoffending and diverting them towards positive directions. Since 2019, all local forces now have a Cyber Prevent capability.

Further good advice and helpful products from Government include the 10 Steps to Cyber Security and the Cyber Information Sharing Partnership (CISP). [10 Steps to Cyber Security - NCSC.GOV.UK](#)

We have also rolled out Regional Cyber Resilience Centres in each of the nine policing regions, and London. These are a collaboration between police, public, private

sector and academic partners to provide subsidised or free products and cyber security consultancy services to help Small and Medium Sized Enterprise and micro businesses protect themselves better in a digital age.

We have developed and we continue to innovate on a series of Active Cyber Defence measures. Active Cyber Defence is the principle of implementing security measures to strengthen the security of a network or system to make it more robust against attack. The National Cyber Security Centre's Active Cyber Defence programme provides tools that are free at the point of use which help organisations to tackle, in a relatively automated way, a significant proportion of the cyber attacks that hit the UK.

There were 28,886 computer misuse offences referred to the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) by Action Fraud in the year ending March 2022, an overall decrease of 5% from the year ending March 2021 (30,467). All computer misuse offence types saw a decrease, apart from 'Hacking – social media and email' which increased by 6% (from 13,576 to 14,357).

The number of computer misuse offences disseminated to forces rose by 9%, from 3,991 in the year ending March 2021 to 4,335 in the year ending March 2022. The total number of computer misuse offences assigned an outcome decreased by 5% from 7,900 in the year ending March 2021 to 7,556 in the year ending March 2022. Of those outcomes, the number resulting in a 'Charged/Summoned' outcome increased from 74 to 97.

Cystic Fibrosis: Mental Health Services and Social Workers

Asked by Baroness Jolly

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the average waiting time for (1) paediatric, and (2) adult, cystic fibrosis patients in England referred to a (a) clinical psychologist, and (b) social worker, for each year since 2015. [HL1900]

Lord Kamall: The information requested is not held centrally.

Asked by Lord Rennard

To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of (1) paediatric, and (2) adult, cystic fibrosis centres in England had a (a) social worker, and (b) clinical psychologist, vacancy for more than six months for each year since 2015. [HL1915]

Lord Kamall: The information requested is not held centrally.

Darfur: Crimes against Humanity

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to instigate an assessment of the signs of atrocities in Darfur; and what plans they have to commission a

Joint Analysis of Conflict and Stability strategic assessment to investigate (1) whether crimes against humanity are being committed, and (2) whether these crimes could develop into genocide. [HL1759]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The UK and Germany completed a Joint Analysis of Conflict and Stability (JACS) on Sudan in 2019. This was used by the UK to help support conflict resolution mechanisms, create a supportive regional environment and improve governance by supporting fair power structures. Whilst we have not commissioned a recent JACS on Sudan, the UK continues to work closely with a wide range of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) on understanding atrocity prevention, early warning and early response systems.

The UK also remains a staunch advocate for justice and accountability for past crimes, something the former Foreign Secretary urged Sudan's leaders to deliver progress on during his visit to Khartoum in January 2021. The Minister for Africa welcomed the start of Ali Kushayb's trial on 5 April in The Hague for alleged crimes against humanity and war crimes in Darfur. We hope that this trial marks a wider process of accountability and reconciliation in Sudan. We continue to support the International Criminal Court Prosecutor in his important work to investigate crimes in Darfur and regularly raise concerns of human rights abuses in international fora such as the UN Human Rights Council. On 7 July, we successfully secured a resolution to maintain monitoring and reporting on human rights violations at the UN Human Rights Council.

Darfur: Gender Based Violence

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports of (1) an increase in sexual and gender-based violence in the states of Darfur, and (2) the intentional destruction of medical and educational infrastructure in the region between January and May. [HL1760]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Our thoughts are with those affected by the current situation in Darfur, we continue to condemn the violence. On 29 April, the UN Security Council responded to our request by issuing a press statement, calling for the cessation of violence and destruction, the need for Sudanese authorities to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure, and for transparent investigations into any crimes committed. We have also reinforced our concerns with the Sudanese authorities, most recently during a visit to Khartoum by the UK Special Representative for Sudan and South Sudan on 25-28 June. The UK continues to push for an end to sexual and gender-based violence. Those working to prevent sexual violence against women and girls must be able to do so without fear of reprisal.

We understand that the fragile security situation across Sudan has been exacerbated by the political crisis since

the military coup. The UK continues to call for all political actors to engage in dialogue to resolve the current crisis, and implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement, including deployment of the National Action Plan for Civilian Protection.

Debts: Cost of Living

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Durham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effect of increases to the cost of living on problem debt; and what steps that are taking to reduce problem debt. [HL1959]

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Durham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effect of increases to the cost of living on problem debt for those in the bottom 40 per cent of equivalised household incomes; and what steps they are taking to protect such households from problem debt. [HL1960]

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Durham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps the Money and Pensions Service is taking to help those in need of debt advice know where to seek it. [HL1962]

Baroness Penn: The Government is committed to monitoring and understanding personal debt levels in the UK, including the impact of cost-of-living pressures, and help individuals access appropriate guidance and support if they need help to get their finances back on track. Different organisations measure and define 'problem debt' in different ways. The Government monitors personal debt levels by working closely with the Money and Pensions Service (MaPS), the Financial Conduct Authority and by engaging regularly with many other stakeholders on their research and findings.

MaPS undertakes an annual survey of Debt Need to understand how many people are facing financial difficulties and to better understand their characteristics, needs and preferences. The most recent survey indicated that 16% (around 8.5 million) of the UK adult population needed debt advice, with a further 20% (around 10.6 million) 'at risk' and likely to need help if their situation deteriorates.

To help people in problem debt, the Government continues to maintain record levels of funding for free-to-consumer debt advice in England in 2022-23, bringing this year's debt advice budget for MaPS to over £90 million.

In addition to this, the Government launched the Breathing Space scheme in England and Wales last year. The scheme gives eligible people in problem debt who receive professional debt advice access to a 60-day period in which enforcement action is paused and most fees, charges and interest are frozen. Mental Health Crisis Breathing Space is an additional strand of Breathing Space that enables people receiving mental health crisis treatment to access the protections of the scheme for the

full duration of their treatment, plus a further 30 days. In 2021, MaPS set up a single point of entry for the service and commissioned a dedicated pilot, delivered by Rethink Mental Illness.

The Government also continues to develop the Statutory Debt Repayment Plan (SDRP), a statutory agreement that will enable a person in problem debt to combine their debts into a single repayment plan, with payments made over a manageable time period, while receiving legal protections from creditor action for the duration of their plan.

To help people access debt advice, MaPS launched MoneyHelper in 2021, a consumer-facing service which provides free and impartial guidance for people across the UK. This includes budget planning and bill prioritiser tools, practical tips for engaging with creditors and a Debt Advice Locator Tool, which helps people find free, high-quality debt advice in their local area or via telephone and online.

MaPS has also developed the Money Advisor Network pilot which enables a range of organisations including Job Centre Plus, local authorities and financial service providers to refer people for free to MaPS funded debt advice. The individuals referred can either proceed immediately to debt advice, request a call-back at a more convenient time or schedule an in-person appointment.

Defence: Artificial Intelligence

Asked by Lord Clement-Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they will publish an annual list of all AI defence programmes they are working on, including the stage of implementation and the budget for each programme. [HL1997]

Baroness Goldie: While Defence is committed to be as transparent as possible about our use of AI technologies, there are no plans at present to publish an annual list of all AI defence programmes due to practical and security reasons.

Defence understands AI as a family of general-purpose technologies with ubiquitous potential applications from the back office to the battlespace. We will publish an AI 'concept playbook' later this year to help partners to understand the areas of Research and Development that we intend to prioritise. However, it is important to understand that in most cases AI will be an enabler for a broader system or capability (e.g. supporting more informed logistics planning) not a capability programme in itself.

Given the range of potential applications, it would not be practical to label and track all sub-elements of projects underway across Defence that include Autonomy or AI. Moreover, in some cases it would not be appropriate to disclose details of Defence capability programmes for security reasons.

Asked by Lord Clement-Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to their policy paper *Ambitious, Safe, Responsible: Our approach to the delivery of AI enabled capability in Defence*, published on 15 June, what steps they are taking to ensure that (1) scientists, (2) developers, and (3) industry, can operate in an environment where there are adequate controls to prevent their research and technology from being used in ways which may be problematic. [HL1998]

Baroness Goldie: The Defence AI Strategy (published on 15 June 2022), set out our clear commitment to use AI safely, lawfully and ethically in line with the standards, values and norms of the society we serve. This is critical to promote confidence and trust among our people, our partners and the general public.

We will deliver this commitment through a range of robust people, process and technology measures, including: embedding our AI Ethics Principles throughout the entire capability lifecycle; independent scrutiny and challenge from our AI Ethics Advisory Panel; training to ensure our people understand and can appropriately mitigate AI-related risks; publishing as much information as possible about key safeguards (such as our approach to Test and Evaluation); specifying (including through Early Market Engagement) how and why we will utilise algorithms and applications; and ensuring there are effective pathways for individuals to raise ethical or safety concerns.

As we implement these commitments from the AI Strategy - and the associated 'Ambitious, Safe, Responsible' policy - Defence will continue to be outward facing, working with colleagues across the AI and technology industry to understand concerns and identify and embed best practice safeguards.

Department of Health and Social Care: Doctors and Social Workers

Asked by Lord Laming

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many posts in the Department of Health and Social Care are filled by qualified (1) doctors, and (2) social workers. [HL1766]

Lord Kamall: There are 49 qualified doctors in Departmental posts. While there is no centralised record of the number of social workers in the Department, there are three qualified social workers in the Chief Social Worker's office.

Deportation: Children

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many British citizens who were children were deported in (1) 2019, (2) 2020, and (3) 2021. [HL1779]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office does not deport children.

Deportation is a specific form of removal which is used when a Foreign National Offender (FNO) has received a custodial sentence of at least 12 months, unless an exception applies, in line with the UK Border Act 2007 and the Immigration Act 1971.

Deportation: Rwanda

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many deportation flights have flown from the UK to Rwanda; and when those flights took place. [HL1811]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: There have not been any returns charter flights operated from the UK to Rwanda.

The Migration and Economic Development Partnership intends to deter dangerous journeys and illegal entry to the UK, break the business model of people smugglers and protect the lives of those they endanger.

Depressive Illnesses: Diagnosis

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many diagnoses the NHS has made of (1) anxiety, and (2) depression, in each of the past five years; and whether this information can be broken down by the type of accommodation of the patient. [HL1807]

Lord Kamall: The information is not held in the format requested, as the relevant datasets do not include data on diagnoses.

Destination Management Organisations Independent Review

Asked by Lord Taylor of Holbeach

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will respond to The de Bois Review: an independent review of Destination Management Organisations in England, published on 14 September 2021. [HL1942]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: The response was published on 20 July 2022, the very day My Noble Friend tabled this question.

Destroyers and Frigates

Asked by Lord Trefgarne

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many (1) destroyers, and (2) frigates, are presently available for service with the Royal Navy. [HL1657]

Baroness Goldie: Six Destroyers and twelve Frigates are in-service with the Royal Navy. They rotate through operational deployments, exercises and periods of planned maintenance.

At present, of the six Destroyers, four are available for operations with the remainder in long term refit. Of the twelve Frigates, eight are available for operations with the remainder in long term refit.

Developing Countries: Sustainable Development

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to undertake a second Voluntary National Review at the UN High-Level Political Forum on the sustainable development goals. [HL1785]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The International Development Strategy and Integrated Review reaffirm the UK's commitment to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

The UK brings powerful economic and political tools to our development partnerships: aid, diplomacy, trade, investment, expertise and influence. Our programme of activity at this year's High Level Political Forum demonstrated how we will use these to meet the evolving needs of our partners and support achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

The UK's first Voluntary National Review (VNR) provided a comprehensive account of actions being taken across the UK by government and other actors. No decision has been made about a follow-up to the 2019 VNR.

Development Aid

Asked by Baroness Helic

To ask Her Majesty's Government what proportion of UK Official Development Assistance funding is allocated on a multi-year basis. [HL1800]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: HM Treasury allocate Official Development Assistance (ODA) on a multi-year basis to government departments through the Spending Review process. We have set initial multi-year allocations internally within the Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office across the Spending Review period, until 2024-25, to deliver the priorities set out in the International Development Strategy and the Integrated Review. Given the Government's response to the ongoing crisis in Ukraine, the FCDO will need to revisit those allocations to ensure all ODA-eligible spending is managed within 0.5% of GNI this calendar year.

Development Aid: Biodiversity

Asked by Lord Randall of Uxbridge

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to use Official Development Assistance funds to support countries to deliver an ambitious post-2020 global biodiversity framework under the Convention on Biological Diversity; and if so, how. [HL1706]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The UK has committed to spend at least £3bn of International Climate Finance between 2021/22 and 2025/26 on development solutions that protect and restore nature. As set out in the Government's recently published International Development Strategy, the UK is also taking steps to ensure UK bilateral Official Development Assistance (ODA) overall becomes 'nature positive', aligning with the international goal to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030, and the post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, once agreed.

Defra is implementing a range of ODA funded programmes, including some ICF funded activities, to support developing countries to halt and reverse biodiversity loss. These include: the £100m Biodiverse Landscapes Fund, supporting improved management of six highly biodiverse landscapes worldwide; an expanded Darwin Initiative (£93.75m) funding conservation projects and building capacity in developing countries; work to tackle the Illegal Wildlife Trade which is a key driver of biodiversity loss (£30m); the UK's Blue Planet Fund (£500m), supporting developing countries to protect and sustainably manage marine ecosystems; and a new Global Centre on Biodiversity for Climate (up to £40m) to deliver R&D on policy solutions for climate challenges through action on biodiversity. In addition, we are scoping potential further work to support developing countries in meeting the draft Global Biodiversity Framework's 30x30 target to protect and restore critical ecosystems.

District Heating

*Asked by **Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures (1) they, and (2) Ofgem, are taking to ensure that homes connected to heat networks are not locked into high fossil fuel heating systems. [HL1920]

Lord Callanan: To ensure heat networks do not remain on fossil fuel systems, the Government has introduced the Green Heat Network Fund (GHNF). The GHNF is a 3 year £288 million capital grant fund which helps heat networks install cost-effective low-carbon heat sources. The Government is also proposing to regulate heat networks through the Energy Security Bill, which would provide powers to set carbon emissions limits on heat networks as part of the move to net zero. Under the Bill, it is envisaged that Ofgem will be appointed as the regulator for heat networks and enforce carbon limits.

Driving under Influence: Cannabis

*Asked by **Lord Farmer***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to publicise the illegality of driving under the influence of cannabis; and what evidence is available of the effectiveness of this messaging. [HL2006]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: THINK! is the government's flagship road safety campaign, playing a vital role in tackling the attitudes and behaviours that lead to road casualties.

A £1M drug drive campaign ran in February 2015 to support the introduction of new legislation and raise awareness of the new laws amongst drivers. The campaign ran again in 2016, with a £1.3M investment, including a reminder to drivers on the presence of roadside testing. Some additional social media communications, focused on festival goers, ran in the summer of 2017.

- The 2016 campaign achieved good levels of recognition (73% awareness), driven by the "Paranoia" film, and overall recognition was higher than in 2015.

- The "Paranoia" film communicated a general anti-drug drive message, while the online and print elements complemented this by showing the roadside swab which acted as a deterrent and improved credibility.

- Knowledge of drug driving penalties increased over the campaign period, and these practical aspects were deemed more concerning than the emotional repercussions of being caught and convicted of drug driving.

- As drug driving is perceived as a niche behaviour (with less of the audience knowing someone who drug drives when compared with other road safety behaviours), the campaign continued to lack relevance among some young male drivers.

There are a number of issues and behaviours that warrant communications investment and spend is prioritised according to the following key principles:

- The scale of the issue
- Ability of communications to influence behaviour
- Public priorities
- Value for money
- Policy priorities and changes in supporting legislation
- Wider trends, for example the impact of the pandemic

THINK! communications for the next three -year period are currently being planned and will include a review on the status of drug driving within that planning and prioritisation process.

Economic Situation

*Asked by **Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effects of total global debt reaching 352 per cent of Gross Domestic Product in the first quarter of this year; and what steps they will take in response. [HL1789]

Baroness Penn: HM Government continually monitors developments in the global economy, including public and private debt levels, interest rates and the growth outlook, among other macroeconomic indicators.

Total global debt increased following the onset of the pandemic in 2020, reflecting a rise in public and private debt. Public debt increased as governments introduced fiscal support to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on livelihoods, whilst revenues fell in line with the broader decline in economic activity. This fiscal support helped maintain living standards and support global growth. Private debt has also increased, with government policies helping to maintain private access to credit to mitigate a more severe downturn.

Higher global debt levels can increase financial fragilities and lower growth by reducing investment. Against a backdrop of higher debt levels, rapidly rising global interest rates and higher energy and food prices may worsen balance of payment and fiscal pressures and increase risks of debt distress, particularly for some emerging and developing economies.

HMG works closely with major international organisations, including the IMF, World Bank, to understand how debt levels are changing, and on necessary international policy responses, including appropriate support for economies experiencing debt distress. For example, the UK has committed to channelling circa up to 20% of its allocation of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) from the IMF's 2021 general allocation of SDRs to those countries most in need; and is driving forward the implementation of the G20/Paris Club Common Framework for debt treatment to support eligible low-income countries with unsustainable debt.

In the April World Economic Outlook the IMF emphasised the need for guaranteeing an orderly system for resolving debt, including the continued application of the Common Framework, where liquidity support alone is not sufficient. In the UK, public debt increased during the pandemic, in line with other countries around the world. In recognition of the risks of high debt, the UK government has already made responsible decisions which return public debt levels to a sustainable path, supported by fiscal rules which require debt to fall as a proportion of GDP over the medium-term.

Education and Health Services: Finance

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to increase budgets for regions in England as a result of pressures on the (1) health service, and (2) education sector. [\[HL1946\]](#)

Baroness Penn: The Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021 (SR21) set out the government's spending plans for the rest of this Parliament.

This investment will support strong public services and be targeted where it will deliver improved outcomes and value for money for the taxpayer.

The Department for Health and Social Care will receive £188.6 billion in 2024-25. This funding will help to tackle

the elective backlog, make progress on 40 New Hospitals and reform our adult social care system.

The Department for Education settlement provides an £18.4 billion cash increase over the Parliament to £86.7 billion in 2024-25. The settlement provides significant investment in skills and supports the government's commitment to level up education, through additional funding for schools and a package of support to recover lost learning.

Electric Scooters

Asked by Baroness Stowell of Beeston

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they made of law enforcement against illegal use of private e-scooters on public (1) roads, and (2) pavements, before extending the trial for local authority-authorised rental e-scooter schemes until May 2024. [\[HL1814\]](#)

Asked by Baroness Stowell of Beeston

To ask Her Majesty's Government what engagement they have had with police forces across (1) England, and (2) Wales, to establish a uniform approach to enforcement of illegal e-scooter use; and what engagement they plan to have following their decision to extend the trial period. [\[HL1815\]](#)

Asked by Baroness Stowell of Beeston

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the current public understanding regarding the law on e-scooters. [\[HL1816\]](#)

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Enforcement of road traffic law and how available resources are deployed to tackle illegal riding of e-scooters is an operational matter for chief officers according to local policing plans. In February we issued updated guidance to all local authorities and operators taking part in the trials, and local authorities in trial areas continue to engage with local police forces. Following the trial extension, the Government will continue to support the police by ensuring they have the tools needed to enforce road traffic legislation including those relating to e-scooters.

The Department has in place a national monitoring and evaluation programme for the e-scooter trials. As part of the evaluation, evidence was gathered on public perceptions of e-scooters, including residents' views of current e-scooter laws. The findings report from the evaluation is due to be published later this year.

Alongside the findings from the evaluation, we are drawing from wider evidence to further support the trials and help us to consider options for new regulations for e-scooters. For example, insights on public understanding of e-scooter laws has been collected through the Department's Transport and Technology tracker, with findings published in December 2021.

Existing trials will continue to run to 30 November 2022. Local Authorities can then choose to withdraw

from the trials or continue with an extension to 31 May 2024. Our e-scooter trials regulations apply in Great Britain, though some aspects of traffic signs and regulations are devolved and would require the devolved Governments to also amend their legislation. To date, Wales have decided not to hold trials.

Asked by Lord Young of Cookham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the increase in the number of privately owned e-scooters in the UK in (1) 2020, (2) 2021, and (3) 2022. [HL1954]

Asked by Lord Young of Cookham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what studies they have commissioned on the safety of private e-scooters, outside of trials. [HL1956]

Asked by Lord Young of Cookham

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to release the data from the e-scooter trials in England. [HL1957]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Alongside the national evaluation of the e-scooter trials, we are continuing to gather wider evidence on the safety of private e-scooters, including through DfT official statistics (such as STAT19), social behavioural research, as well as by following research conducted by external bodies. The findings report from the evaluation, and underlying datasets, are due to be published later this year.

Based on findings from the Department's Transport and Technology Tracker, we estimate that as of June 2021 roughly 750,000 individuals aged 16+ owned a private e-scooter in England – we do not have data for the whole of the UK, or data for 2022 currently.

Electric Scooters: Sales

Asked by Lord Young of Cookham

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many inspections Trading Standards have made of retailers selling private e-scooters in the last 12 months. [HL1955]

Lord Callanan: BEIS does not hold this information. Trading Standards services are provided by local authorities who operate independently from central government and are therefore responsible for their own enforcement activity and are accountable to their local electorate.

Electric Vehicles: Charging Points

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to offer incentives for companies to invest in a nationwide system of public electric vehicle charging stations. [HL1655]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The UK has been a global front-runner in supporting provision of charging infrastructure along with private sector investment. Of the £2.5 billion of Government funding committed to the electric vehicle (EV) transition since 2020, over £1.6 billion will be used to support charging infrastructure.

Our UK electric vehicle charging infrastructure strategy (published 25 March 2022) sets out our vision and commitments to make EV charging cheaper and more convenient than refuelling at a petrol station.

To ensure that the transition to EVs takes place in every part of the country, we are pledging at least £500 million to support local chargepoint provision. As part of this, the Local EV Infrastructure (LEVI) fund will provide approximately £400 million of capital and £50 million of resource funding to support local authorities to work with industry and transform the availability of charging for drivers without off-street parking.

In addition, to ensure the private sector can continue to expand the charging network at pace in the 2020s, the Government will invest £950 million in future proofing grid capacity at motorway and major A road service areas to prepare the network for uptake of zero emission cars and vans ahead of need.

Emergencies

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made on the updating of the National Resilience Strategy; when it will be published; and whether they intend to incorporate the recommendations from the Institute for Government report Managing Extreme Risks, published on 20 July. [HL1990]

Lord True: The Integrated Review committed the Government to publishing a Resilience Strategy and in 2021 the Cabinet Office ran a Call for Evidence to inform this. The Strategy draws on a wide evidence base including international best practice; experience of recent crises; and external reports and recommendations on issues such as risk and critical national infrastructure from a range of organisations including Parliamentary Committees and formal advisory bodies.

The Strategy will be published at the earliest opportunity by the incoming administration.

Employment: Health

Asked by Baroness Jolly

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will allocate funding to deliver the commitments made in their response to the 'Health is everyone's business' consultation, published on 4 October 2021; and whether this will include funding for the establishment of a Centre for Work and Health. [HL1608]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: The UK Government committed to provide £1.3bn over the SR21 period for employment support for disabled people and people with

health conditions in the Levelling-Up White Paper. This includes commitments set out in joint DWP-DHSC consultation response “Health is Everyone’s Business” (HiEB). We are working with stakeholders including the Medical Research Council, Economic and Social Research Council, UK Research and Innovation and National Institute for Health and Care Research to identify the most efficient and effective way to improve the research infrastructure that supports innovation as outlined in HiEB.

Energy: Billing

Asked by Lord Sikka

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will introduce legislation requiring energy supply companies to ring-fence credit balances owed to customers. [HL1615]

Lord Callanan: Ofgem published a consultation on 20 June setting out their proposals for protecting customer credit balances, including a ringfencing mechanism.

Energy: Conservation

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to their plans to establish a regulatory framework for heat networks as set out in the Energy Bill [HL], what steps they are taking to ensure that properties' energy efficiency is improved when they are connected to a heat network; and what funding will be available for any such energy efficiency improvements. [HL1919]

Lord Callanan: Following the success of the Heat Network Efficiency Scheme (HNES) Demonstrator which was delivered in FY21/22, we are now developing a multi-year scheme, the HNES Main. This scheme will be a key part of the Heat Network Transformation Programme in which we are investing £338 million from 2022-2025.

The HNES Main is likely to again offer both capital grants and revenue grants to existing district heating or communal heating projects to improve the efficiency of the communal network.

Alongside the improvements to network efficiency the government has announced more than £3.9 billion of new funding for decarbonising heat and buildings, including measure to improve the energy efficiency of properties.

Energy: Housing

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of UK homes have an energy efficiency performance rating of (1) A, or (2) B. [HL1889]

Lord Harrington of Watford: The energy efficiency of housing in the UK is reported separately by each Administration. In 2020-21 2.9% of the English housing

stock had an energy efficiency rating of A or B. In 2019 4% of the Scottish housing stock had an energy efficiency rating of A or B.

The proportion of housing in Wales and Northern Ireland with an energy efficiency rating of A or B is not reported.

Energy: Prices

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to tackle rising energy prices. [HL1716]

Lord Callanan: The Government has announced an exceptional support package worth £37billion this year to shield consumers from the worst impacts of volatile international energy markets this coming winter. The Energy Bills Support Scheme (EBSS) will also deliver a £400 non-repayable grant to eligible households to help with energy bills from October.

Energy: Private Rented Housing

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Chelmsford

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to publish a response to their consultation Improving the energy performance of privately rented homes, which closed on 8 January 2021. [HL1891]

Lord Callanan: We have carefully analysed the responses received to the consultation on Improving the energy performance of privately rented homes, and we will publish a Government Response in due course.

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Chelmsford

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact on (1) household energy bills, (2) UK gas consumption, and (3) carbon emissions, of raising Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards in private rented homes to Energy Performance Certificate Band C. [HL1892]

Lord Callanan: In the consultation on improving the energy efficiency performance of privately rented homes in England and Wales, the preferred policy proposal would deliver energy bill savings of £220 a year on average by 2028. It would lower energy demand on the grid and support the transition to low-carbon heating, delivering ~6.1 MtCO₂e of savings for Carbon Budget 5. These figures were published in the consultation, thus the energy bill savings do not reflect the current energy prices.

English Language: Education

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure equal access to English for Speakers of Other Languages support. [HL1926]

Baroness Barran: The department recognises that language skills are crucial to help people integrate into life in England, as well as to break down barriers to work and career progression.

We fund adults through the Adult Education Budget (AEB) for courses and qualifications, so that they can be confident they have the English language skills they need.

Currently, approximately 60% of the AEB is devolved to 9 Mayoral Combined Authorities and delegated to the Mayor of London acting through the Greater London Authority. These authorities are responsible for the provision of adult education and allocation of the AEB in their local areas. The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) is responsible for the remaining AEB in non-devolved areas, where colleges and training providers have the freedom and flexibility to determine how they use their AEB to meet the needs of their communities.

Learner eligibility for public funding for education and training for adults, including English for Speakers of other Languages, is set out in the ESFA AEB Funding Rules for the 2021/22 funding year, which is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/adult-education-budget-aeb-funding-rules-2021-to-2022>.

Ethiopia: Human Rights

Asked by Baroness Helic

To ask Her Majesty's Government what support they have provided to (1) the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, and (2) the UN Human Rights Council's International Commission of Experts, to investigate conflict-related sexual violence in Ethiopia, following the publication of the joint report by the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner Joint Investigation into Alleged Violations of International Human Rights, Humanitarian and Refugee Law Committed by all Parties to the Conflict in the Tigray Region of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, published on 3 November 2021. [HL1798]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The UK is a strong supporter of the work of the International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia (ICHREE). We co-sponsored the resolution mandating its creation at the Special Session of the Human Rights Council in December 2021. We will be strongly supporting the renewal of the Commission's mandate at the forthcoming 52nd Session of the Human Rights Council. We are urging all parties to facilitate its investigations. The UK supported the inclusion of Conflict Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) in the ICHREE mandate. We have raised CRSV with the Government of Ethiopia and other parties to the conflict and will continue to do so.

The UK's new Human Rights and Peacebuilding programme is providing support to the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) to enhance its investigative

capacity and improve the availability and accessibility of services for survivors of gender-based violence.

The UK will continue to support the work of the EHRC, the ICHREE, and of the wider UN in its efforts to ensure that those responsible for the atrocities committed during the conflict in northern Ethiopia, including instances of conflict-related sexual violence, are held to account.

Ethiopia: Sexual Offences

Asked by Baroness Helic

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made in implementing the recommendations of the expert from the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative deployed to Ethiopia in June 2021. [HL1797]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Our Embassy in Addis Ababa is working with organisations in Ethiopia to implement the recommendations from the scoping mission by the UK's Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative (PSVI) Team of Experts in summer 2021. This includes new programme funding to support women's rights-focused organisations to step-up support services to survivors of violence; new research into the drivers and dynamics of conflict-related sexual violence; and improved coordination of the international response to gender-based violence. We have deployed a Gender Based Violence Adviser to our Embassy in Addis Ababa to ensure that gender is integrated into humanitarian and human rights programming. A member of the PSVI Team of Experts is currently providing training on responding to Conflict Related Sexual Violence to Ethiopian civil society organisations.

Families

Asked by Lord Farmer

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay on 23 March (HL Deb col 955), whether the remit of the Children's Commissioner's Family Review includes action to prevent family breakdown. [HL2005]

Lord Harrington of Watford: The Children's Commissioner for England's independent review on family life explores how to improve the way public services understand the needs of children and families, so every child has the best start in life and the opportunity to reach their full potential.

The review involves extensive engagement with children and families from different backgrounds and locations across England, to understand their lives and what they value in family life. It will look at families' experiences, how they seek and gain support and look to better understand the prevalence of familial breakdown and how best to support children and families going through this. The review will also engage with local services, communities and other key stakeholders.

The Office of the Children's Commissioner aims to publish a report on the review by Spring 2023.

Farmers: Advisory Services

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Exeter

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Thrive initiative run by Devon County Council, which offers farmers up to three hours of free advice from a farm consultant; and what plans they have to encourage the roll out of this scheme in other areas. [HL1849]

Lord Benyon: The Thrive initiative is not funded by Defra but where possible we will consider any learning that it, and other similar programmes, can provide to inform our future plans.

We are due to launch the third phase of the Future Farming Resilience Fund (FFRF) which provides free expert advice to farmers and land managers in England during the early years of the agricultural transition.

It does this by awarding grants to organisations who, in turn, help farmers and land managers to:

- understand the changes that are happening;
- identify how, what and when they may need to adapt their business models; and
- access tailored support to adapt.

Defra has awarded grants to 17 organisations to provide delivery of the next phase of the FFRF. The support will be available from October 2022 until March 2025.

Finance Act 1986

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to replace the reference of the "recognised stock exchange" with "multilateral trading facility" in section 99A(5) of the Finance Act 1986. [HL1753]

Baroness Penn: Section 99A(5) of the Finance Act 1986 sets out the conditions by which a market qualifies for recognition by HMRC as a recognised growth market for the purposes of the growth market exemption from Stamp Duty and Stamp Duty Reserve Tax. Replacing the reference to a 'recognised stock exchange' with 'multilateral trading facility' would have the effect of extending the recognised growth market exemption from Stamp Duty and Stamp Duty Reserve Tax to markets that are not part of a recognised stock exchange.

There are currently no plans to extend the recognised growth market exemption from Stamp Duty and Stamp Duty Reserve Tax to markets that are not part of a recognised stock exchange. However, as with all aspects of the tax system, the Government will continue to keep this legislation under review.

Fixed-Term Parliaments Act 2011: Welfare Reform Act 2012

Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett

To ask Her Majesty's Government why the repeal of the Fixed-Term Parliaments Act 2011 required a provision to amend the Welfare Reform Act 2012 to review the benefit cap every five years, rather than in each Parliament; and why this five year period began in March 2022. [HL1699]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: When the review was undertaken once in each Parliament this created potential uncertainty, given the possibility of an early election. This was dealt with by a specific reference to the Fixed Term Parliaments Act 2011.

The repeal of that Act meant that there would be no certainty as to the time period in which the duty had to be complied with and therefore, a significant risk of inadvertent non-compliance.

For this reason, The Welfare Reform Act 2012 was amended to impose a statutory duty to carry out a review of the levels within a certain time frame.

The new five-year period begins in March 2022 as this is when the amending legislation came into force.

Flood Control: Housing

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they (1) are taking, and (2) plan to take, to encourage households to (a) store, and (b) provide soakaways for, rainwater; and what assessment they have made of incentivising the adoption of such practices through reductions in (i) council tax, or (ii) water and drainage fixed rates. [HL1605]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: We support the use of blue green infrastructure, such as sustainable drainage systems and grey water recycling to manage surface water, across existing and new communities. We have placed a greater emphasis on this in our 25 Year Environment Plan, Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Policy Statement and updated planning policy.

We are currently reviewing the implementation of Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act (2010). This schedule introduces standards for new sustainable drainage systems and makes connection to public sewers conditional on approval of the drainage system before any construction work can commence. National standards will set out a hierarchy of destinations for surface water runoff to ensure the most effective drainage system is delivered that will help alleviate pressures on the sewer network, as well as reducing flood risk, harvesting rainwater and improving water quality, amenity and biodiversity.

As set out in our [Written Ministerial Statement on Water Demand in July 2021](#), we are developing a roadmap towards greater water efficiency in new housing developments and retrofits. This includes the exploration of revised building regulations and how the development of new technologies can contribute to meeting these standards. We will ensure that the underlying legislation can, where appropriate, accommodate any potential future expansion of rainwater harvesting, water re-use and storage options.

Households who can show that their premises are not connected to the public sewer for surface water drainage are already entitled to a bill discount via a surface water drainage rebate from their water company.

Flood Control: Housing and Roads

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what analysis, if any, of storm water from (1) the roofs of houses, and (2) highways, they have undertaken to establish whether such water can be discharged safely into (a) water courses, and (b) the sea. [\[HL1604\]](#)

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: In July 2021, the Environment Agency (EA) produced [The State of the Environment: The Urban Environment](#) report (www.gov.uk/government/publications/state-of-the-environment/the-state-of-the-environment-the-urban-environment), which includes an overview of the impact of urban and highways surface water run-off in England. Run off from roofs and roads has historically been considered suitable for discharge to watercourses with the overriding driver being efficient drainage to maintain highway safety, but increasingly the impact of this run-off is being better understood, particularly in inland watercourses. There is little risk to the sea because of ample dilution.

National Highways continue to work with the EA to better understand pollutants in road runoff and effective treatment strategies. There is ongoing work to better understand the contribution from the Strategic Road Network (SRN) to micro plastic pollution and to build on earlier research to investigate the presence of other contaminants of potential concern not previously monitored.

Flood Control: Somerset Levels

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the preparedness of flood defences in the Somerset levels and marshes for winter 2022–23. [\[HL1879\]](#)

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The Somerset Levels and Moors remains prone to flooding, due to its low-lying nature and a rapidly changing climate. £80 million of public investment has been made in this landscape following the floods of 2013–14 to help

it adapt. This significant investment has allowed improved physical infrastructure that allows pre-emptive action to be taken to delay the onset of flooding and to evacuate water more effectively from this low-lying area. This enables communities to be more resilient and to recover more rapidly from flooding.

The Environment Agency is implementing nature-based solutions at a landscape scale and working with individual landowners to support this, enhance biodiversity and increase the capacity of the landscape to absorb water and slow flooding whilst creating carbon storage.

Construction work will start next year on the £100 million Bridgwater Barrier, one of the largest flood defence schemes in the country, which was identified as an action in the 20-year Flood Action Plan for Somerset. This will reduce tidal flood risk to over 13,000 residential homes and businesses and ensure that high tide levels do not adversely impact on the Somerset Levels and Moors.

Food Supply: Northern Ireland

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Manchester

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure an (1) adequate, and (2) diverse, supply of food for those of (a) Orthodox Jewish faith, and (b) other faiths, in Northern Ireland. [\[HL1742\]](#)

Lord Benyon: We recognise the importance of ensuring that everyone in Northern Ireland is able to observe their chosen faith fully, and without hindrance. This includes those of Orthodox Jewish faith, who rely on free access to kosher meats and groceries.

We have previously been made aware that a supplier decided to stop supplying kosher foods to Northern Ireland. They explained that this was owing to difficulty for them complying with the Official Controls Regulation which applies in Northern Ireland by virtue of the Northern Ireland Protocol.

We worked closely with those concerned to identify alternative options, and an alternative GB supplier of kosher foods was identified.

We are not aware of any similar issues facing those of other faiths in Northern Ireland, but we do know that the Protocol is still causing real problems. It is our preference to resolve these problems through talks with the EU, but in the meantime the Government's Northern Ireland Protocol Bill will fix the practical problems that the Protocol has created.

Food: VAT

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to reduce VAT in response to rising grocery bills. [\[HL1944\]](#)

Baroness Penn: VAT has been designed as a broad-based tax on consumption, and the 20 per cent standard rate applies to the vast majority of goods and services.

While there are exceptions to the standard rate, these have always been strictly limited by both legal and fiscal considerations. One exception is the zero-rate of VAT the UK applies to many foods, including fresh fruit, vegetables, cereals, meat, bread, milk, tea, and coffee, to help ensure food is affordable for families.

VAT makes a significant contribution to the UK public finances, being forecast to raise £135 billion in 2021-22 and helping to fund key spending priorities. Any reduction in tax paid is a reduction in the money available to support important public services, including the NHS and policing. The Government keeps all taxes under review.

Freight: Trade

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether additional access will be provided to freight operators to support UK businesses trade internationally. [HL2051]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Access for EU and UK freight operators to one another's markets is governed by the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) There are no restrictions on freight movements between the UK and EU. Once an international laden journey has been completed, a UK operator can make two freight movements in a 7 day period within the EU, one of which may be within a single EU country. EU operators can make up to two movements in a 7 day period in the UK following an international laden journey.

The Government has no plans to renegotiate the TCA at this time.

Fuel Oil: VAT Zero Rating

Asked by Lord Allen of Kensington

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the potential benefit of zero-rating VAT on fuel oil to assist households that are reliant on fuel oil to heat their homes; and what plans they have to reduce VAT on fuel oil. [HL1820]

Baroness Penn: This year the Government is providing over £37 billion in cost of living support, including helping people cope with the impact of higher energy bills, with £400 off their bills from October through the expansion of the Energy Bills Support Scheme (EBSS) and with millions of the most vulnerable households due to receive at least £1,200 in total.

Domestic fuels such as gas, electricity and heating oil are not subject to the standard rate of VAT at 20 per cent but to a reduced rate of VAT at only 5 per cent.

The Government keeps all taxes under review.

Further Education: Special Educational Needs

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Coventry

To ask Her Majesty's Government what further consultation opportunities they will provide for those involved in the education of SEND students within further education colleges to inform the development of policy following the SEND green paper consultation. [HL1999]

Baroness Barran: The department will continue to work with partners, including further education providers, to design a national Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) improvement plan. This will be published later this year and will set out in detail how we will deliver improvements to the SEND and AP system, including in further education. In autumn, the department will establish a National SEND and AP Board to lead improvements in the system across education, health, and care. We will set out the board's role and membership, including how we will ensure the voices and lived experiences of children, young people and their families are at the heart of the board discussions.

Gambling: Mental Health

Asked by Lord Foster of Bath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they plan to take in response to the recommendations set out in the 'Prevention of Future Deaths Report' issued after the inquest of Jack Ritchie, published on 7 March. [HL2010]

Lord Kamall: In May 2022, the Government published its response to the Coroner's Prevention of Future Deaths report following the inquest into the death of Jack Ritchie. A copy of the Government's response is attached.

This confirmed the Government's commitment to addressing gambling-related harms and prioritising gambling as a public health issue. We will improve the awareness and understanding of gambling-related harms amongst healthcare professions as well as expanding and improving specialist treatment services available for people with a gambling addiction. We have also committed to assess current gambling regulation through the Review of the Gambling Act 2005.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Attachment [2022-0072-Response-from-DHSC-DCMS-and-DFE_Published (1).pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-07-21/HL2010>

Gambling: Video Games

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to increase monitoring of third-party websites that enable the trading of loot box items. [HL1928]

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the link between loot boxes and problem gambling. [HL1929]

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether loot boxes are (1) games of chance, and (2) capable of being exchanged for real money. [HL1930]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: Her Majesty's Government's response to the call for evidence sets out our findings on loot boxes, and our view on the next steps to address the issues it identified.

The call for evidence identified an association between the purchase of loot boxes and problem gambling. There are, however, a range of plausible explanations for this association, and research has not established whether a causal relationship exists.

Loot boxes vary in their design and deployment within games. Loot box rewards are usually confined for use within a given game and cannot be sold for real world currency, so are unlikely to meet the Gambling Act 2005's definition of a prize of 'money or money's worth'.

It is for the Gambling Commission to decide on a case-by-case basis whether to pursue enforcement action against any operations which it believes to be facilitating unlicensed gambling. It has shown that it can and will take action where the trading of items obtained from loot boxes brings loot box mechanics within the statutory definitions of gambling. Its recent uplift in fees has given the regulator new resources to monitor for and tackle unlicensed gambling.

Gender Recognition

Asked by Lord Clement-Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government further to the Written Answers by Lord Kamall on 24 May (HL476 and HL475), what assessment they have made of the (1) clarity, and (2) inclusivity, of using the language "people with cervixes" in the Gender Identity Toolkit for General Practice. [HL1845]

Lord Kamall: No specific assessment has been made. The Toolkit is made available by the Institute of General Practice Management, Indigo Gender Service, Practice Index and Pride in Practice. It is designed to improve the knowledge of general practice teams when providing inclusive and equitable care to transgender and non-binary patients.

Gender: Equality

Asked by Baroness Gale

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the commitment in their policy paper Gender equality at every stage: a roadmap for change, published in July 2019, to provide an annual progress report to Parliament, where the reports they have already made can be found; and when they plan to publish their next report. [HL1895]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: In December 2020 the Minister for Women and Equalities set out a new approach to tackling inequality, including in relation to gender. This involves moving beyond the previous roadmap and narrow focus of protected characteristics; and reflects the new expanded remit of the Equality Hub.

Since then, the Hub has been concentrating on improving the quality of evidence and data about disparities and the types of barriers different people face. This evidence is enabling us to support the development of policy across government to make the UK a fairer place to live and work.

General Practitioners: Finance

Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they anticipate to return to funding general practice to 11 per cent of the total NHS budget. [HL2023]

Lord Kamall: There is no target on the proportion of the National Health Service budget allocated for the funding of general practice. In 2019, we invested an additional £4.5 billion in primary medical and community care by 2023/24. In February 2020, we committed at least a further £1.5 billion until 2023/24 for the recruitment of additional staff in general practice.

General Practitioners: Labour Turnover

Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take to retain General Practitioners working up until the age of retirement to stem the flow of GPs leaving the profession. [HL2025]

Lord Kamall: The updated GP Contract Framework announced a number of new retention schemes alongside continued support for existing schemes for the general practice workforce. The GP Retention Scheme provides financial and educational support to assist general practitioners (GPs) to remain in clinical practice where they are unable to undertake a regular part-time role and may otherwise leave the profession.

The International Induction Programme provides a supported pathway for overseas qualified GPs who have not worked in general practice in the United Kingdom to be inducted safely into the National Health Service. The Return to Practice Programme provides a pathway for

qualified GPs who have previously been on the General Medical Council's GP Register and NHS England's Medical Performers List to return to general practice after an absence of more than two years.

The Primary Care Fellowship Programme guarantees the opportunity for every newly qualified GP and nurse entering general practice to receive funded mentorship, funded continuing professional development opportunities of one session per week and rotational placements within or across Primary Care Networks to develop experience and support the transition into the local workforce. The Supporting Mentors Scheme is a new national scheme which will offer an opportunity for highly experienced GPs to mentor newly qualified GPs entering the workforce through the Fellowship Programme.

The New to Partnership Payment is available to those GPs without partnership experience who are offered partnerships, in addition to other professional groups such as nurses and pharmacists. New partners will benefit from a £3,000 business training allowance and a guaranteed one-off payment of £20,000 to support their establishment as a new partner.

General Practitioners: Migrant Workers

Asked by Lord Naseby

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress has been made in the negotiations between the Department of Health and Social Care and the Home Office regarding the approximately 1,000 foreign GPs working for the NHS who are threatened with deportation because they do not meet the requirements of the skilled worker scheme. [HL1613]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Deportation relates to the removal from the UK of Foreign Nationals who are serious or persistent criminal offenders. It is wrong to suggest 1,000 foreign national GPs fall within this category or to imply they have been threatened with this by the Home Office. We therefore would not be having any negotiations with the Department for Health and Social Care on this basis.

General Practitioner (GP) is a role which qualifies for the Skilled Worker Visa, in particular the Health and Care visa which makes it easier, cheaper, and quicker for health workers – including GPs – to come to the UK to work compared to other immigration routes. This route also exempts them from the need to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge.

The Home Office works with employers in the sector to ensure they can recruit under the Skilled Worker route by becoming a licensed sponsor, with tens of thousands of employers having done so, including many small and medium size businesses. Those who are licensed sponsors can recruit for any role which qualifies for the Skilled Worker Visa.

General Practitioners: Recruitment

Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many General Practitioners they forecast to be in practice in 2030. [HL2024]

Lord Kamall: The information requested is not held centrally. However, we are working to increase the general practice workforce, address the reasons why doctors leave the profession and encourage them to return to practice.

The updated GP Contract Framework for 2020/21 also provides new retention schemes and continued support for existing schemes to retain general practitioners. We are also working with the National Health Service and the profession to understand what further support may be required and to improve the working environment.

Ghana: Marburg Virus

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to monitor the re-emergence of the Marburg virus in Ghana. [HL1884]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: As outlined in the International Development Strategy, the UK is committed to strengthening global health security. In Ghana, the UK recently trained 7,000 health workers on surveillance and response, including in the regions affected by the current Marburg outbreak. Ghana responded swiftly to the outbreak and continues to intensify containment measures, with all new suspected Marburg cases identified through surveillance activities. The UK continues to support Ghana on surveillance and infection prevention and control, and has offered to provide additional support if needed.

More broadly, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), the Department of Health and Social Care and the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs are also providing technical support to the Africa Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, to improve regional preparedness and response, and address weaknesses in health security systems in Ghana and neighbouring countries as needed. The FCDO's Emergency Medical Teams and UK Health Security Agency's Public Health Rapid Response Teams have expertise and capacity to be deployed at short notice and have recently provided support to African countries including Ghana, for Covid-19 and Ebola and Marburg outbreaks.

Hammersmith Bridge Task Force

Asked by Baroness Kramer

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the Hammersmith Bridge Task Force will next meet; and when the agenda for that meeting will be published. [HL1907]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The focus for the Government, London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, and TfL is delivering and monitoring the stabilisation works and developing a business case for the second stage of works. A further meeting of the Taskforce will be considered when members put forward substantive agenda items for discussion.

The Taskforce publishes a report of each meeting on the Government website.

Hatun Tash

Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 13 July (HL1352), whether they will now answer the

question put; namely, what plans they have, if any, to instigate an inquiry into (1) the arrest of Miss Hatun Tash at Speakers' Corner on 26 June and her subsequent detention, strip search and questioning at 4am on 27 June, and (2) the actions of the police towards other individuals present at Speakers' Corner (a) before, and (b) during, Miss Tash's arrest. [HL1745]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Ministers are unable to intervene in individual cases and complaints against the police.

If an individual is unhappy with the decisions made by the police, they have the option of submitting a complaint to the relevant police force. Police force websites include information about how to complain. A complaint can also be made via an online form available on the website of the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) at: <https://policeconduct.gov.uk/complaints-and-appeals/make-complaint>.

A short guide to the police complaints system is also available on the IOPC's website and is attached: https://policeconduct.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Documents/Complaint_forms/IOPC_A_guide_to_complaint_system_2020.pdf

The Answer includes the following attached material:

IOPC Police complaints
[IOPC_A_guide_to_complaint_system_2020.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-07-13/HL1745>

Health Services and Social Services: BTEC Qualifications

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have undertaken an impact assessment on the decision to end the provision of the BTEC qualification in Health and Social Care with regard to (1) NHS workforce numbers, (2) social care workforce numbers, and (3) patient safety. [HL1600]

Baroness Barran: The department has been clear that we will continue to fund some BTECs and other qualifications in future, where there is a clear need for skills and knowledge that A levels and T Levels cannot provide, and where they meet new quality standards. These will continue to play an important role for 16 to 19 year olds and adults. This includes for students taking qualifications such as BTECs as their full programme of study, where there is no A level or T Level, and those taking mixed programmes of A levels and other qualifications. We expect to fund small academic qualifications that should typically be taken alongside A levels in priority subject areas such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and in areas where an A level is not available, such as health and social care. We will set out the full approval criteria in due course.

The health T Level will help raise awareness amongst young people of the occupational choices within the healthcare sector and provide an opportunity for employers to strengthen their engagement with local schools and colleges. In addition, the health T Level will provide a pipeline of young talent who may move into Trainee Nursing Associate and Assistant Health Practitioner roles, later progressing to the registered occupations.

In November last year the department announced an extra year before our reforms are implemented, including the removal of overlapping qualifications. This extra year will allow the department to continue to support the growth of T Levels and gives more notice to providers, awarding organisations, employers, students and parents so that they can prepare for the changes.

Health Services: Males

Asked by Lord Farmer

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress has been made on the development of a Men's Health Strategy. [HL2007]

Lord Kamall: Although the Department does not have any current plans to develop a men's health strategy, we have measures in place to address specific health issues which disproportionately affect men. This includes commitments in the NHS Long Term Plan to reduce stroke and heart attacks and the forthcoming new Tobacco Control Plan and significant investment in suicide prevention.

Health Services: Migrants

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much money the Immigration Health surcharge raised in (1) 2020, and (2) 2021; and how much of that money was distributed (a) solely to the National Health Service, and (b) to other departments and public bodies. [HL1647]

*Asked by **Lord Rosser***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the extent to which the Immigration Health Surcharge has reduced the impact of non-British citizens using the National Health Service; and how they have made this assessment. [HL1648]

Lord Kamall: The Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) raised £480.82 million in 2020/21; and £1,423 million in 2021/22. This relates to income collected by the Home Office through visa applications for the United Kingdom. The information requested on the distribution of this income specifically for the National Health Service in England, other Departments and public bodies is not held in the format requested. A proportion of net IHS income is allocated to the Department of Health and Social Care with other income sources for expenditure on health services by NHS England and other organisations, such as local authorities. However, there is no central record of the proportion of IHS income received by NHS and non-NHS organisations.

No specific assessment of the impact of the IHS on non-British citizens' use of the NHS has been made. Those who pay the IHS have the same entitlement to NHS care as those ordinarily resident in the United Kingdom, with the exception of assisted conception services.

Health: Equality

*Asked by **Lord Farmer***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the statement by the Minister for Women's Health on 20 July, what evidence they have to support the claim that there is a "gender health gap" adversely affecting women and the Government needs to "ensure women receive the same standards of care as men", given that men die younger than women and are more likely to die from heart disease, suicide, COVID and diabetes. [HL2008]

Lord Kamall: The Women's Health Strategy for England found that although on average women in the United Kingdom live longer than men, women spend a quarter of their lives in ill-health and disability compared to approximately one fifth of men. Disability-free life expectancy has reduced at almost twice the rate for women in England compared to men. A copy of the Women's Health Strategy for England is attached.

The call for evidence which informed the Women's Health Strategy received approximately 100,000 responses from individuals and over 400 written responses from organisations with expertise in women's health. The Results of the 'Women's Health – Let's talk about it' survey found that women have been under-represented in research studies, including clinical trials, therefore there is less understanding of how general health conditions and disabilities such as cardiovascular disease and mental health conditions can affect women and men differently. Respondents also reported that there is insufficient understanding of conditions which solely

impact women, such as endometriosis or the menopause. A copy of the Results of the 'Women's Health – Let's talk about it' survey is attached.

The responses received to the call for evidence from organisations and experts in women's healthcare also highlighted the need for improved education and training in women's health conditions for healthcare professionals. Respondents also reported a lack of awareness of women's health issues among some healthcare professionals, including the causes of infertility and treatment for gynaecological conditions. A copy of the Results of the of the written evidence submitted by organisations and experts is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

attachment [results-of-the-womens-health-lets-talk-about-it-survey (1).pdf]

attachment [Women_s-Health-Strategy-England.pdf]

attachment
[Womens_Health_Strategy_written_responses_from_organisations_and-experts.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-07-21/HL2008>

Health: Males

*Asked by **Baroness Eaton***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to (1) ensuring men's health is made a ministerial priority, and (2) making improvements to men's health a specific strand of work within the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities. [HL2002]

Lord Kamall: Improving the health of both men and women is a ministerial priority for the Department. Evidence suggests that men are disproportionately affected by certain conditions, such as ischemic heart disease, are more likely to smoke or engage in other health harming behaviours and are more likely to die by suicide. We have committed to reduce stroke and heart attacks and the forthcoming publication of the new Tobacco Control Plan will target groups where smoking rates are not decreasing, including men. We are also investing in measures to prevent suicide.

While there are no current plans to make men's health a specific strand of work, the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities aims to improve the health of the population regardless of socio-economic background or gender.

Healthy Start Scheme

*Asked by **The Lord Bishop of Gloucester***

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to publish data on the take-up of the Healthy Start scheme among eligible families in April 2022. [HL2011]

Lord Kamall: The information requested is not currently held centrally. The Department of Health and Social Care and the NHS Business Services Authority are working with the Department for Work and Pensions to obtain the relevant data as soon as possible. Once received, this information will be published online.

Heart Diseases: Diagnosis and Medical Treatments

Asked by Baroness Masham of Ilton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take to ensure that GP surgeries with low performing Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) data are provided with additional support for (1) diagnosing, and (2) treating, heart failure. [HL1644]

Lord Kamall: The Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) is an annual voluntary incentive programme for general practitioner (GP) practices in England, which rewards practices for meeting the required thresholds for each indicator. No additional support is offered specifically to low-performing practices. NHS England is implementing measures to raise awareness of the symptoms of heart failure and ensure early and rapid access to diagnostic tests and treatment, overseen by the National Clinical Director for Heart Disease and supported by an Expert Advisory Group of clinical experts. This includes the launch of community diagnostic centres which could deliver over one million additional computerised tomography, magnetic resonance imaging, ultrasound scans, echocardiograms scans and X-rays. This will support Primary Care Networks to increase diagnostic capacity for the detection of conditions such as heart failure and heart valve disease.

NHS England has developed five 'NHS@Home' pilots to support patients with heart failure in the community. The 'Managing Heart Failure @home' scheme aims to support people living with heart failure to manage their condition at home through patient education and remote monitoring. Working with a specialist clinician, patients are supported to understand their medications, reduce salt intake, monitor and record daily weight and blood pressure measurements and recognise symptoms which may indicate deterioration. The 'Blood Pressure @Home' initiative allocated more than 220,000 blood pressure monitors in England to enable at-risk patients to measure their blood pressure remotely and share the results with their GP practice, reducing the need for appointments and travel. These schemes aim to reduce hospital admissions and increase patients' quality of life, through improved understanding of the management of the condition and communication with primary, community and specialist teams.

Heart Diseases: Primary Health Care

Asked by Baroness Masham of Ilton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that those most at risk of heart failure

have immediate access to primary care services for the (1) diagnosis, and (2) monitoring, of their condition. [HL1645]

Lord Kamall: Multi-disciplinary teams within Primary Care Networks provide greater access to echocardiography to investigate the symptoms of patients with breathlessness and accelerate the early detection of heart failure and heart valve disease.

We have committed to creating an additional 50 million appointments a year in general practice by increasing and diversifying the primary care workforce. This will improve access for patients, including those at risk from heart failure and ensure staff can provide a range of care options for patients outside of hospital.

Heat Pumps

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they define a smart heat pump; what plans they have to introduce support for consumers to purchase smart heat pumps; and when they plan for any such support to be introduced. [HL1916]

Lord Callanan: The Government is currently consulting on proposals to mandate smart functionality for specific electric heating appliances, including heat pumps, from 2025. For the purpose of the smart mandate, a smart heat pump is defined as communications-enabled and capable of responding automatically to incentive signals (such as price) and/or other more direct control signals by shifting or modulating its electricity consumption. Consumers can use existing support schemes, such as the Boiler Upgrade Scheme, to install a smart heat pump and the consultation is seeking views on what further action may be needed to ensure all consumers can benefit from smart heating.

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to require the companies involved in the Hydrogen Village Trial to conduct whole-house assessments of the upgrades required to make a house suitable for a heat pump. [HL1917]

Lord Callanan: Companies involved in planning the Village Trial will complete detailed property surveys in the proposed trial locations. The surveys will be used to assess suitability for hydrogen conversion or for an alternative heating system for consumers who do not wish to or cannot participate in the trial.

Heat Pumps: Imports

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to protect UK manufacturers from cheap imported heat pumps as a result of their proposed

market-based mechanism for low carbon heat. [HL1918]

Lord Callanan: The Government is putting in place a package of measures to build a globally competitive UK heat pump manufacturing sector. This includes policies to help build demand for heat pumps, like the £450 million Boiler Upgrade Scheme, as well as those that incentivise inward investment in the supply chain, such as the Super Deduction Capital Allowance Scheme and the Heat Pump Investment Accelerator Competition. There has already been significant investment in the UK heat pump supply chain over the past 12 months from companies like Mitsubishi, Octopus Energy, Vaillant and Ideal Heating, and we expect this growth to continue.

Heating: Rural Areas

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Gloucester

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have plans to help households in rural communities move away from higher cost fuel sources for heating. [HL2012]

Lord Callanan: The Government recognises that heating oil prices have risen steeply over the past year and has therefore set out a £37 billion package of support. This includes financial support which remains available for heating oil customers with energy bills, if eligible, through the Warm Home Discount, Winter Fuel Payment and Cold Weather Payment schemes.

The Government continues to believe it essential that heating oil consumers receive a fair deal. There is an open market for the supply of domestic heating oil in the UK as the Government believes this is the best long-term guarantee of competitive prices.

High Speed 2 Line: Euston Station

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Vere of Norbiton on 15 July (HL1419), and in respect of properties in Park Village East, what information HS2 Ltd has provided in its engagement with affected parties; what changes have been made to the current design as a result of this engagement; who has been identified as the affected parties; and whether they will place all relevant papers including any independent reports on ground movement in the Library of the House. [HL1888]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: HS2 Ltd has kept local residents informed about the plans for the HS2 Euston Approaches through (i) a series of regular online and face to face information sessions; and (ii) online materials made available on the HS2 Ltd website. Most recently, in Spring 2022, HS2 Ltd hosted a series of information sessions, where updates were provided on the development of the design of the Euston Approaches, including the proposed tunnels. These virtual and in

person information sessions were attended by Park Village East residents. The online materials include a Frequently Asked Questions document, which includes details of the developing designs, along with detailed responses to regular questions received from Park Village East residents about tunnelling and excavations.

In parallel, HS2 Ltd has been in regular contact with relevant residents to arrange property surveys and other investigations to inform ground movement assessments associated with the proposed major excavations and tunnelling. As the detailed design of the tunnels progresses, HS2 Ltd will carry out further assessments and provide updates to relevant property owners. Property owners within the settlement buffer zone are able to apply for a settlement deed under the HS2 Act.

Details of the final design are expected to be available to share. HS2 plan to finalise and share the tunnel design in spring 2023, and will keep the community informed if dates change, with tunnelling due to start in mid to late 2023.

HS2 Ltd has changed the design based on community feedback is the Euston Cavern Headhouse planned for the northern end of Park Village East. The headhouse has been re-designed prior to submitting the town planning application to reflect the local residents' preference for a red brick façade in keeping with the neighbouring Park Village Studios.

History: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Lexden

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to commission an official history of Northern Ireland from 1968 to 1998; and if they have any such plans, whether they plan to appoint a panel of historians to oversee the project. [HL1908]

Lord Caine: As announced alongside the introduction of the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill on 17 May 2022, the Government intends to commission an Official History relating to the Troubles in Northern Ireland.

This will be conducted by independent historians with access to all relevant material in Government records, and with the purpose of providing an examination of the Government's policy towards Northern Ireland during this time.

The project will be steered by experts, who will make recommendations on scope and other important details. Further details will be announced in due course.

HIV Infection: Death

Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people died in England from an AIDS-related illness in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available. [HL1722]

Lord True: A response to the noble Lord's Parliamentary Question of 13 July is below and attached.

Professor Sir Ian Diamond | National Statistician

Lord Black of Brentwood House of Lords London SW1A 0PW

19 July 2022

Dear Lord Black,

As National Statistician and Chief Executive of the UK Statistics Authority, I am responding to your Parliamentary Question asking how many people died in England from an AIDS-related illness in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available (HL1722).

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) publishes statistics on deaths registered in England and Wales. Mortality statistics are compiled from information supplied when deaths are certified and registered as part of civil registration. Causes mentioned on the death certificate are converted to International Classification of Diseases (ICD) codes, with the underlying cause of death defined as the disease or injury that initiated the events that directly lead to the death. At the ONS, we use the term "due to" to refer to the underlying cause of a death. Table 1 of the attached dataset shows the number of number of deaths due to HIV disease ICD-10 codes, from 2011 to 2021, registered in England.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Sir Ian Diamond

Table 1: Number of deaths [1] due to human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) disease ICD-10 codes [2], by year, 2011 to 2021 [3], England [4]

Year	B20	B21	B22	B23	B24	Total Per Year
2011	101	18	30	29	7	185
2012	109	27	31	22	11	200
2013	96	30	38	29	8	201
2014	83	36	10	8	15	152
2015	96	39	6	4	16	161
2016	74	43	6	10	19	152
2017	90	34	7	6	20	157
2018	78	28	7	5	15	133
2019	64	28	11	7	10	120
2020	68	20	20	12	13	133
2021	76	15	21	3	20	135
Total per code	935	318	187	135	154	1729

Source: Office for National Statistics

Footnotes:

[1] Number of deaths by ICD-10 code are available through our explorable dataset NOMIS from 2013

onwards, this can be accessed here: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/query/construct/summary.asp?reset=yes&mode=construct&dataset=161&version=0&anal=1&initset=>

[2] International Classification of Diseases 10th edition (ICD-10) codes are as follows: B20, HIV disease resulting in infectious and parasitic diseases; B21, HIV disease resulting in malignant neoplasms; B22, HIV disease resulting in other specified diseases; B23, HIV disease resulting in other conditions; B24, Unspecified HIV disease.

[3] Figures are for deaths registered in a calendar year, rather than death occurrences.

[4] Figures are based on area of usual residence and exclude non-residents.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

UKSA response to HL1722

[UKSA_Response_to_PQHL1722.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-07-13/HL1722>

Holiday Accommodation and Private Rented Housing

Asked by **Lord Naseby**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take to make the provision of long-term homes for private rent more appealing than supplying holiday lets. [HL1980]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: The sharing economy has brought many benefits to the tourism sector and wider economy, as well as creating an additional income stream for homeowners. However, we recognise that the increase in short-term letting has also prompted some concerns. These include the impact on the housing market and local communities particularly from those living in our most popular tourist destinations. The Government committed in the Tourism Recovery Plan, published in June last year, to consult on a possible Short Term Accommodation Registration Scheme in England. A call for evidence as the first stage of that consultation process was published on 29 June and runs until 21 September. We will listen carefully to what local people and affected stakeholders have to say to make sure we respond appropriately with evidence-based policy proposals.

Home Office: Email

Asked by **Lord Rosser**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many British citizens have paid to send email enquiries via SITEL UK; and what is the cost to the applicant of sending such an email from within the UK. [HL1712]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: SITEL UK delivered the UKVI overseas helpline services from March 2017 up until April 2021. Teleperformance now deliver this service on behalf of the Home Office.

Customers who are looking to apply or have applied for visas from outside the UK who choose to make contact by e-mail will be charged £2.74 per e-mail enquiry. This includes the initial e-mail enquiry plus any follow-up e-mails to and from the contact centre relating to the same enquiry. E-mails are sent via a web message form found on the [Contact UKVI](#) pages on Gov.uk.

The specific email form can be found [here](#) under the section 'online'.

Customers applying for visas from within the UK are not charged to send an email.

We do not hold data on the nationality of people who have paid to send an email.

Home Office: Public Expenditure

Asked by Baroness Mobarik

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the total budget for the Home Office for each year since 2009. [HL1571]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office reports budgetary information in the Annual Report and Accounts by financial year (April to March).

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>£000s</i>
2021-22	18,681,143
2020-21	17,974,929
2019-20	14,892,011
2018-19	15,694,071
2017-18	14,154,085
2016-17	13,530,820
2015-16	12,615,214
2014-15	13,644,128
2013-14	12,461,515
2012-13	10,492,524
2011-12	10,641,338
2010-11	10,854,940
2009-10	10,991,194
2008-09	10,627,462

Source: HO annual reports and accounts - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Home Office: Staff

Asked by Baroness Mobarik

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many staff have been employed by the Home Office for each year since 2009. [HL1572]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The number of staff employed by the Home Office is published in our annual reports.

2008/09	3189	
2009/10	3719	
2010/11	3350	
2011/12	11141	*Machine of Government change increase
2012/13	12456	
2013/14	26328	*Machine of Government change increase
2014/15	31556	
2015/16	31034	
2016/17	32173	
2017/18	31790	
2018/19	34982	
2019/20	33628	
2020/21	34469	
2021/22	35781	

*Based on headcount (not full-time equivalent). Include permanent employees

Sources:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ho-annual-reports-and-accounts>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-home-office-departmental-report-2009>

Hong Kong: Demonstrations

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Hong Kong regarding the jailing of (1) Alexandra Wong, and (2) Koo Sze-yiu, for participating in pro-democracy demonstrations in 2019; and what assessment they have made of the (a) rule of law, and (b) freedom of speech, in that territory. [HL1761]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is deeply concerned about the erosion of rights and freedoms in Hong Kong, and the authorities' decision to target pro-democracy figures for prosecution. The right to peaceful

protest is one of the rights China promised to protect, as guaranteed in both the Sino-British Joint Declaration and the Basic Law. However, the Chinese Government has failed to uphold freedom of speech and assembly, including through Chinese and Hong Kong authorities' continuing use of the National Security Law to target dissenting voices.

The UK is clear that freedom of speech, an independent judiciary and the rule of law are protected in the Joint Declaration and should be upheld. We continue to raise our concerns directly with the Hong Kong and Chinese authorities and call on China to uphold the promises it willingly agreed to.

Hong Kong: Human Rights

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the observations on Hong Kong made by the United Nations Human Rights Committee during the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; and what plans they have to ensure that the recommendations of the United Nations Human Rights Committee on the situation in Hong Kong are delivered. [[HL1764](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have followed closely the United Nations Human Rights Committee review of Hong Kong's implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, including the evidence submitted by Non-Governmental Organisations regarding the use of the National Security Law to erode Hong Kong's rights and freedoms. We note the concerns expressed about the National Security Law and the restrictions on freedom of expression, assembly, association and participation in political affairs. We look forward to seeing the recommendations from the Committee and will review accordingly.

The UK has been clear that the imposition of the National Security Law and the overhaul of Hong Kong's electoral system have undermined the civil and political rights promised to Hong Kongers under the Sino-British Joint Declaration. We continue to work with our allies and partners as part of a global network of liberty to hold China to its international obligations.

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the view of experts from the United Nations Human Rights Committee that Hong Kong's national security law (1) undermines the right to a fair trial, and (2) expands the power of law to law enforcement; and what steps they intend to take in response. [[HL1780](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK has been clear that the National Security Law constitutes a clear and serious breach of the Sino-British Joint Declaration. The mainland Chinese and Hong Kong authorities have used the National Security Law and its related institutions to

curtail freedoms, punish dissent and shrink the space for opposition, free press and civil society.

We have followed closely the United Nations Human Rights Committee review of Hong Kong's implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, including the evidence submitted by Non-Governmental Organisations regarding the use of the National Security Law to erode Hong Kong's rights and freedoms. We look forward to seeing the recommendations from the Committee and will review accordingly.

The UN experts' views are for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government to respond to and address. The UK has taken a number of measures already in response to the National Security Law. These include introducing a new immigration path for British National (Overseas) passport holders, suspending our extradition treaty with Hong Kong, and extending our arms embargo on mainland China to Hong Kong.

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the remarks by the United Nations Human Rights Committee during the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights review on Hong Kong that the national security law has hindered the fundamental rights in Hong Kong, what plans they have to implement individual sanctions against Hong Kong officials. [[HL1781](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is deeply concerned that actions by the Chinese and Hong Kong authorities, including the imposition of the National Security Law, have eroded rights and freedoms in Hong Kong.

We note the concerns expressed by the United Nations Human Rights Committee's review of Hong Kong's implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights about the National Security Law and the restrictions on freedom of expression, assembly, association and participation in political affairs. We look forward to seeing the recommendations from the Committee and will review accordingly.

We will continue to consider designations under the Global Human Rights Sanctions Regulations. We do not normally speculate about future sanctions designations as to do so could reduce their impact.

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the opinion of Carlos Gomez Martinez, of the United Nations Human Rights Committee that the national security law undermines Hong Kong's judicial independence and the right to a fair trial; and what discussions they plan to have with British judges who serve in Hong Kong. [[HL1782](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: China has continued to use the National Security Law and its related institutions to undermine rights and freedoms promised in the Joint

Declaration. As National Security Law cases proceed through the Courts, we are seeing the implications of this sweeping legislation, including the chilling effect on freedom of expression, the stifling of opposition voices, and the criminalising of dissent.

It was against this backdrop that the President of the Supreme Court, in consultation with the Foreign Secretary and the Deputy Prime Minister, decided that it was no longer tenable for serving UK judges to sit on the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal.

The UK judges that remain in the Court of Final Appeal are retired from UK judicial service. It is for them to make their own personal decisions on their continued service in Hong Kong.

Horticulture: Seasonal Workers

*Asked by **Baroness Kennedy of Cradley***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many international seasonal workers they estimate will be needed for harvesting fruit and vegetables in the UK in 2022. [\[HL946\]](#)

Lord Benyon: We estimate between 50,000 to 60,000 seasonal workers are needed annually to bring in the harvest in the UK. From 2022, we envisage that growers will increasingly recruit domestically, including British, EU Settlement Scheme workers and Ukrainians looking for employment in the UK, supported with 30,000 workers from the Seasonal Workers visa route and through increasing automation where possible. As announced in the Food Strategy White Paper, there will also be an additional 8,000 visas available this year for seasonal workers in horticulture.

Hospital Wards: Gender

*Asked by **Lord Clement-Jones***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what stage the review of single-sex accommodation in the NHS has reached; and when the report of that review is expected to be published. [\[HL1841\]](#)

Lord Kamall: NHS England is continuing its review of the guidance 'Delivering same-sex accommodation'. The revised guidance will be published once the review has been completed.

House of Lords: Location

*Asked by **Lord Norton of Louth***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the letter from the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to the Lord Speaker, dated 13 May, represents Government policy. [\[HL952\]](#)

Lord Harrington of Watford: The Government is clear that it is up to the House of Lords to decide where they wish to be located, including during any potential

decant of Parliament. The previous Secretary of State said in his letter that he would welcome the House of Lords playing a role in the levelling up agenda and he suggested a number of illustrative options.

The freehold of the QEII Conference Centre is held by the Secretary of State. The Restoration and Renewal programme is currently being reshaped. Tangentially, the department is taking steps to deliver clarity for the commercial users of the Centre, and good outcomes for the British taxpayer.

Housing Benefit: Cost of Living Payments

*Asked by **The Lord Bishop of Chelmsford***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of private renters who receive housing benefit and (1) qualify for the £650 support grant, and (2) do not qualify for the £650 support grant. [\[HL1835\]](#)

Baroness Stedman-Scott: No assessment has been made.

However, the vast majority of people receiving Housing Benefit will be in receipt of another qualifying benefit for the Cost-of-Living Payment.

To support people who need additional help, the Government is providing an extra £500 million of local support. In England this will be via the Household Support Fund, which will be extended from this October to March 2023 backed by £421m.

The Household Support Fund helps those in most need with payments towards the rising cost of food, energy, and water bills.

The government will issue additional guidance to Local Authorities to ensure support is targeted towards those most in need of support including those not eligible for the Cost-of-Living Payments set out on 26 May 2022. Guidance for local authorities on how to distribute the fund will be released soon.

Housing Benefit: Social Rented Housing

*Asked by **Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many households are currently affected by the under-occupancy charge with deductions for (1) one extra bedroom, or (2) more than one extra bedroom; and what assessment they have made of the impact of these deductions given the increased cost of living. [\[HL1620\]](#)

Baroness Stedman-Scott: The removal of the spare room subsidy is an important tool to make better use of the existing social housing stock, enable mobility within the social rented sector and contain growing housing support expenditure. It also aligns the size criteria rules used in the private rented sector in the social sector.

The policy allows for the provision of an additional bedroom to support disabled people and carers, the

families of disabled children, foster carers, parents who adopt, parents of service personnel, and people who have suffered a bereavement. Additionally, those in receipt of pension age housing benefit are exempt.

Those who need additional support with their housing costs can seek assistance from their local authority via the Discretionary Housing Payment (DHPs) scheme. Since 2011 the Government has provided almost £1.5 billion in DHP funding to local authorities.

The number of Households affected by the removal of the spare room subsidy is set out in the table below.

Households with a reduction due to the removal of the spare room subsidy, Great Britain, February 2022

One bedroom	Two or more bedrooms	Reduction applied but bedroom information is unknown
396,100	84,900	500

Notes:

i. Figures are from [Stat-Xplore](#) and are rounded to the nearest hundred.

ii. Includes Housing Benefit and Universal Credit Housing Element. Universal Credit data for February is provisional and will be within two per cent of revised figures in future releases.

Housing: Heat Pumps

Asked by Baroness Meacher

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to publish performance data from the Electrification of Heat Demonstration Project. [\[HL1973\]](#)

Lord Callanan: The Government intends to publish the performance data from the Electrification of Heat Demonstration Project in due course, once quality assurance of the data has been completed.

Asked by Baroness Meacher

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the (1) cost, and (2) feasibility, of electricity network reinforcement to support heat pump roll out plans by (a) 2028, (b) 2040, and (c) 2050; and whether they will publish that assessment. [\[HL1974\]](#)

Lord Callanan: Ofgem uses the price control framework to ensure that electricity network companies are provided with the necessary funding to deliver the required capacity to meet future demand on the grid, including to support the roll out of heat pumps. Government liaises regularly with Ofgem and industry, including network operators, on this issue.

Housing: Standards

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Chelmsford

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to consult on the Decent Homes Standard; and if so, when that consultation will be launched. [\[HL1890\]](#)

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: We are committed to drive up standards in private rented accommodation, and we will be consulting in due course on introducing a legally binding Decent Homes Standard in the private rented sector.

Immigration

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the cost of the benefits and entitlements provided to successful immigration applicants; and how this is factored into setting fees for immigration and nationality services. [\[HL1646\]](#)

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the cost of the financial benefits that are available from a successful UK citizenship application. [\[HL1650\]](#)

Baroness Williams of Trafford: HL1646

Immigration and nationality fees are kept under review to ensure they are within the parameters agreed with HM Treasury and Parliament, as set out in Section 68 (9) of the Immigration Act 2014, which details the factors the Home Secretary may take into account when setting fees. These include the costs of processing an application, the benefits likely to accrue to any person in connection with the application, and the costs of exercising wider immigration and nationality functions.

HL1650

The 2018 Immigration and Nationality Fees Regulations setting the current fee to register as a British Citizen, were accompanied by an impact assessment which can be accessed via the following link: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukia/2018/59/pdfs/ukia_20180059_en.pdf

An amendment to these Regulations was laid on 26 May 2022 which provides a power to waive fees for child registration applications on the basis of affordability and a fee exception for children who are looked after by a Local Authority. These regulations were accompanied by an impact assessment which can be accessed via the following link: [The Immigration and Nationality \(Fees\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2022 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

These analyses considered benefits such as revenue for the Exchequer and the benefits to applicants from attaining citizenship, the latter of which cannot be monetised. Those were balanced against implementation and processing costs to the Home Office, familiarisation costs for law and immigration advice firms, time costs for applicants, and public service provision costs.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Child Citizenship (b) [Child Citizenship Affordability Fee Waiver.pdf]

Impact Assessment (a) [Impact Assessment.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-07-11/HL1646>

Immigration Bail

*Asked by **The Earl of Sandwich***

To ask Her Majesty's Government why they have set the period of detention before an individual may apply for bail from immigration detention as seven days. [HL1934]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Paragraph 3(3) of Schedule 10 to The Immigration Act 2016 sets out the limitation on the First-tier Tribunal to grant immigration bail:

A person who is being detained under paragraph 16(1) of Schedule 2 to the Immigration Act 1971 must not be granted immigration bail by the First-tier Tribunal until after the end of the period of 8 days beginning with the date of the person's arrival in the United Kingdom.

This limitation only applies to people detained under paragraph 16(1) of Schedule 2 pending examination and pending a decision to give or refuse leave to enter. It does not extend to those detained under paragraph 16(1A) of the Schedule, which is for the purpose of removal.

The published detention policy makes it clear that detention must only be used when necessary, and for the shortest possible period. There is a presumption in favour of liberty for any person, and during this time, Secretary of State bail can be granted where appropriate in the individual case. Once a person is in detention, regular reviews are undertaken to ensure that their detention remains lawful, appropriate, and proportionate.

Inflation

*Asked by **Lord Taylor of Warwick***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to slow inflation in the short-term. [HL1984]

Baroness Penn: The Government understands that people across the UK are worried about the rising cost of living and are seeing their disposable incomes decrease as they spend more on the essentials.

The Government has the ability and resolve to reduce inflation using three tools – independent monetary policy, responsible management of the public finances and supply side reform. These tools will boost our productivity and growth and help to bring inflation under control.

The primary tool for combatting inflation is monetary policy, which is the responsibility of the independent Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), including decisions on Bank Rate and quantitative easing. Since the MPC were given independence over monetary policy, CPI inflation has averaged around the MPC's 2% target. The Government remains fully committed to the price stability objective, as well as the 2% inflation target, and retains full confidence in the Committee.

We have a responsibility to help those who, through no fault of their own, are paying the highest price for the inflation we face. However, we also recognise that it is not only the most vulnerable in society that are struggling, which is why we are providing financial support to all households and across a range of income groups. In May, the Government announced over £15bn of additional cost of living support, targeted at those with the greatest need. This package builds on the over £22bn announced previously, with government support for the cost of living now totalling over £37bn this year, equivalent to 1.5% of GDP.

Infrastructure: Weather

*Asked by **Lord Taylor of Warwick***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that infrastructure is resistant to high temperatures. [HL1883]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The Climate Change Act 2008 created a framework for strengthening UK preparedness for dealing with risks caused by the changing climate. This includes:

- Preparing, on a five yearly cycle, a UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA), followed by a National Adaptation Programme (NAP), setting out actions to address the risks identified in the latest CCRA (copy attached to this answer).

- Providing the Secretary of State with the 'Adaptation Reporting Power' that enables us to require (or invite) public bodies and major infrastructure providers to report on their preparedness for climate change. The latest reports can be viewed online at gov.uk.

Our electricity infrastructure is highly resilient and designed to operate in hot weather. In the event that energy infrastructure is impacted by extreme heat, the energy sector has long-standing plans and procedures to respond and repair any damage to infrastructure.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

UK CCRA 2022 [UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-07-18/HL1883>

International Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief

*Asked by **Baroness Whitaker***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the implications of removing references to "sexual and reproductive health and rights" and "bodily autonomy" from the Statement on freedom of religion or belief and gender equality, following the International Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief on 5 and 6 July. [HL1987]

*Asked by **Baroness Whitaker***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the removal of references to "sexual and reproductive health and rights" and "bodily autonomy" from the Statement on freedom of religion or belief and gender equality, whether the original statement can be reinstated. [[HL1988](#)]

*Asked by **Baroness Whitaker***

To ask Her Majesty's Government why all references to "sexual and reproductive health and rights" and "bodily autonomy" were removed from the Statement on freedom of religion or belief and gender equality, published on 7 July. [[HL1989](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is committed to defending and promoting universal and comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights and will continue working with other countries to protect gender equality in international agreements. In our capacity as Chair of the event, we amended the statement we made at the Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) Conference to make the final statement more inclusive of all perspectives and views to allow for a constructive exchange of views on all issues. The UK continues to fund support and lead on issues of gender including on SRHR, through initiatives related to Women, Peace and Security and Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict.

*Asked by **Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle***

To ask Her Majesty's Government by what process the statement from the 2022 International Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief was modified to delete references to "sexual and reproductive health and rights" and "bodily autonomy". [[HL1992](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is committed to defending and promoting universal and comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights and will continue working with other countries to protect gender equality in international agreements. In our capacity as Chair of the event, we amended the statement we made at the Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) Conference to make the final statement more inclusive of all perspectives and views, to allow for a constructive exchange of views on all issues. The UK continues to fund support and lead on issues of gender including on SRHR, through initiatives related to Women, Peace and Security, and Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict.

Internet: Abuse

*Asked by **Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure that the Online Safety Bill will protect local councillors and council employees at all levels of local government from online abuse. [[HL1826](#)]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: The Online Safety Bill will protect all users, including local councillors and council employees, from abuse online.

Services in scope of the Bill will need to ensure that illegal content in scope is removed swiftly and that the risk of it appearing and spreading is minimised by effective systems. Category one services must be clear how they address priority content that is harmful to adults, and enforce their terms of service consistently. Priority categories of content which are harmful to adults and children will be set out in secondary legislation and are likely to include some types of online abuse and harassment.

Ofcom will have a suite of enforcement powers available to use against companies who fail their duties. These powers include fines for companies of up to £18 million or 10% of qualifying annual global turnover, and business disruption measures.

Iraq: Kurds

*Asked by **Lord Austin of Dudley***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the potential for cooperation on education between the Kurdistan region of Iraq and the UK. [[HL1784](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK supports the Kurdistan Region of Iraq's education sector and recently hosted the Prime Minister and Minister of Education of the Kurdistan Regional Government and discussed opportunities for collaboration in education. In discussions with the Secretary of State for the Department for Education we agreed to work closely to further expand our collaboration. Our Consulate in Erbil continues to identify opportunities for and work with UK institutions that offer both academic and vocational training programmes, including City and Guilds who now have established an office in Iraq.

Jobcentres: Armed Forces

*Asked by **Baroness Sherlock***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much funding has been spent to date from the up to £6 million committed for Armed Forces Champions in 2019. [[HL1750](#)]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: The Department was allocated specific funding for Armed Forces Champions work in the then Chancellor's 2019 Spending Round, to be used in 2020/21.

The Department's main priority during the pandemic was to focus on processing claims and paying people quickly, while supporting all those using Jobcentre Plus services. As a result, the planned restructuring of the Armed Forces Champions service planned for April 2020 was paused.

The Department introduced a new Armed Forces Champions model in April 2021 using its own existing resources. Officials in the Department have discussed the new model with a number of Armed Forces stakeholders, and it continues to be very well received.

Joint Exercises

Asked by Lord Goddard of Stockport

To ask Her Majesty's Government what military exercises they have conducted with allies so far this year; and how many British participants were deployed. [HL1791]

Baroness Goldie: 71 military exercises have been conducted with allies and partners so far this year. Circa 17,000 British Service Personnel were deployed.

Asked by Lord Goddard of Stockport

To ask Her Majesty's Government what military exercises they plan to conduct with allies during the rest of this year; and how many British participants will be in each exercise. [HL1792]

Baroness Goldie: 81 military exercises are planned to be conducted with allies during the rest of this year. Circa 14,500 British Service Personnel will participate across these exercises.

Legal Aid Scheme

Asked by Lord Garnier

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many applications have been made for licences to permit legal advice to be given to sanctioned (1) individuals, or (2) entities, since Russia invaded Ukraine on 24 February; and how many of those applications have been (a) granted, (b) refused, and (c) not yet dealt with. [HL1682]

Asked by Lord Garnier

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many applications have been made for licences to permit payment for legal (1) advice, or (2) representation, since Russia invaded Ukraine on 24 February; and how many of those applications have been (a) granted, (b) refused, and (c) not yet dealt with. [HL1683]

Asked by Lord Garnier

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the median time taken to determine licence applications to permit payment for legal (1) advice, or (2) representation. [HL1684]

Asked by Lord Garnier

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many applications for licences to permit payment for legal (1) advice, or (2) representation, have been made by (a) barristers, or (b) solicitors. [HL1685]

Asked by Lord Garnier

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people are employed to deal with applications for licences to permit payment for legal (1) advice, or (2) representation. [HL1686]

Baroness Penn: The Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation (OFSI) in HM Treasury is responsible for financial sanctions enforcement. OFSI may issue a licence to enable the payment of reasonable fees and/or expenses for the provision of legal services. Providing legal services to a designated person or entity subject to financial sanctions restrictions is not prohibited, a licence is only required to permit payment for these services.

OFSI aims to engage with the substance of licence applications within 4 weeks, however application times can vary where further information is required.

From June 2021 to June 2022 OFSI issued 29 licences for the payment of legal fees. OFSI is unable to provide all of the information requested as it does not collate information on legal expenses licence applications broken down by (a) legal advice and (b) legal representation, or by the involvement of sanctioned (1) individuals or (2) entities, or by the live status of the application, and it would involve disproportionate costs to gather.

The number of active staff in OFSI since Financial Year 2016-2017 can be found in the table below:

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Total number of staff</i>
2016-2017	27
2017-2018	30
2018-2019	36
2019-2020	38
2020-2021	40

In light of recent developments in Ukraine, the number of staff has since increased. Releasing further details of OFSI's headcount by function could prejudice its operational effectiveness.

OFSI publishes an Annual Review containing information on the breakdown of legal expenses licences issued during the preceding financial year. The 2020/21 Annual Review can be found on gov.uk. Data for the 2021/22 financial year is expected to be published in the Autumn and this will include a further update of total OFSI headcount.

LGBTQ+ People: Finance

Asked by Baroness Barker

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to place the UK as a leading funder of LGBTQ+ rights. [HL1665]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: As a country with a proud history on LGBT equality, and with one of the world's most comprehensive and robust legislative frameworks,

the UK Government continues to be a leading funder of work to protect LGBT rights.

The Government has provided over £6 million in funding to prevent and respond to bullying in schools, including LGBT-related bullying, of which £1 million was announced this year. The Government continues to invest in relevant healthcare, including over £20 million to deliver the HIV Action Plan with the goal of eradicating new transmissions in the UK by 2030. We are providing up to £360,000 for the new conversion practices support service; have extended funding for the existing LGBT domestic abuse helpline with an uplift of £80,000 for 2022/23; and last year we provided £2 million for specialist 'by and for' victim support organisations, including LGBT victim services.

Internationally, in June, we announced a further £2.7 million to support human rights defenders and advance equalities and freedom across the Commonwealth. Since taking over as Chair-In-Office in 2018, the Government has invested over £11 million in the promotion and protection of LGBT rights across the Commonwealth.

Licensing Act 2003

Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the potential benefits of making public health a licensing objective by amending the Licensing Act 2003. [HL1864]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government has no plans to introduce Health as a Licensing Objective at this time.

Life Imprisonment

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Gloucester

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people received a life sentence and were (1) under 18, (2) 18 to 20, (3) 21 to 24, (4) 25 to 29, (5) 30 to 34, (6) 35 to 39, (7) 40 to 49, (8) 50 to 59, (9) 60 to 69, and (10) 70 and older, at the time of sentencing in each year since 2002. [HL1687]

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Gloucester

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people received a life sentence with a tariff of between 10 years to less than 15 years, and were (1) under 18, (2) 18 to 20, (3) 21 to 24, (4) 25 to 29, (5) 30 to 34, (6) 35 to 39, (7) 40–49, (8) 50 to 59, (9) 60 to 69, and (10) 70 and older, at the time of sentencing in each year since 2002. [HL1688]

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Gloucester

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people received a life sentence with a tariff of between 15 years to less than 20 years, and were (1) under 18, (2) 18 to 20, (3) 21 to 24, (4) 25 to 29, (5) 30 to 34, (6) 35 to 39, (7) 40 to 49, (8) 50 to 59, (9) 60 to 69, and (10) 70 and older, at the time of sentencing in each year since 2002. [HL1689]

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Gloucester

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people received a life sentence with a tariff of between 20 years to less than 25 years, and were (1) under 18, (2) 18 to 20, (3) 21 to 24, (4) 25 to 29, (5) 30 to 34, (6) 35 to 39, (7) 40 to 49, (8) 50 to 59, (9) 60 to 69, and (10) 70 and older, at the time of sentencing in each year since 2002. [HL1690]

Lord Bellamy: By law, prisoners serving life and other indeterminate sentences must complete their tariff in custody and thereafter be released only when the Parole Board concludes that it is no longer necessary for the protection of the public for them to remain confined to custody. The Government is committed to supporting prisoners to reduce their risk and so progress towards safe release, but the priority is always to protect the public.

HL1687

The following table shows the number of prisoners that received a life sentence and were (1) under 18, (2) 18 to 20, (3) 21 to 24, (4) 25 to 29, (5) 30 to 34, (6) 35 to 39, (7) 40 to 49, (8) 50 to 59, (9) 60 to 69, and (10) 70 years of age and older, at the time of sentencing in each year since 2002.

Year of sentence	Age at Sentence									
	Under 18	18 to 20	21 to 24	25 to 29	30 to 34	35 to 39	40 to 49	50 to 59	60 to 69	70 and over
2002	14	55	88	98	95	94	95	33	10	*
2003	11	55	75	87	86	89	98	34	4	*
2004	16	55	95	105	86	90	114	26	16	*
2005	31	64	109	84	93	99	99	46	9	0
2006	22	65	101	114	78	75	112	30	6	*
2007	25	75	90	77	58	48	78	53	7	5
2008	30	56	95	84	67	53	100	36	19	0
2009	27	67	73	78	55	45	79	29	8	0

<i>Year of sentence</i>	<i>Age at Sentence</i>									
	<i>Under 18</i>	<i>18 to 20</i>	<i>21 to 24</i>	<i>25 to 29</i>	<i>30 to 34</i>	<i>35 to 39</i>	<i>40 to 49</i>	<i>50 to 59</i>	<i>60 to 69</i>	<i>70 and over</i>
2010	18	45	60	78	55	39	59	28	10	*
2011	16	34	59	75	52	42	65	36	13	*
2012	15	49	63	73	61	39	75	34	12	*
2013	14	37	56	69	67	51	67	35	13	*
2014	21	44	77	74	45	40	85	51	9	6
2015	14	40	51	56	53	45	70	31	10	4
2016	10	45	64	58	50	46	86	43	16	3
2017	12	41	59	62	50	55	63	32	9	5
2018	29	54	62	57	57	60	74	46	15	*
2019	30	60	51	76	64	57	66	41	8	5
2020	22	42	53	45	35	37	45	23	3	*
2021	27	77	67	79	62	49	70	23	15	*

HL1688

The following table shows the number of prisoners that received a life sentence with a tariff of between 10 years to less than 15 years, and were (1) under 18, (2) 18 to 20,

(3) 21 to 24, (4) 25 to 29, (5) 30 to 34, (6) 35 to 39, (7) 40–49, (8) 50 to 59, (9) 60 to 69, and (10) 70 years of age and older, at the time of sentencing in each year since 2002.

<i>Year of sentence</i>	<i>Age at Sentence</i>									
	<i>Under 18</i>	<i>18 to 20</i>	<i>21 to 24</i>	<i>25 to 29</i>	<i>30 to 34</i>	<i>35 to 39</i>	<i>40 to 49</i>	<i>50 to 59</i>	<i>60 to 69</i>	<i>70 and over</i>
2002	4	19	38	37	27	26	28	6	3	0
2003	4	20	21	21	24	25	24	4	0	*
2004	6	23	35	31	33	28	35	6	6	*
2005	10	26	38	29	24	26	24	17	*	0
2006	6	23	30	33	27	22	26	11	3	0
2007	11	37	39	25	27	10	26	23	*	*
2008	21	28	36	25	19	18	38	13	4	0
2009	14	32	26	20	20	14	24	6	4	0
2010	12	8	12	10	9	12	15	8	*	*
2011	12	9	17	16	12	11	14	7	8	0
2012	8	9	10	19	13	8	20	12	*	*
2013	7	11	3	12	12	5	17	11	4	0
2014	7	10	8	8	8	9	17	12	*	3
2015	8	5	10	8	12	4	12	7	3	*
2016	4	12	11	13	9	7	13	11	3	0
2017	5	3	5	7	5	8	8	7	3	*
2018	16	6	8	7	7	7	9	7	5	*
2019	12	9	3	6	8	8	11	4	*	4
2020	5	8	*	6	5	5	7	4	*	0
2021	9	11	7	10	6	4	11	3	*	*

HL1689

The following table shows the number of prisoners that received a life sentence with a tariff of between 15 years

to less than 20 years, and were (1) under 18, (2) 18 to 20, (3) 21 to 24, (4) 25 to 29, (5) 30 to 34, (6) 35 to 39, (7) 40 to 49, (8) 50 to 59, (9) 60 to 69, and (10) 70 years of age

and older, at the time of sentencing in each year since 2002.

<i>Year of sentence</i>	<i>Age at Sentence</i>									
	<i>Under 18</i>	<i>18 to 20</i>	<i>21 to 24</i>	<i>25 to 29</i>	<i>30 to 34</i>	<i>35 to 39</i>	<i>40 to 49</i>	<i>50 to 59</i>	<i>60 to 69</i>	<i>70 and over</i>
2002	0	4	15	10	10	11	8	5	*	0
2003	*	3	14	9	16	14	19	*	0	0
2004	0	11	23	23	12	13	15	*	*	0
2005	*	6	17	18	22	12	10	9	*	0
2006	*	14	16	24	8	10	15	3	*	0
2007	3	19	20	22	12	15	16	8	*	0
2008	*	18	22	19	12	15	17	5	*	0
2009	5	15	22	20	16	16	26	9	*	0
2010	*	16	19	28	18	8	21	8	*	0
2011	3	16	14	30	14	13	22	11	*	0
2012	6	16	18	9	19	7	19	9	4	0
2013	*	10	23	14	20	15	18	6	*	0
2014	5	10	24	19	6	8	21	13	*	*
2015	4	14	12	12	13	8	12	9	*	0
2016	3	10	17	6	12	9	27	11	6	*
2017	5	27	16	14	15	16	14	5	*	*
2018	10	21	12	14	14	21	16	14	4	0
2019	17	25	11	23	13	17	19	13	*	*
2020	13	20	10	5	10	6	11	5	0	0
2021	14	36	14	22	21	12	18	8	5	0

HL1690

The following table shows the number of prisoners that received a life sentence with a tariff of between 20 years to less than 25 years, and were (1) under 18, (2) 18 to 20,

(3) 21 to 24, (4) 25 to 29, (5) 30 to 34, (6) 35 to 39, (7) 40 to 49, (8) 50 to 59, (9) 60 to 69, and (10) 70 and older, at the time of sentencing in each year since 2002.

<i>Year of sentence</i>	<i>Age at Sentence</i>									
	<i>Under 18</i>	<i>18 to 20</i>	<i>21 to 24</i>	<i>25 to 29</i>	<i>30 to 34</i>	<i>35 to 39</i>	<i>40 to 49</i>	<i>50 to 59</i>	<i>60 to 69</i>	<i>70 and over</i>
2002	0	0	*	*	*	*	3	0	*	0
2003	0	*	4	6	3	*	*	*	0	0
2004	0	*	5	11	*	4	4	*	*	0
2005	0	4	10	4	6	8	5	3	*	0
2006	0	9	12	11	7	*	9	*	0	0
2007	0	7	7	*	4	*	*	6	0	0
2008	*	5	15	14	9	5	14	*	0	0
2009	*	10	10	11	6	4	10	4	0	0
2010	*	11	13	20	12	6	8	3	0	0
2011	0	7	10	15	8	9	11	6	0	0
2012	0	16	15	15	10	6	19	7	*	0

Year of sentence	Age at Sentence									
	Under 18	18 to 20	21 to 24	25 to 29	30 to 34	35 to 39	40 to 49	50 to 59	60 to 69	70 and over
2013	0	8	14	14	9	11	7	9	*	0
2014	*	11	14	12	12	10	16	10	*	*
2015	0	10	10	12	9	13	8	3	4	0
2016	0	11	24	13	6	9	14	7	*	0
2017	0	7	15	15	11	6	10	7	0	0
2018	0	18	15	15	16	10	11	6	*	0
2019	0	13	19	18	14	8	13	10	*	0
2020	*	11	23	16	10	5	13	3	0	0
2021	*	11	24	18	9	10	13	*	3	0

Notes for all figures in the tables provided above:

- 1) Due to rounding, the interquartile range may not equal the difference between the third and first quartiles.
- 2) Figures do not include whole-life orders.
- 3) Tariff length is the time between date of sentence and tariff expiry date.
- 4) Numbers are subject to revision as more data become available.
- 5) An asterisk (*) has been used to suppress values of one or two. This is to prevent the disclosure of individual information. Further disclosure control may be completed where this alone is not sufficient.
- 6) The figures in these tables 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. Data has been supplied for as many of the requested years as it is possible to provide within cost limits; earlier years may not be available due to changes in recording over time.

Life Imprisonment

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the (1) lower quartile, (2) median, (3) upper quartile, and (4) interquartile range, of tariff lengths for people who received a life sentence in each year since 2002. [HL1672]

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the (1) lower quartile, (2) median, (3) upper quartile, and (4) interquartile range, of the number of months spent in custody by life sentence prisoners who were released in each year since 2002. [HL1673]

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the (1) lower quartile, (2) median, (3) upper quartile, and (4) interquartile range, of the age of people serving a life

sentence at the point of release in each year since 2002. [HL1674]

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the (1) mean, and (2) median, number of months spent in custody beyond tariff for life sentence prisoners at the point of release in each year since 2002. [HL1675]

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what proportion of people serving a life sentence were released at their first Parole Board hearing in each year since 2002. [HL1676]

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people were serving an Imprisonment for Public Protection sentence with a tariff of 10 years or more in each year, by ethnicity. [HL1677]

Lord Bellamy: By law, prisoners serving life and other indeterminate sentences must complete their tariff in custody and thereafter be released only when the Parole Board concludes that it is no longer necessary for the protection of the public for them to remain confined to custody. The Government is committed to supporting prisoners to reduce their risk and so progress towards safe release, but the priority is always to protect the public.

HL1672

The following table shows the (1) lower quartile, (2) median, (3) upper quartile, and (4) interquartile range, of tariff lengths in years for prisoners who received a life sentence in each year since 2002.

Year of Sentence	Lower Quartile	Median	Upper Quartile	Interquartile Range
2002	4	9	13	9
2003	4	9	13	9
2004	5	11	14	9
2005	5	11	15	10
2006	7	12	18	11

<i>Year of Sentence</i>	<i>Lower Quartile</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Upper Quartile</i>	<i>Interquartile Range</i>
2007	10	13	17	7
2008	11	14	20	9
2009	12	15	19	7
2010	13	17	22	9
2011	14	17	21	7
2012	14	18	24	10
2013	13	17	23	10
2014	11	17	23	12
2015	11	17	23	12
2016	12	17	22	10
2017	10	17	22	12
2018	13	18	23	10
2019	14	18	23	9
2020	14	19	24	10
2021	15	19	24	9

HL1673

The following table shows the (1) lower quartile, (2) median, (3) upper quartile, and (4) interquartile range, of the number of months spent in custody by life sentence prisoners who were released in each year since 2002.

<i>Year of Sentence</i>	<i>Lower Quartile</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Upper Quartile</i>	<i>Interquartile Range</i>
2010	133	170	240	107
2011	119	157	213	94
2012	129	166	240	111
2013	136	174	243	107
2014	135	171	236	101
2015	144	176	224	81
2016	149	177	229	80
2017	151	180	247	96
2018	158	191	235	77
2019	172	200	268	96
2020	164	191	240	76
2021	165	205	263	98

Notes for above figures: Months spent in custody is calculated from date of sentence to release date. It does not take into consideration time spent in custody before sentence.

HL1674

The following table shows the (1) lower quartile, (2) median, (3) upper quartile, and (4) interquartile range, of the age of prisoners serving a life sentence at the point of release in each year since 2002.

<i>Year of Sentence</i>	<i>Lower Quartile</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Upper Quartile</i>	<i>Interquartile Range</i>
2010	37	45	53	16
2011	34	42	50	16
2012	38	45	53	15
2013	38	46	55	17
2014	39	47	54	15
2015	38	46	54	16
2016	40	47	54	14
2017	39	47	56	17
2018	40	49	57	17
2019	42	51	58	16
2020	39	48	57	18
2021	39	49	57	18

Notes for above figures: Age at time of release does not reflect how long the offender had been in custody.

HL1675

The following table shows the (1) mean, and (2) median, number of months spent in custody beyond tariff for life sentence prisoners at the point of release in each year since 2002.

<i>Year of Sentence</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Median</i>
2010	67	47
2011	69	51
2012	81	60
2013	80	66
2014	83	65
2015	76	64
2016	79	63
2017	81	55
2018	90	69
2019	96	83
2020	79	44
2021	83	46

HL1676

The following table shows the proportion of prisoners serving a life sentence who were released at their first Parole Board hearing in each year since 2002.

<i>Hearing Start Year</i>	<i>Knockback %</i>	<i>Open %</i>	<i>Release %</i>
2010	28	44	28
2011	31	37	32
2012	18	39	43
2013	17	38	45

	<i>Knockback</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>Release</i>
<i>Hearing Start Year</i>	%	%	%
2014	26	28	47
2015	35	20	44
2016	36	20	44
2017	25	27	47
2018	32	22	46

2019	37	18	45
2020	28	19	52
2021	38	19	43

HL1677

The following table shows the number of 'unreleased IPP prisoners with a tariff length of 10 years or more, by ethnicity group, as at 30 June 2015 to 30 June 2021.

	30/06/2015	30/06/2016	30/06/2017	30/06/2018	30/06/2019	30/06/2020	30/06/2021
Total	94	92	90	87	89	84	76
Asian/ Asian British	6	6	5	5	5	6	6
Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British	26	26	25	25	26	26	22
Mixed/ Multiple ethnic groups	5	5	5	5	5	4	3
White	57	55	55	52	53	48	45

Notes for above figures: Figures exclude prisoners recalled from an IPP sentence

Notes for all figures in the above tables:

- 1) Due to rounding, the interquartile range may not equal the difference between the third and first quartiles.
- 2) Tariff length is the time between date of sentence and tariff expiry date.
- 3) Figures do not include whole-life orders.
- 4) Numbers are subject to revision as more data become available.
- 5) The figures in these tables 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. Data has been supplied for as many of the requested years as it is possible to provide within cost limits; earlier years may not be available due to changes in recording over time.

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Gloucester

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people received a life sentence with a tariff of 25 years or more and were (1) under 18, (2) 18 to 20, (3) 21 to 24, (4) 25 to 29 (5) 30 to 34 (6) 35 to 39 (7) 40 to 49, (8) 50 to 59, (9) 60 to 69, and (19) 70 and older, at the time of sentencing, in each year since 2002. [HL1735]

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Gloucester

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the (1) mean, and (2) median, tariff length for people receiving

a life sentence aged (a) under 18, (b) 18 to 20, (c) 21 to 24, (d) 25 to 29, (e) 30 to 34, (f) 35 to 39, (g) 40 to 49, (h) 50 to 59, (i) 60 to 69, and (j) 70 and older, at the time of sentencing, in each year since 2002. [HL1736]

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Gloucester

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people were serving an imprisonment for public protection sentence with a tariff of 10 years or more in each year since 2002; and of those, how many were aged (1) 18 to 20, (2) 21 to 24, (3) 25 to 29, (4) 30 to 34, (5) 35 to 39, (6) 40 to 49, (7) 50 to 59, (8) 60 to 69, (9) 70 and older, at the time of sentencing. [HL1737]

Lord Bellamy: By law, prisoners serving life and other indeterminate sentences must complete their tariff in custody and thereafter be released only when the Parole Board concludes that it is no longer necessary for the protection of the public for them to remain confined to custody. The Government is committed to supporting prisoners to reduce their risk and so progress towards safe release, but the priority is always to protect the public.

HL1735

The following table shows the number of prisoners that received a life sentence with a tariff of 25 years or more and were (1) under 18, (2) 18 to 20, (3) 21 to 24, (4) 25 to 29 (5) 30 to 34 (6) 35 to 39 (7) 40 to 49, (8) 50 to 59, (9) 60 to 69, and (19) 70 years and older, at the time of sentencing, in each year since 2002

Age at Sentence (in years)

<i>Year of sentence</i>	<i>Under 18</i>	<i>18 to 20</i>	<i>21 to 24</i>	<i>25 to 29</i>	<i>30 to 34</i>	<i>35 to 39</i>	<i>40 to 49</i>	<i>50 to 59</i>	<i>60 to 69</i>	<i>70+</i>
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2002	0	0	*	0	0	0	*	0	0	0
2003	0	0	*	*	*	0	0	0	0	0
2004	0	0	*	*	*	*	*	0	0	0
2005	0	*	9	6	3	8	7	*	0	0
2006	0	3	10	24	9	9	9	4	0	0
2007	0	*	6	13	3	4	6	*	0	0
2008	0	*	11	21	14	7	15	*	0	0
2009	0	*	6	22	7	6	5	5	0	0
2010	0	5	10	12	13	11	8	*	*	0
2011	0	*	16	11	11	6	11	4	*	0
2012	*	6	16	26	14	11	10	*	4	0
2013	0	4	10	21	18	11	13	*	*	0
2014	0	9	26	16	12	6	7	5	*	0
2015	0	5	12	17	10	9	13	4	*	0
2016	*	5	10	12	11	12	10	6	*	0
2017	0	*	17	15	4	12	11	3	0	0
2018	0	5	25	15	15	11	15	9	*	0
2019	0	11	14	20	19	18	11	4	0	0
2020	0	3	15	13	6	14	9	3	*	*
2021	*	14	20	22	19	9	16	5	3	0

HL1736

The following tables show the (1) mean, and (2) median, tariff length for people receiving a life sentence aged (a) under 18, (b) 18 to 20, (c) 21 to 24, (d) 25 to 29, (e) 30 to 34, (f) 35 to 39, (g) 40 to 49, (h) 50 to 59, (i) 60

to 69, and (j) 70 years and older, at the time of sentencing, in each year since 2002.

Table 1 – ages (a) under 18, (b) 18 to 20, (c) 21 to 24, (d) 25 to 29

Year of Sentence	Age at Sentence (in years)									
	Under 18		18 to 20		21 to 24		25 to 29			
	Average	Median	Average	Median	Average	Median	Average	Median		
2002	7	7	9	9	11	11	9	10		
2003	9	9	9	9	11	11	9	8		
2004	9	9	11	11	12	12	12	12		
2005	9	8	10	11	13	12	12	13		
2006	9	8	14	13	13	14	16	15		
2007	11	10	14	14	14	14	16	14		
2008	11	11	15	14	16	15	19	17		
2009	12	11	15	14	17	16	20	18		
2010	12	12	18	19	18	17	18	18		
2011	13	13	17	17	20	19	19	18		
2012	14	14	19	19	21	20	21	22		
2013	11	11	16	15	19	18	20	20		
2014	12	13	18	18	21	20	17	16		

	<i>Age at Sentence (in years)</i>							
	<i>Under 18</i>		<i>18 to 20</i>		<i>21 to 24</i>		<i>25 to 29</i>	
2015	13	14	18	19	19	19	20	20
2016	14	13	16	16	20	21	17	17
2017	13	13	17	18	20	20	18	19
2018	13	13	18	18	22	23	20	20
2019	15	15	19	18	21	21	20	20
2020	15	15	18	18	22	22	21	22
2021	15	15	19	18	21	21	20	21

Table 2 – ages (e) 30 to 34, (f) 35 to 39, (g) 40 to 49, (h) 50 to 59

	<i>Age at Sentence (in years)</i>							
	<i>30 to 34</i>		<i>35 to 39</i>		<i>40 to 49</i>		<i>50 to 59</i>	
<i>Year of Sentence</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Median</i>
2002	9	9	8	8	9	9	9	8
2003	10	10	9	9	9	9	7	4
2004	10	11	10	10	9	9	9	8
2005	11	12	12	12	10	8	12	12
2006	13	12	12	12	12	10	13	12
2007	14	14	13	14	13	12	13	13
2008	17	16	16	15	16	14	12	12
2009	17	15	17	15	15	15	18	17
2010	20	19	20	17	17	17	14	13
2011	18	17	18	17	18	18	16	16
2012	19	17	19	17	18	17	16	15
2013	19	17	19	19	17	16	15	14
2014	19	21	17	17	15	15	16	16
2015	17	17	18	20	15	14	15	15
2016	17	17	18	19	16	16	17	15
2017	16	16	17	17	16	16	14	14
2018	20	20	18	17	16	16	17	16
2019	20	20	21	17	17	18	17	18
2020	18	18	20	21	19	19	14	13
2021	20	19	18	18	18	18	18	18

Table 3 – ages (i) 60 to 69, and (j) 70 years and older

	<i>Age at Sentence (in years)</i>			
	<i>60 to 69</i>		<i>70 and over</i>	
<i>Year of Sentence</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Median</i>
2002	11	11	8	8

2003	5	5	11	11
2004	10	10	7	7
2005	7	6	NA	NA
2006	12	14	3	3
2007	9	7	9	11
2008	9	8	NA	NA
2009	13	13	NA	NA
2010	15	14	9	9
2011	15	13	NA	NA
2012	19	17	11	11
2013	14	14	9	9
2014	13	10	14	12
2015	18	19	10	9
2016	20	16	11	11
2017	10	10	12	13
2018	15	13	13	13
2019	14	15	14	14
2020	15	14	29	29
2021	18	18	14	14

HL1737

The following tables show the number of prisoners serving a sentence of imprisonment for public protection (IPP) with a tariff of 10 years or more in each year since 2002; and of those, how many were aged (1) 18 to 20, (2) 21 to 24, (3) 25 to 29, (4) 30 to 34, (5) 35 to 39, (6) 40 to 49, (7) 50 to 59, (8) 60 to 69, (9) 70 years and older, at the time of sentencing, as at 30 June 2012 to 2021.

Table 1 – Year of sentence: 30 June 2012 to 30 June 2016

Age at Senten ce (in years)	Year of Sentence				
	30/06/20 12	30/06/20 13	30/06/20 14	30/06/20 15	30/06/20 16
Total	91	95	94	94	92
18 - 20	7	7	6	6	6
21 - 24	15	16	15	14	14
25 - 29	18	20	20	21	21
30 - 34	11	11	11	10	10
35 - 39	8	8	8	8	8
40 - 49	19	20	21	22	21
50 - 59	9	10	10	10	9
60 - 69	*	*	*	*	*
70 and over	*	*	*	*	*

Table 2 – Year of sentence: 30 June 2017 to 30 June 2021

Age at Senten ce (in years)	Year of Sentence				
	30/06/20 17	30/06/20 18	30/06/20 19	30/06/20 20	30/06/20 21
Total	90	87	89	84	76
18 - 20	5	5	5	*	0
21 - 24	14	12	12	13	11
25 - 29	20	20	20	19	17
30 - 34	10	11	11	10	11
35 - 39	8	7	7	7	*
40 - 49	21	21	21	20	17
50 - 59	9	8	10	11	10
60 - 69	*	*	*	*	*
70 and over	*	*	*	*	*

Notes for all figures:

- 1) Due to rounding, the interquartile range may not equal the difference between the third and first quartiles.
- 2) Tariff length is the time between date of sentence and tariff expiry date.
- 3) Figures do not include whole-life orders.
- 4) 'NA' means not applicable

5) An asterisk (*) has been used to suppress values of one or two. This is to prevent the disclosure of individual information. Further disclosure control may be completed where this alone is not sufficient.

6) Numbers are subject to revision as more data become available.

7) The figures in these tables 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. Data has been supplied for as many of the requested years as it is possible to provide within cost limits; earlier years may not be available due to changes in recording over time.

Local Government: Climate Change

*Asked by **Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment, if any, they have made of the findings of the report by the National Association of Local Councils, What can local councils do on climate change?, published on 25 October 2021. [HL1825]

Lord Harrington of Watford: Town and parish councils have an important role in improving the well-being of their communities and helping them overcome challenges, including climate change. The Government welcomes the 2021 report by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), who we meet regularly with at a ministerial and official level.

The Levelling Up White Paper outlines the UK Government's plans to set up a Neighbourhood Governance Review to examine the effectiveness of current arrangements and make it easier for local people and community groups to come together to set local priorities and shape the future of their neighbourhoods. As the membership body for parish councils, NALC will be a key stakeholder of this work.

Local Government: Standards

*Asked by **Baroness Scott of Needham Market***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what sector support funding for local government improvement they have provided through a grant directly to (1) the Local Government Association, and (2) the National Association of Local Councils, in the financial years (a) 2019–20, (b) 2020–21, (c) 2021–22, and (d) 2022–23. [HL1935]

Lord Harrington of Watford: DLUHC granted the Local Government Association £19.2 million in 2019–20, £19.2 million in 2020–21, £18.8 million in 2021–22 and £18 million in 2022–23, to deliver local government sector support programmes.

No sector support grants for local government improvement were provided by DLUHC to the National Association of Local Councils during this period.

The Levelling Up White Paper outlines the UK Government's commitment to establish a Neighbourhood Governance Review. This will explore the current effectiveness of neighbourhood governance models and how they can be strengthened, including the role of town and parish councils.

Macular Degeneration: Medical Treatments

*Asked by **Lord Low of Dalston***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to increase NHS capacity to deliver intravitreal injections to accommodate the prospective, novel treatment of geographic atrophy. [HL1972]

Lord Kamall: The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) is currently supporting clinical trials for a number of medicines relating to geographic atrophy, including intravitreal injections. It will review the quality, safety and efficacy of these products should the manufacturers apply for licences.

All new licensed medicines are subsequently appraised by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and guidance issued to the National Health Service. In the absence of NICE's guidance, local commissioners should consider the available evidence when determining funding for new treatments and the capacity of the local NHS to deliver the service.

Marine Accident Investigation Branch

*Asked by **The Lord Bishop of Exeter***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the publication of the 2021 Marine Accident Investigation Branch Annual Report on 9 June, what steps they are taking to reduce the numbers of unsafe pilot ladders. [HL1847]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) is engaging with UK pilot safety stakeholders, under the UK Safety of Navigation Committee (UKSON), to look to reduce the numbers of unsafe pilot ladders. This includes discussions on pilot transfer safety.

Pilot ladder reports are logged and local Marine Surveyors must investigate and take appropriate action. They are required to look at pilot ladders during their surveys on board UK flagged vessels and during Port State Control inspections on foreign vessels, in accordance with the Paris Memorandum of Understanding.

The MCA is also liaising with, among others, the International Maritime Organization, UK maritime industry, International Association of Classification Societies and International Standards Organization to foster international collaboration and influence suitable changes and amendments to relevant conventions, regulations and standards on pilot ladder safety.

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Exeter

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what assessment they have made of the 2021 Marine Accident Investigation Branch Annual Report, published on 9 June; in particular, the finding that 10 commercial fishermen lost their lives in 2021, the highest figure in a decade; and what steps they are taking in response to improve maritime safety and reduce fatalities. [HL1848]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) Annual Report reflects that fishing remains the most dangerous industry in the UK. Owners and Skippers are ultimately responsible for the safety of their vessels and crew.

Following the MAIB recommendations to improve maritime safety and reduce fatalities, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) introduced the Small Fishing Vessel Code of Practice in September 2021, which sets minimum standards for vessel construction, machinery, water freeing, freeboard, and stability. Vessels are now inspected both in and out of the water and the MCA have introduced inspections to take place at random, outside of the routine inspection cycle.

In addition, Seafish and the MCA have developed the Home and Dry website and have run three safety campaigns covering: risk assessment; man overboard and vessel stability. Since 2008, the MCA has provided £3 million to enable Seafish to obtain match funding to provide free safety training. The MCA have also supported the Royal National Lifeboat Institution and Seafish in the delivery of Man Overboard Awareness events. The MCA are also developing new training and certification requirements which will extend certification for skippers of vessels from 16.5m to 7m.

Maryam Alsayed Tiyrab*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Sudan regarding the death sentence by stoning given to Maryam Alsayed Tiyrab for adultery. [HL1762]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: We most strongly condemn the decision of a Sudanese court to sentence Maryam Alsayed Tiyrab to death by stoning for adultery. It is a longstanding policy of the UK Government to oppose the death penalty, in all circumstances, as a matter of principle. Our Embassy in Khartoum has engaged the Sudanese authorities to raise our concerns and seek further clarification on the detail of this case. Sudan's transitional government had made significant progress on human rights, including on legal reforms and the rights of women and girls. It is vital that this progress is not put at risk following the military coup on 25 October.

Media: Copyright*Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the financial impact on the UK news media sector of the decision to expand the text and data mining copyright exception. [HL1719]

Lord Callanan: The Government asked specific questions about impact in the consultation on AI and IP, but received very limited quantitative evidence. An impact assessment will be published alongside the legislation when laid. The proposed exception will be targeted to limit negative impacts, and the government welcomes further evidence from rights holders on how to best achieve this.

Medical Records: Gender Recognition*Asked by Lord Clement-Jones*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Lord Kamall on 24 May (HL476 and HL475), what assessment they have made of the risks to (1) patients, and (2) medical professionals, that might arise as a result of the policy on recording gender set out in the Gender Identity Toolkit for General Practice. [HL1842]

Lord Kamall: No formal risk assessment has been made.

Asked by Lord Clement-Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Lord Kamall on 24 May (HL476 and HL475), what is the legal underpinning for the policy set out in the Gender Identity Toolkit for General Practice that only gender, not sex and gender, are included on medical records. [HL1843]

Lord Kamall: The Gender Recognition Act 2004 provides additional rights and safeguards for those with a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC), such as making it an offence to disclose protected information. This includes information pertaining to the previously recorded sex of a person who holds a GRC where that information has been obtained in an official capacity and the person has not consented to its disclosure, subject to limited exceptions.

The Gender Identity Toolkit for General Practice is made available by the Institute of General Practice Management, Indigo Gender Service, Practice Index and Pride in Practice. However, it is not Government guidance. The Toolkit provides voluntary information to general practices on the administration of changes to medical records and makes reference to the Gender Recognition Act.

Asked by Lord Clement-Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Lord Kamall on 24 May (HL476 and HL475), how medical professionals are held to account for any negative consequences that arise from how they have recorded a patient's gender. [HL1844]

Lord Kamall: All regulated healthcare professionals are required to register with the relevant professional regulator, such as the General Medical Council, in order to practice in the United Kingdom. These regulators determine the standards which registered professionals must meet and the professional values, knowledge, skills and behaviours required. Regulators are independent bodies and can take action to restrict the practise of healthcare professionals who fail to meet the expected standards.

Asked by Lord Clement-Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Lord Kamall on 24 May (HL476 and HL475), what is the policy for recording the gender of people who self-identify as non-binary in medical records; and what is the legal underpinning for this policy. [HL1846]

Lord Kamall: The Government continues to consider emerging data and research on the experiences of non-binary people to understand how future policy can be developed. In general, the National Health Service identifies individuals as male or female via NHS numbers and medical records. This aligns with the Gender Recognition Act 2004 which refers to two sexes: male and female. NHS bodies must always consider any legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and compliance with the European Convention on Human Rights in respect of those who identify as non-binary.

Mental Capacity: Payments

Asked by Lord Young of Cookham

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to publish a response to their consultation Mental Capacity Act: Small Payments Scheme, which closed on 12 January. [HL1953]

Lord Bellamy: The consultation exposed a number of issues that required further consideration. We have continued working with relevant stakeholders to unpack these further to test the feasibility and design of any scheme, in particular the safeguards required and practical considerations to meet the aims of simplicity.

We have also been working with the Court of Protection to consider operational improvements. We are preparing the Government response to the consultation and will provide the House with a further update in the autumn.

Migrants: Detainees

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people who are (1) survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, and (2) otherwise recognised as vulnerable under the Adults at Risk policy, were brought to an immigration detention centre in (a) 2019, (b) 2020, and (c) 2021. [HL1711]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The requested information cannot be accurately extracted from our internal systems. To provide this information would require a manual trawl of case records and to do so would incur disproportionate cost.

The Adults at Risk in Immigration Detention (AAR) policy strengthens the presumption against the detention of those who are particularly vulnerable to harm in detention. Under the AAR policy, vulnerable individuals will be detained only when the evidence of vulnerability in their particular case is outweighed by the immigration considerations, including expected date of removal, compliance with immigration law, and public protection. Where a decision is taken to maintain the detention of a vulnerable person, safeguards are in place including regular reviews to ensure detention remains lawful, appropriate and proportionate.

All Home Office staff working in the detention system are given training and support to identify and act upon indicators of vulnerability.

Mike Veale

Asked by Lord Lexden

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the reply by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 18 July (HL Deb col 1756), what is the maximum period beyond which the start of a misconduct hearing cannot be postponed. [HL1967]

Asked by Lord Lexden

To ask Her Majesty's Government who is the legally qualified chair in charge of the misconduct hearing that is to be convened for Mike Veale, former Chief Constable of Cleveland Police. [HL1968]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Chair of a misconduct hearing must ensure that the hearing commences within 100 working days from the date the officer is served with a notice that they are being referred to a misconduct hearing. The Chair may, in the interests of justice, extend that period. There is no maximum period defined.

Arrangements concerning the misconduct hearing for Mike Veale, former Chief Constable of Cleveland Police, are a matter for the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Cleveland. It is for the PCC to manage any actions arising from it.

Ministers: Conduct

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Education broke the Ministerial Code by raising her middle finger to a crowd outside Downing Street on 7 July. [HL1633]

Baroness Barran: The government recognises how important professional conduct, ethical standards and appropriate behaviour are in setting a good example for our children and young people. My right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister, is similarly clear that MPs and those in government should be held to the highest standards.

My hon. Friend, the Minister for Skills, Further and Higher Education has acknowledged that she should have shown more composure and regrets that her behaviour fell short of expected standards on this occasion.

Ministry of Defence: Correspondence

Asked by Lord Rogan

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the Ministry of Defence intends to respond to the letter sent by Lord Rogan on 17 May. [HL1982]

Baroness Goldie: I replied to the noble Lord's letter on 16 June 2022. A further copy has been despatched in light of this question.

Ministry of Defence: Procurement

Asked by Lord Goddard of Stockport

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the (1) proportion, and (2) absolute value, of Ministry of Defence spend on procurement of goods and services that were denominated in dollars for 2021–22; and what is anticipated for 2022–23. [HL1965]

Baroness Goldie: For financial year (FY) 2021–22, the Departmental spend on the procurement of goods and services in dollars was around USD\$5.3 billion, which is approximately 8.4% of the total £46 billion Defence budget. For FY 2022–23, the Department does not routinely release forecast spending figures.

Monkeypox: Disease Control

Asked by Baroness Merron

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to respond to the monkeypox outbreak. [HL1876]

Lord Kamall: The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) is working with the National Health Service and the public health agencies in the four nations to prevent onward transmission of monkeypox virus. The UKHSA is raising awareness of the outbreak with the public, including advice on symptoms and how to access the appropriate treatment options.

The UKHSA recommends that gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men at higher risk of exposure to monkeypox should be offered a dose of a smallpox vaccine, such as Imvanex. Vaccines are also offered to those most likely to be exposed to monkeypox including healthcare workers and close contacts of those infected.

Monkeypox: Greater London

Asked by Baroness Merron

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take in response to 71 per cent of monkeypox cases being concentrated in London. [HL1877]

Lord Kamall: The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) is working with the National Health Service and sexual health, voluntary and community sector organisations in London to share accurate information on the outbreak with those at increased risk and prevent onward transmission of the virus. The UKHSA is raising awareness and advising the public on symptoms and how to access the appropriate treatment options.

Vaccines are being offered to gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men considered to be at higher risk of exposure to monkeypox. Vaccines are also offered to those most likely to be exposed to monkeypox, including healthcare workers and close contacts of those infected. The UKHSA has provided approximately 8,000 doses of the Imvanex vaccine to sites in London and continues to conduct outreach work.

Morocco: Trade Promotion

Asked by Lord Goddard of Stockport

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect to appoint a replacement Trade Envoy to Morocco. [HL1853]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The Department for International Trade is constantly reviewing suitable markets to identify where the appointment of a Trade Envoy can be of greatest benefit to the trade and investment aims of the UK.

The former Trade Envoy to Morocco resigned on the 5th July and a recommendation will be made to the next Prime Minister in due course.

Motor Vehicles: Exports

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the (1) procedure, and (2) protocol, for the temporary export of classic cars to (a) Hungary, and (b) the rest of the EU, for (i) repair, and (ii) return, to the UK. [HL1817]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: There is no requirement to notify the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) that a vehicle has been temporarily exported. All UK-registered vehicles must either remain registered or

the keeper must only notify the DVLA if it has been permanently exported.

A UK-registered vehicle can be driven to Hungary or an EU member state and used in that country for up to six months in any 12-month period. The vehicle must remain properly registered and licensed in the UK and have a valid MoT (if needed).

If a vehicle is to be permanently exported, the vehicle keeper must complete the 'export' section of the vehicle registration certificate (V5C) and return it to the DVLA. The vehicle record will then be amended to show that the vehicle has been permanently exported. The remaining part of the V5C will need to be retained and provided to the relevant vehicle registration authority as required.

The keeper of a vehicle which is registered in the UK and is significantly restored or rebuilt should notify the DVLA. An inspection of the vehicle or other evidence may be required to ensure the vehicle register is updated where necessary.

Natural Gas: Kurds

Asked by Lord Austin of Dudley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the potential for gas from the Kurdistan region to diversify the supply of gas to the UK. [\[HL1783\]](#)

Lord Callanan: Great Britain has highly diverse sources of gas supply. These include pipelines from the UK and Norwegian continental shelves (UKCS & NCS), interconnection with the European continent, and three Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) terminals, providing the UK with one of the largest LNG import infrastructures in Europe.

The UK's diverse range of sources of gas supply is a strength to the Government's approach to energy security. The integrated nature of the global gas market, and the fact that it is an internationally traded commodity, ensures that the UK continues to work closely with all its international partners.

Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have completed preparations for the Review Conference on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons that will take place in August this year; and who will represent the UK at that conference. [\[HL1700\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK looks forward to working with all states to strengthen the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) at the Tenth Review Conference in August. The FCDO is still finalising Ministerial attendance. The senior official who will represent the UK at the conference will be the UK's

Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament.

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, as outlined in the National Report ahead of the 10th Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, they will hold regular engagement with Parliamentarians to increase understanding and awareness of the UK's nuclear deterrence and disarmament policy, and provide opportunity for dialogue. [\[HL1704\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We value our engagement with UK Parliamentarians on the UK's nuclear deterrence and disarmament policy, and will continue to offer briefings, including with relevant Parliamentary Committees. The Government provides annual updates to Parliament on the progress of the Dreadnought Class submarine programme and other related Defence Nuclear Enterprise programmes. The most recent report was published on 16 December 2021.

Nuclear Weapons

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the use of nuclear weapons; and what steps they are taking to ensure that they will not be used. [\[HL1702\]](#)

Baroness Goldie: Her Majesty's Government recognises the possible humanitarian and environmental consequences which could result from the use of nuclear weapons. We hope never to have to use them, but to deliver effective deterrence in all circumstances; and we remain fully committed to the long-term goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

We take our responsibilities as a nuclear weapon state, including reducing the risk of nuclear conflict, very seriously. Our Trident missiles have not been targeted at any state since 1994 and our submarines are at several days' notice to fire. We will continue to work internationally to build trust and confidence between states; including through the P5 process which, under UK leadership, has made important progress on several issues of relevance to strategic risk reduction, including discussions on the concept of risk reduction, nuclear doctrines, and transparency.

Nurses: Training

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of their decision to terminate the BTEC qualification in Health and Social Care on the numbers of students applying for courses to qualify as nurses; and what percentage of students starting nursing courses in each of the last three years have achieved this qualification. [\[HL1746\]](#)

Baroness Barran: The department has been clear that it will continue to fund some BTEC courses and other qualifications in future where there is a clear need for skills and knowledge that A levels and T Levels cannot provide, and where they meet new quality standards. The government intends to fund small academic qualifications that should typically be taken alongside A levels in priority areas such as STEM subjects, and in areas where an A level is not available, such as health and social care. We will set out the full approval criteria in the autumn.

The department is reforming the system to ensure all qualifications approved for funding are high quality, have a clear purpose, and deliver great outcomes. T Levels have been developed with over 250 leading employers, have significantly longer teaching hours and include a meaningful nine-week industry placement that sets them apart from many current vocational qualifications. The Health T Level will help raise awareness amongst young people of the occupational choices within the healthcare sector and provide an opportunity for employers to strengthen their engagement with local schools and colleges. In addition, the Health T Level will provide a pipeline of young talent who may move into Trainee Nursing Associate and Assistant Health Practitioner roles, later progressing to the registered occupations.

As a department, we don't hold the data on the percentage of students starting nursing courses in each of the last three years.

Offences against Children: Rotherham and Telford

Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will direct (1) the Home Office, and (2) other government departments, to stop using the terms "Asian men" and "men of Pakistani origin" to describe the members of the child sexual exploitation gangs in Rotherham and Telford. [\[HL1808\]](#)

Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will initiate an inquiry into the factors that inspired the members of the child sexual exploitation gangs in Rotherham and Telford; and in particular, the extent to which Islamic teachings were a determining factor. [\[HL1809\]](#)

Baroness Williams of Trafford: In 2020 the Government published a paper on the characteristics of group-based child sexual exploitation, setting out the best available evidence on offender characteristics. We know that child sexual exploitation is not exclusive to any single culture, community, race or religion. However, political or cultural sensitivities must not get in the way of uncovering and tackling these devastating crimes, and understanding local community and cultural factors is clearly an important part of this.

That is why the Government is working with policing to drive up the quality of police data on child sexual exploitation. As part of this, the Home Secretary has made it mandatory from March 2022 for police forces to record the ethnicity of those held on suspicion of group-based child sexual exploitation. We are also funding dedicated child sexual abuse and exploitation analysts in every policing region, and we will shortly publish an updated version of our Child Exploitation Disruption Toolkit, supporting police and local agencies in working together to better understand and disrupt offending in their areas.

In addition, the Home Secretary has recently commissioned the policing inspectorate to conduct an inspection into how the police respond to group-based child sexual exploitation. This will ensure policing is learning from past mistakes including those highlighted in the local inquiries in Rotherham and Telford, and that the very best practice is now being put in place by forces across the country.

Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that prosecutions are brought against (1) the members of the child sexual exploitation gangs in Rotherham and Telford, and (2) the responsible authorities that failed to prevent the abuse from taking place. [\[HL1810\]](#)

Lord Stewart of Dirleton: Following the Alexis Jay report in 2014 and identification of the problems that existed in responding to investigations of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) gangs in Rotherham, the National Crime Agency (NCA) launched Operation Stovewood, a dedicated team investigating similar offending which had occurred within Rotherham. As outlined in the Telford Inquiry report, a number of other forces across the country have successfully investigated similar offending in their force areas.

The CPS has a national response to these types of investigations. Each area has formerly dealt with large CSE cases within their Rape and Serious Sexual Offence (RASSO) units. Since its inception, Operation Stovewood has been handled by a team of lawyers within the former Organised Crime Division. On 1 April 2022, the CPS created a new unit in direct response to the number and scale of these investigations being undertaken across England and Wales. The Organised Child Sexual Abuse Unit (OCSAU) is a dedicated team of lawyers, which in addition to the casework generated by NCA Op Stovewood and Child Exploitation and Online Protection teams, will undertake all similar casework generated by police forces nationwide.

The unit currently has casework involving approximately 255 suspects and defendants. The lawyers within the unit work closely with investigators from the earliest stage of the commencement of investigations to ensure that the strongest possible cases can be built, so that those committing these offences are prosecuted. Where the CPS's legal test is met, they will always

prosecute these offenders for the offences they have committed.

Ophthalmic Services: Special Educational Needs

Asked by Baroness Finlay of Llandaff

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Kamall on 11 July (HL1271), how many children attending day special schools access eye tests through the domiciliary scheme. [HL1851]

Lord Kamall: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Overseas Trade: Republic of Ireland

Asked by Lord Hay of Ballyore

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of jobs in the Republic of Ireland dependent on trade with the UK in June. [HL1479]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: Experimental estimates published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) report around 207,000 workers in the Republic of Ireland were supported by exports to the UK in 2018 (latest year for which estimates are available).

More timely estimates for June 2022 or estimates for employment supported by total trade between the Republic of Ireland and the UK (exports *plus* imports), are not available.

Source: OECD Trade in Employment (2021 ed.) database, <https://www.oecd.org/sti/ind/trade-in-employment.htm>

Pakistan: Blasphemy

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Manchester

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Pakistan regarding the cases of (1) Qaisar Ayub, and (2) Amoon Ayub, who have been imprisoned and sentenced to death for blasphemy. [HL1740]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We oppose the death penalty in all circumstances as a matter of principle and have made that clear to the Government of Pakistan. We are deeply concerned at the misuse of blasphemy laws in Pakistan. We continue to press for speedy and fair trials for those accused of blasphemy, including cases such as Qaisar and Amoon Ayub, and urge the authorities to ensure the safety of those charged with blasphemy. Most recently, the British High Commissioner in Islamabad raised the misuse of the blasphemy laws in his meeting last month [in June] with Pakistan's new Human Rights Minister, Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada.

Pakistan: Females

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they (1) are implementing, or (2) plan to implement, to use (a) Official Development Assistance, or (b) other policies, to address the issues of (i) child and maternal mortality and ill health, (ii) low levels of girls' education, and (iii) other gender issues, in Balochistan. [HL1787]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The FCDO remains committed to targeting future aid to Pakistan's marginalised groups and have developed a Pakistan Network Gender Strategy (2022-27) to increase our focus on women and girls. We regularly raise at a senior level our concerns about the human rights situation in Pakistan, including gender equality, at a senior level with the Government of Pakistan. In February 2022, the British High Commissioner to Pakistan visited Balochistan, where he met the Chief Minister, Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo, and discussed the protection of human rights.

The UK also has a proud track record of delivering effective development assistance to Pakistan. During the response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the UK Government worked with the World Food Programme to deliver life-saving nutrition assistance for children and pregnant and lactating women in Balochistan. We also scaled up water, sanitation and hygiene interventions. The UK continues to fund education programmes in the refugee-hosting areas of Balochistan which support both Pakistani and Afghan refugee children.

Pakistan: Human Rights

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take in response to human rights abuses in Pakistan, particularly against the people of Balochistan; and whether those plans will include the use of Magnitsky-style sanctions. [HL1788]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is concerned about reports of human rights abuses and violations in Pakistan, including in the province of Balochistan. We regularly raise our concerns about human rights at a senior level with the Government of Pakistan. I did so most recently on 23 June, when I met Pakistan's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Hina Rabbani Khar. In February 2022, the British High Commissioner to Pakistan visited Balochistan, where he met the Chief Minister, Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo, and discussed the protection of human rights. It is not appropriate to speculate who may be designated under the sanctions regime in the future. To do this could reduce the impact of the designations.

Parish and Town Councils: Domestic Visits

*Asked by **Baroness Scott of Needham Market***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have for (1) ministers, and (2) officials, to visit parish and town councils to improve their understanding of the councils' work and challenges. [[HL1938](#)]

Lord Harrington of Watford: Ministers and officials regularly visit communities across the UK, to hear from a range of voices from all tiers of government, the public and private sectors, and community and voluntary groups.

In the Levelling Up White Paper the UK Government committed to a Review of Neighbourhood Governance, including the role and functions of parish councils. This will look at how to make it easier for local people to come together to set local priorities and shape the future of their neighbourhoods. As part of this work, we will want to hear from a range of parish councils about their work and the challenges they face.

Parish and Town Councils: Elections

*Asked by **Baroness Scott of Needham Market***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to work with the National Association of Local Councils (1) to raise public awareness of parish and town council elections in 2023, and (2) to encourage more people to stand for election to improve the diversity of councillors. [[HL1937](#)]

Lord Harrington of Watford: Elections are essential for good local democracy. Parish and town council elections are delivered by the principal local authorities for their areas, who will communicate with local electorates on forthcoming elections as they consider appropriate. They are supported in this by the independent Electoral Commission, who, as well as running national awareness campaigns, produce resources and materials to improve public understanding of all elections, available for use by local authorities.

As part of a forthcoming Review of Neighbourhood Governance announced in the Levelling Up White Paper, we will be reviewing the effectiveness of current neighbourhood governance including parish and town councils. Through the review, we want to make it easier for people to participate and shape the future of their neighbourhoods.

Parliament: Telephone Services

*Asked by **Lord Campbell-Savours***

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker what assessment has been made of dissatisfaction with the parliamentary phone system expressed in the House of Lords Members Survey; and whether that will lead to a procurement review. [[HL1790](#)]

Lord Touhig: The Senior Deputy Speaker has asked me, as Chair of the Services Committee, to respond on his

behalf. The Chief Information Officer and Managing Director of the Parliamentary Digital Service has noted Members' dissatisfaction with the existing telephone handset solution expressed in the House of Lords' Member Survey and has accepted the need to take remedial action.

An investment programme mandate to replace the current service which is now end of life has been recently approved by the bicameral Digital Strategy Board and will formally begin over the summer recess with the development of a business case alongside continued market research and implementation planning. The programme will prioritise addressing Members' clear dissatisfaction with the telephone handsets. The programme has begun engaging with Members to ensure that the replacement solution addresses the dissatisfaction and will continue to do so after the summer recess

At its meeting on the 26 May the Services Committee was advised that the project timelines had not yet been defined but it was expected that all user migration would be completed by the end of 2023.

Passports

*Asked by **Baroness Randerson***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have been informed by any (1) airports and (2) airlines, of any cases where staff shortages have been exacerbated by slow response times for replacing passports that have already been exhausted because they no longer have space for additional stamps. [[HL1776](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Her Majesty's Passport Office prioritises applications which meet its urgent and compassionate criteria. This criteria includes employees in the aviation industry who can evidence their need for a passport for work purposes.

Passports: EU Countries

*Asked by **Baroness Randerson***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the requirement following UK's departure from the EU that passports must be stamped on a fresh page upon each entry and exit to the EU, what consideration have they given to increasing the number of pages in passports, particularly for airline flight crew; and what steps the Passport Office is taking to ensure that essential workers are supplied with new documents within 24 hours of request. [[HL1775](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: There are currently no plans to increase pages in the British passport.

Frequent travellers already have the option to apply for a 54-page passport.

Her Majesty's Passport Office prioritises applications which meet its urgent and compassionate criteria. The criteria include employees in the aviation industry who can evidence their need for a passport for work purposes.

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to including a module on self-care in the personal and social development curriculum taught in schools. [HL1882]

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

The relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education statutory guidance clearly sets out the content that should be covered in the topics of basic first aid and health and prevention, at both primary and secondary school. The guidance is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>. The subjects have been designed to build knowledge and support the development of pupils' self-control and their ability to self-regulate, as well as providing strategies for doing so.

Health education covers aspects of self-care such as dental hygiene and personal hygiene. It also has a strong focus on mental wellbeing, including a recognition that mental wellbeing and physical health are linked. The aim is to give pupils the information they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing, including self-care, and to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns, including common types of mental ill health.

To support schools to deliver this content effectively, the department has produced teacher training modules which are free to download from GOV.UK. These modules can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teaching-about-relationships-sex-and-health#train-teachers-on-relationships-sex-and-health-education>.

Pharmacy: Finance

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take to provide funding for the implementation of a National Minor Ailments Scheme to be operated by community pharmacies and pharmacists. [HL1921]

Lord Kamall: The Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework 2019-2024 sets out the ambition for community pharmacy to be further integrated with the National Health Service and provide advice and treatment for minor illnesses. Approximately £13 billion has been allocated to community pharmacy through the Framework, with £2.592 billion in each of the five years. Through the Framework, the Community Pharmacist Consultation Service was introduced to enable staff in NHS 111 and general practices to refer patients to a same day appointment for advice and treatment of minor ailments with a community pharmacist.

Photography: Copyright

Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the financial impact on the UK professional photography sector of the decision to expand the text and data mining copyright exception. [HL1721]

Lord Callanan: The Government asked specific questions about impact in the consultation on AI and IP, but received very limited quantitative evidence. An impact assessment will be published alongside the legislation when laid. The proposed exception will be targeted to limit negative impacts, and the government welcomes further evidence from rights holders on how to best achieve this.

Police and Crime Commissioners

Asked by Lord Lexden

To ask Her Majesty's Government what legal requirements exist to ensure that Police and Crime Commissioners answer enquiries made to them. [HL1969]

Asked by Lord Lexden

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether Police and Crime Commissioners are obligated to meet delegations of members of the House of Lords upon request. [HL1970]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) have a crucial role to play in engaging with the public and partners in their force area to deliver on their priorities to cut crime, including statutory obligations to consult with them on key documents, such as their Police and Crime Plan.

The actions and decisions of PCCs are scrutinised by Police and Crime Panels (PCPs) and PCCs must provide information and answer questions raised by their PCP where reasonable and appropriate, in line with their duties in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. Where necessary, PCCs must also respond to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests from the public, in accordance with the FOI Act 2000.

There are no legal obligations for PCCs to meet delegations of members of the House of Lords. However, PCCs should be expected to engage constructively with any such requests, in line with their position as directly elected local leaders.

Police and Crime Commissioners: Elections

Asked by Lord Trefgarne

To ask Her Majesty's Government what formal legal qualifications are required for any person seeking election as a Police and Crime Commissioner. [HL1758]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The criteria for those who wish to stand for, and hold the office of Police and Crime Commissioner, is set out in legislation under Section 64 to 69 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

Those who wish to stand as a candidate must be at least 18 years of age on the day of their nomination and registered to vote in the force area in which they wish to stand. They must also be a British citizen, an eligible Commonwealth citizen or a qualifying EU citizen or EU citizen with retained rights. To be nominated as a candidate, candidates must obtain 100 nominations and tender a deposit of £5,000.

Individuals are not required to have any formal legal qualifications or other qualifications.

Ports: Energy Supply

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what support they are giving to enable the deployment of technologically mature but presently economically unviable decarbonisation technologies, such as shore power. [HL1833]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The government is supporting the decarbonisation of the UK Maritime sector through a two-pronged approach: R&D funding and investment; and a comprehensive policy and regulatory programme.

Building on the success of the first Clean Maritime Demonstration Competition, in March 2022 the government announced a £206m R&D fund to be managed by the newly established UK Shipping Office for Reducing Emissions (UK SHORE). UK SHORE will work in partnership with industry to tackle supply and demand barriers and speed the transition of the UK toward a decarbonised maritime sector. The UK SHORE programme is being scoped and is considering different kinds of projects. The programme will aim to deliver a suite of interventions transforming the UK into a global leader in the design, manufacture and operation of clean maritime technology – boosting both jobs and economic growth.

Earlier this year a 12-week call for evidence on the uptake of shore power in the UK was launched as part of a commitment in the Transport Decarbonisation Plan. The responses to the call for evidence have been analysed and were published in July 2022. The next step is to use the evidence to develop policy proposals and consult on them later this year.

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

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Building on the success of the first Clean Maritime Demonstration Competition, in March 2022 the government announced a £206m R&D fund to be managed by the newly established UK Shipping Office for Reducing Emissions (UK SHORE). UK SHORE will work in partnership with industry to tackle supply and demand barriers and speed the transition of the UK toward a decarbonised maritime sector. The UK SHORE programme is being scoped and is considering different kinds of projects. The programme will aim to deliver a suite of interventions transforming the UK into a global leader in the design, manufacture and operation of clean maritime technology – boosting both jobs and economic growth.

Earlier this year a 12-week call for evidence on the uptake of shore power in the UK was launched as part of a commitment in the Transport Decarbonisation Plan. The responses to the call for evidence have been analysed and were published in July 2022. The next step is to use the evidence to develop policy proposals and consult on them later this year.

Primary Health Care

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to developing a self-care strategy. [HL1880]

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the role of self-care in helping to relieve pressures faced by primary care settings, such as GP practices. [HL1881]

Lord Kamall: There are no plans to introduce a self-care strategy. All community pharmacies in England delivering NHS services provide support for self-care, including for minor ailments. This can include provision of advice, information and, where appropriate, the sale of medicines to patients and carers. Through the Community Pharmacist Consultation Service, general practitioners and NHS 111 can refer patients to community pharmacists for advice on and treatment of minor illnesses. In addition, general practices are contractually required to provide online self-care information.

Prison Sentences

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people received an Extended Determinate Sentence with a

custodial period of 10 years or more in each year since 2012, by ethnicity. [HL1724]

Lord Bellamy: The data requested is provided in the attached tables.

The Ministry of Justice publishes information on Extended Determinate Sentences and custodial sentence length, by ethnicity, in England and Wales, for the years 2017 to 2021 available in the [Outcomes by Offence data tool \(MS Excel Spreadsheet, 21 MB\)](#).

The Answer includes the following attached material:

HL1724 Table [2022-07-27 HL1724 .xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-07-13/HL1724>

Prisons: Reform

Asked by Lord Laming

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the Prison Reform Trust Prison: the facts, published on 15 July; and what steps they will take in response. [HL1966]

Lord Bellamy: The Prison Reform Trust's report raises a number of issues on which encouraging progress is being made, including work on the Prisons White Paper commitments.

This includes addressing retention of prison officers, and from October 2016 to March 2022, the number of band 3-5 prison officers increased by over 4,000. The most recent pay award provides at least a 4% base pay increase for all prison staff between Operational Support Grade and Governors (Bands 2-11).

We are creating a more resilient estate by both building additional prison places and undertaking refurbishments. This means investing £3.8 billion to deliver 20,000 additional, modern prison places including 2,000 temporary prison places across England and Wales. We are also investing £37 million to deliver improvements to prison safety, as well as investing a further £120 million in tackling substance misuse over the next three years to get more offenders engaged in treatment.

In March, we completed our £100 million Security Investment Programme which will enable us to tackle efforts to undermine prison stability.

There is also a range of projects addressing the diversity of needs among the prison population. This includes developing further support for neurodivergent prisoners by introducing additional staff roles or screening tools as well as developing a strategy supporting older prisoners.

We are continuing to work with Governors across the estate to ensure we are restoring services effectively whilst addressing any backlogs created during the pandemic.

Private Rented Housing

Asked by Lord Goddard of Stockport

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the stock of private homes available to rent following changes to regulations regarding buy-to-let accommodation. [HL1795]

Lord Harrington of Watford: Since 2010, there have been a range of policy changes affecting private landlords. These include tax changes for buy-to-let landlords, changes to the Stamp Duty Land Tax, tightening lending criteria on buy-to-let mortgages and the growing role of the build-to-rent sector.

The Private Rented Sector remains an important part of the housing market, with 4.4 million households currently in the Private Rented Sector. The proportion of PRS households has remained relatively stable for nearly a decade, as evidenced through the English Housing Survey. According to the English Private Landlord Survey (2021) over half (57%) of landlords had a buy-to-let mortgage, representing 68% of tenancies, indicating that buy-to-let landlords continue to invest.

Asked by Lord Naseby

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the size of the private rented housing sector; and whether their policy is to decrease that size. [HL1978]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: The proportion of households living in the private rented sector (PRS) has remained relatively stable over the past decade. The English Housing Survey shows that in 2012-13, the PRS accounted for 18% of households in England. In 2015-16, this increased slightly to 20%, decreasing slightly to 19% in 2019-20, and remaining stable at 19% households in 2020-21.

Most people want to buy their own home one day and the government is firmly committed to helping Generation Rent to become Generation Buy. However, we also appreciate that this is not everyone's aspiration and that there are many people for whom renting a home is either a more practical or more affordable option. The PRS remains an important part of the housing market for the 4.4 million households who live there.

The recent White Paper, 'A Fairer Private Rented Sector', sets out how the government will deliver a fairer, more secure, and higher quality PRS. The reforms are designed to provide good landlords with the support they need, and to make sure they have the confidence to continue operating in the market. We will continue to talk to landlords, local councils and other interested groups while monitoring the impact of our reforms on the sector.

The government also strongly supports the expansion of the Build to Rent (BtR) market. BtR boosts housing supply, diversifies the private rental sector and increases quality and choice for renters in cities and towns across England. To support this, we have revised the National Planning Policy Framework and issued a new chapter of

planning guidance to support the delivery of more BtR homes, including affordable rental homes.

Asked by Lord Naseby

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made, if any, of the demand for homes for private rent. [HL1979]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: The English Housing Survey provides information on housing stock. There was an expansion in the proportion of Private Rented Sector households from 2008 which peaked in 2017. Although there has been a slight downward trend since 2017, the proportion has remained relatively stable for nearly a decade at around 19% to 20%.

Asked by Lord Naseby

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the total (1) number, and (2) proportion, of households in England in the private rented sector in each year since 2017. [HL1981]

Lord Harrington of Watford: The English Housing Survey collects data on number and proportion of households in each tenure and publishes this every year in our Headline Report, with details at Annex Table 1.1. The totals for the private rented sector from 2017 are as follows: 2016-17: 4,692,000 households; 20.3% of households 2017-18: 4,530,000 households; 19.5% of households 2018-19: 4,552,000 households; 19.3% of households 2019-20: 4,438,000 households; 18.7% of households 2020-21: 4,434,000 households; 18.5% of households.

Private Rented Housing: Arrears

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Chelmsford

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many county court judgements there have been for private renters for non-payment of arrears, each year for the past five years, across England and Wales. [HL1839]

Lord Bellamy: A landlord of a privately rented property may apply to the court either as part of an application seeking repossession of the property, or separately to eviction action, for a county court judgement seeking repayment of rent arrears from their tenant.

Our case management systems do not record what a judgement debt relates to, this information is only recorded in the particulars of claim which would require manual reviewing of court files to extract and as such could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Published quarterly statistics on volumes of county court judgements can be found here – <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/civil-justice-statistics-quarterly#2022>

Published quarterly statistics on possession volumes can be found here – <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mortgage-and-landlord-possession-statistics>

At the onset of the COVID-19 public health emergency, the Government took unprecedented action to protect tenants from eviction resulting in the majority of possession claims being stayed until 20 September 2020. This meant that possession claims could not progress through the court process including hearings and enforcement action by way of evictions. Since the lifting of the stay, private rented possession claims have largely returned to pre-covid volumes, but social landlord possession claims remain suppressed and are currently sitting at around 60% of their pre-covid volumes.

Private Rented Housing: Energy Bills Rebate

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Chelmsford

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of how many private renters will not receive the one-off £150 energy rebate payment because the rebate money is paid directly to their landlord and not to the tenant. [HL1836]

Lord Harrington of Watford: Councils are expected to pay the council tax rebate to the occupants of an eligible property, not the landlord. Where a landlord of an eligible property usually pays the council tax as part of the rental agreement, the Government has asked councils to agree a payment method directly with the tenant.

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government how private tenants who pay their council tax or energy bills as part of their rent will be able to claim their energy bills support grant if (1) their rent has already risen this year, and (2) it has not already risen this year. [HL1873]

Lord Callanan: There are rules which can protect tenants and ensure they receive the benefit of this policy. A copy of Ofgem's guidance on how to ensure customers are being charged no more than they should when they buy the electricity through their landlord, including what to do if they think there has been a mistake, is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

HL1873 Resale of gas and electricity [HL1873 Resale of gas and electricity.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-07-18/HL1873>

Private Rented Housing: Evictions

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they made (1) to inform their plans for two-month eviction periods to be set out in the upcoming Renters Reform Bill, and (2) of whether this is sufficient notice for a family with children in school to find a new home in their local area. [HL1802]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: The Government is committed to delivering a fairer and more

effective rental market that works for both tenants and landlords. As set out in our 'A Fairer Private Rented Sector' White Paper, the Government has committed to ending Section 21 no fault evictions. At the same time, we will reform the grounds for evictions to ensure that landlords are able to get possession of their properties when they need to, these reforms will include mandatory grounds for if a landlord wishes to sell or move into the property with two months' notice periods. To protect tenants' security, landlords will not be able to use these grounds in the first six months of a tenancy and to prevent misuse they will not be able to relet the property in the 3 months following the end of the tenancy.

The notice period we are proposing balances the needs of both tenants and landlords, giving tenants and their families time to find a new home while ensuring landlords can manage their assets when they need to do so. However, we encourage landlords to work flexibly with their tenants and notify them of their intentions as far in advance as possible. We encourage tenants who receive notice to consider their options as soon as possible and to contact their local authority if they are at risk of homelessness.

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they made (1) to inform their plans for a no-let period of three months, after an eviction for sale, and (2) of whether this is long enough to deter unscrupulous landlords from abusing the grounds for sale. [\[HL1803\]](#)

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: The Government is clear that misuse of the new grounds of possession and any attempt to find loopholes within our reforms will not be tolerated. We are engaging widely with stakeholders to assess the impact of our enforcement proposals and consider what action is necessary to prevent landlords misusing grounds for possession.

Where a landlord wishes to gain possession to sell their property, they will need to be prepared to provide evidence in court to prove that this is their intention. Introducing a ban on re-marketing and re-letting will allow tenants to more easily demonstrate misuse of the grounds – they can, for example, show that a property has been marketed online. Our assessment is that a three-month restriction acts as an additional deterrent by increasing the costs of misusing a ground substantially and is likely sufficient to prevent a rogue landlord from profiting by immediately re-letting the property at a higher rent. However, we recognise that landlords' circumstances can legitimately change and the three-month restriction provides a balanced and proportionate approach, ensuring that good landlords are not unfairly burdened if this happens.

The three-month restriction is one part of a comprehensive approach to enforcing the new tenancy regime. Other proposals include giving local authorities the powers to issue fines to landlords and allowing tenants to seek redress through a new Ombudsman covering all private landlords.

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what kind of proof a landlord will be obliged to provide to prove that they intend to sell or move themselves or families back into a property, under plans to be set out in the Renters Reform Bill. [\[HL1804\]](#)

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: Where landlords want to use the new moving or selling grounds to seek possession, they will need to be prepared to prove their intention in a court. We will share further guidance on what evidence could be used to demonstrate their intent in due course, and will consider how to ensure this is as simple as possible while protecting tenants from unlawful eviction.

We encourage landlords to communicate with tenants about their intentions early, and share evidence where possible, to avoid unnecessary disputes about the legitimacy of eviction notices arising. Tenants may wish to request further information from their landlord or seek independent advice.

We are clear that attempts to misuse these grounds are unacceptable, and we will restrict landlords from remarketing or reletting the property within three months of using these grounds.

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Chelmsford

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that, with the removal of section 21 evictions in the upcoming Renters Reform Bill, private renters are not forced out of their homes as a result of unaffordable rent increases. [\[HL1837\]](#)

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: In the Renters Reform Bill, we will introduce additional protections for tenants against unfair rent increases, while ensuring landlords can continue to make necessary changes to rent. We will allow increases to rent once per year in line with current legislation and will increase the minimum notice landlords must provide of any change in rent to two months. We will end the use of rent review clauses, preventing tenants being locked into automatic rent increases that are vague or may exceed market prices. We are clear that attempts to evict tenants through unreasonable rent increases are unacceptable. We will make sure that tenants have the confidence to challenge unfair rent increases through the First-tier Tribunal. We will prevent the Tribunal increasing rent beyond the amount landlords initially asked for when they proposed a rent increase.

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Chelmsford

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, under the proposed changes to possession in the Renters' Reform Bill, renters can be evicted every eight months with the new grounds due to no fault of their own. [\[HL1838\]](#)

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: The Government is committed to delivering a fairer and more effective rental market that works for both tenants and

landlords. We will deliver the manifesto commitment to end Section 21 evictions; this will mean that a landlord will only be able to evict their tenants in specific circumstances defined in law and they must be prepared to provide evidence of this in court. Under our proposals, landlords will be able to get possession of their properties when they need to, these reforms will include mandatory grounds for if a landlord wishes to sell or move into the property with two months' notice periods. To protect tenants' security, landlords will not be able to use these grounds in the first six months of a tenancy. Our reforms strike the right balance between improving security for tenants and ensuring landlords continue to feel confident in the market.

Private Rented Housing: Rents

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of private renters who pay (1) energy bills, and (2) council tax, as part of their rent. [HL1871]

Lord Harrington of Watford: The English Housing Survey provides information on the number of private renting households who pay energy bills or council tax as part of their rent. In 2021, 162,000 households, or 3.7% of private renting households, pay their electricity bills as part of their rent; 131,000 households (3%) pay their gas bills as part of their rent; and 120,000 households (2.8%) have their council tax included as part of their rent.

Private Rented Housing: Tenants' Rights

Asked by Lord Goddard of Stockport

To ask Her Majesty's Government what impact assessment they have carried out on proposals to strengthen tenants' rights on the stock of private homes available to rent. [HL1794]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: We will publish an impact assessment as the Bill passes through Parliament, which will set out the costs and benefits and overall impact on the sector including both tenants and landlords. Our White Paper is based on a balanced package of reforms that support both tenants and landlords, drawing from the experience of reforms in other parts of the United Kingdom.

Privy Council

Asked by Lord Lamont of Lerwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government which minister made the decision (1) to reduce the size of the Accession Council, and (2) to hold a ballot of Privy Councillors to attend the Council. [HL1767]

Lord True: The decision not to summons all Privy Counsellors to the next Accession Council, and to hold a ballot of Privy Counsellors not eligible to attend on an ex officio basis, was taken with the collective agreement of

the Lord President of the Council and Number 10. The Royal Household was also consulted on the basis of this collective advice. This decision-making process is consistent with the decision-making process for previous Accession Councils.

The decision to reduce the size of the Accession Council and to hold a ballot for those ineligible to attend on an ex officio basis applies to all Privy Councillors, regardless of their nationality or their usual place of residence.

St. James's Palace is the senior Royal Palace in the United Kingdom and the Court of St. James is the Royal Court to which all Realm High Commissioners are accredited. St. James's Palace has therefore long been agreed to be the most appropriate setting for the Accession Council.

In any case, Westminster Hall will not be available to host the Accession Council because an intensive and time critical series of works will begin on the Parliamentary estate, including Westminster Hall, as soon as Demise is announced. The purpose of these works is to prepare the estate and surrounding areas for significant elements of ceremonial and procedural activity. Hosting the Accession Council in Westminster Hall would prevent the completion of these critical works, resulting in significant disruption to other national activity.

Attendance at an Accession Council is not a statutory matter and there is no constitutional requirement to consult Privy Counsellors on any amendments to attendance arrangements.

Decisions on attendance arrangements for future Accession Councils will be taken at the appropriate time.

Asked by Lord Lamont of Lerwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the decision to reduce the size of the Accession Council and to hold a ballot also applies to Privy Councillors from (1) Commonwealth, or (2) other countries. [HL1768]

Asked by Lord Lamont of Lerwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Accession Council on the death of the Sovereign could be held in Westminster Hall; and if not, why not. [HL1769]

Asked by Lord Lamont of Lerwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consultations were undertaken by the Privy Council with Privy Councillors prior to the decision to reduce the size of the Accession Council. [HL1770]

Asked by Lord Lamont of Lerwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the decision to reduce the size of the Accession Council and to hold an annual ballot of Privy Councillors only applies to the next meeting of the Accession Council or whether annual ballots will continue thereafter. [HL1771]

Lord True: The decision not to summons all Privy Counsellors to the next Accession Council, and to hold a ballot of Privy Counsellors not eligible to attend on an ex officio basis, was taken with the collective agreement of the Lord President of the Council and Number 10. The Royal Household was also consulted on the basis of this collective advice. This decision-making process is consistent with the decision-making process for previous Accession Councils.

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Attendance at an Accession Council is not a statutory matter and there is no constitutional requirement to consult Privy Counsellors on any amendments to attendance arrangements.

Decisions on attendance arrangements for future Accession Councils will be taken at the appropriate time.

Protection From Eviction Act 1977: Prosecutions

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many prosecutions have been brought under the Protection from Eviction Act 1977 for (1) harassment, and (2) unlawful eviction, by each police force in England and Wales in 2020 and 2021. [HL1806]

Lord Bellamy: The Ministry of Justice publishes information on the number of prosecutions, for the years 2017 to 2021, in England and Wales, in the [Outcomes by Offence data tool 2021 \(MS Excel Spreadsheet, 21 MB\)](#). An extract of this tool is provided alongside this response with the requested figures in. Instructions on how to access this data are also included below.

In the Outcomes by Offence data tool:

- Select the 'Prosecutions and Convictions' worksheet.
- Filter by HO offence code and select the following offences:

- 08701 - Unlawful eviction of occupier (Contrary to section 1(2) and (4) of the Protection from Eviction Act 1977).

- 08702 - Unlawful harassment of occupier (Contrary to section 1(3A) and (4) of the Protection from Eviction Act 1977).

- Move the Police Force Area filter to the rows area for a breakdown by PFA.

The following HO offence code may also be of interest:

- 08703 - Protection of occupiers against eviction and harassment (S.210 Housing Act 2004 and S.3 Caravan Sites Act 1968).

If the police were to charge a different offence, such as common assault, that would not be included in the attached table.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

PQ HL1806 Table [2022-07-29 HL1806 Table.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-07-15/HL1806>

Public Footpaths

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of the existing institutional framework in England for waymarking (1) long distance trails, and (2) local footpaths. [HL1622]

Lord Benyon: Effective waymarking and signage has been consistently identified as an essential component in the maintenance of public rights of ways improving access and providing a better experience for all users.

Local authorities are responsible for the management and maintenance of public rights of way including the appropriate use of signage in accordance with published guidance. No overall assessment of the condition of signage and waymarking has been undertaken however such assessments may form part of local authorities' rights of way improvement plans.

Signage for National Trails is covered by national trail quality standards where there is a requirement to make constant improvements to individual Trails and its associated routes. Monitoring information on the assessment of the condition of path surfaces and structures including signage is reported annually.

Publishing: Copyright

Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the financial impact on the UK professional publishing industry of the decision to expand the text and data mining copyright exception. [HL1720]

Lord Callanan: The Government asked specific questions about impact in the consultation on AI and IP,

but received very limited quantitative evidence. An impact assessment will be published alongside the legislation when laid. The proposed exception will be targeted to limit negative impacts, and the government welcomes further evidence from rights holders on how to best achieve this.

Railway Network: Temperature

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment, if any, they have made of the options available to ensure the resilience of the National Rail Network at temperatures in excess of 40 degrees centigrade. [HL1994]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Department for Transport has plans in place and underway to adapt to and mitigate the risks of our changing climate. The Williams-Shapps Rail Plan includes a priority for long-term investment in climate resilience supported by smarter forecasting, planning and technology.

On Wednesday 20 July, Network Rail announced the launch of a new taskforce led by independent experts to investigate and make recommendations on how the railway can develop its approach to resilience during hot weather following this week's unprecedented heatwave.

The review will consider four key areas, each led by an independent expert in their field. Three of these areas will be focused on gathering insights from other countries and making comparisons with international rail networks that are more used to dealing with extreme heat and fluctuations in temperature.

As part of the review, the taskforce will:

- investigate options to ensure the railway infrastructure can continue to function safely and reliably during very hot weather; and
- explore operational standards, policies and practices which could allow services to continue to operate safely and without highly limiting speed restrictions in extreme heat.

Network Rail (NR) and the wider rail industry are working to improve our resilience to climate change impacts and other disruptive events. They are developing a risk-based approach to resilience planning, enabling a focus on those risks and assets that are key to delivering safety and performance improvements for passengers and freight users in a cost-effective manner.

Many infrastructure operators, including Network Rail, consider the changing climate in their strategic planning and report on their preparedness under the Adaptation Reporting Power.

Railways: Finance

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect the Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline to be updated;

and why it has not been updated "on an annual basis", as set out in the Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline Autumn 2019 Schemes Update, published on 4 April 2019. [HL1914]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The forthcoming Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline (RNEP) update has been delayed to take account of the way the pandemic changed the way our railways are used. We need to ensure that the projects that we take forward reflect this changed shape of rail demand whilst remaining affordable. The Spending Review set out funding that allows us to continue to invest at record levels. It is important that we are able to provide as much clarity and certainty as possible and the forthcoming RNEP update will do this.

Railways: North of England

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the risk of (1) delay, and (2) cost increases, to the Transpennine Route upgrade as a result of changing ministerial priorities. [HL2037]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU) is a major and complex rail project. Ministerial priorities outlined in the Integrated Rail Plan means TRU will now provide further benefits to rail users on the main corridor across the Pennines. Full electrification, digital signalling, reduction of journey times and better access at stations will lead to an improved experience for passengers and freight users. The department, working with stakeholders regularly assess any risks to schedule and increase in costs and will continue to do so throughout the development of the programme to ensure that public money is spent effectively.

Railways: Standards

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans, if any, they have to assess the effectiveness of train operators in providing accurate and timely information for passengers during the disruption to services on 18, 19 and 20 July. [HL1995]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Evidence for the provision of accurate and timely information, including during the period 18, 19 and 20 July, will contribute to the determination of a performance-based fee for eligible rail operators. The evidence in this area and across other metrics of performance is independently evaluated before a performance score and fee is determined.

Railways: Temperature

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure railways are resilient to future heatwaves. [HL1943]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: My Department has plans in place and underway to adapt to and mitigate the risks of climate change. The Williams-Shapps plan for Rail includes a priority for long-term investment in climate resilience supported by smarter forecasting, planning and technology.

Network Rail (NR) and the wider rail industry are also working to improve our resilience to climate change impacts and other disruptive events. They are developing a risk-based approach to resilience planning, enabling a focus on those risks and assets that are key to delivering safety and performance improvements for passengers and freight users in a cost-effective manner.

Lessons from the hot summers over the past few years have been implemented including a maintenance programme preparing infrastructure for summer. The experience of the last few days has shown that there is more to do. Our infrastructure is not designed to operate in these extreme conditions, so NR have prioritised safety. Engineering standards are being reviewed with a view to enabling assets to better handle hotter temperatures (and other changes in the climate) and lessen the need to reduce services to manage risk.

NR's Third Adaptation Report details the wide range of other adaptation work undertaken since 2015 and lays out action plans going forward.

At an industry level the Rail Resilience Project (RRP), which commenced its delivery phase in April 2022, will deliver on the conclusions and nine recommendations from a cross-industry Rail Resilience Review undertaken in Q1 & 2 2021. It will deliver for the first time a coherent industry doctrine across the full emergency management lifecycle. It will be supported by guidance on implementation, a full competency framework for emergency management professionals and structures to improve governance across the industry and engagement with partners.

Redundancy Pay

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what payments will be made to each of the ministers who recently resigned from the Government; and whether they have plans to introduce legislation to make employers liable for similar payments to those who voluntarily resign from the (1) public, and (2) private, sector. [HL1631]

Lord True:

Under the provisions of the Ministerial and other Pensions and Salaries Act 1991, a former minister only becomes entitled to a severance payment in the event that they are not appointed to another relevant office within three weeks of stepping down.

The provision of severance payments is set out in legislation, passed by Parliament, that has been applied by successive administrations over a significant period. Severance pay reflects the unpredictable nature of ministerial office.

Refugees

Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtsett

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many refugees who had entered the UK through safe and legal routes were granted leave to remain (1) every year since 2015, and (2) broken down by route. [HL1698]

Lord Harrington of Watford: Information on safe and legal routes is available via the link below:

Nationality and Borders Bill: Factsheet Safe and Legal Routes - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

The Home Office publishes data on resettlement in the 'Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release'. Data on the number of refugees resettled by resettlement scheme are published in table Asy_D02 of the asylum and resettlement detailed datasets. Information on how to use the datasets can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook. The latest data relates to Q1 2022.

The resettlement data in Asy_D02 does not cover data relating to the individuals relocated under the Afghanistan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) or Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP). The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) opened in January 2022, with the first eligible person relocated under the scheme on 6 January 2022.

The Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) launched on 1 April 2021, and provisional data show more than 7,000 people have been relocated under the scheme so far. Statistics on these schemes will be included in future editions of Immigration Statistics.

Further details on the ACRS and ARAP can be found in the *FACTSHEET: ACRS and other routes and Operation Warm Welcome: progress update*.

Data on the number of Family Reunion visas granted are published in table Fam_D01 of the asylum and resettlement detailed datasets. Information on how to use the datasets can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook. The latest data relates to Q1 2022.

The Home Office publishes data on the number of applications and grants of leave on the British National Overseas (BN(O)) route in the "How many people come to the UK each year (including visitors)?" topic and underlying datasets of the 'Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release'.

Information on future Home Office statistical release dates can be found in the 'Research and statistics calendar'.

Information on the number of visas granted under the Ukraine Family Scheme and the Homes for Ukraine Scheme can be found in our published data on the GOV.UK webpage: Ukraine Family Scheme and Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme (Homes for Ukraine) visa data - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Asy_D02 - Table [asylum-applications-datasets-mar-2022 - copy 2.xlsx]

Family Reunion Visas - Table Fam_D01 [family-reunion-visa-grants-datasets-mar-2022 - Fam D01.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-07-12/HL1698>

Refugees: Deportation

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government which other countries in addition to Rwanda they are considering as destinations to deport refugees from the UK. [HL1813]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The term 'Deportation' refers to a legally defined subset of returns which are enforced either following a criminal conviction, or when it is judged that a person's removal from the UK is conducive to the public good. The term 'deportation' does not therefore apply to relocations under the Migration and Economic Development Partnership with Rwanda.

We are unable to comment on discussions that may be being held with other countries. We are, however, committed to working closely with international partners as we act on fixing our broken asylum system. This ground-breaking Partnership is a model that could be replicated elsewhere, and we are always willing to work with partners around the world to tackle this joint challenge.

Refugees: Europe Agreements

Asked by Baroness Hoey

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to maintain their suspension of the Council of Europe Agreement on the Abolition of Visas for Refugees; whether they have expressed concerns to the government of Ireland about refugees obtaining international protection in Dublin having reached the Irish Republic by means of the European Agreement, then using the Common Travel Area to reach the United Kingdom to seek asylum; and what discussions they have had with the government of Ireland regarding their willingness to suspend the Agreement. [HL1898]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Her Majesty's Government suspended the Council of Europe Agreement on the Abolition of Visas for Refugees ("the Agreement") in 2003 on public order and security grounds. The government of Ireland suspended operation of the Agreement for a period of 12 months on 19 July 2022.

The United Kingdom and Ireland have a regular dialogue relating to the operation of the Common Travel Area where issues such as border security risks and shared immigration challenges are discussed. Those who fear persecution should claim asylum in the first safe country they reach – this is the fastest route to safety.

Ireland is a safe country and, as such, it would not be appropriate for individuals to travel to the UK from Ireland to claim asylum.

Refugees: Nigeria

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to deport refugees who arrive in the UK to Nigeria. [HL1453]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: We recently signed a migration agreement with Nigeria which will see both countries work together to tackle shared migration issues, including doing more together to support legal migration, tackle illegal migration and speed up the deportation of foreign criminals.

This agreement is different from our Migration and Economic Development Partnership with Rwanda which allows for asylum seekers, not refugees, whose claims are inadmissible to be relocated to Rwanda.

Refugees: Syria

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to expand the terms of reference of the UK Resettlement Scheme; whether the Scheme is available to (1) British nationals, and (2) the children of British nationals, in detention camps in North-East Syria; and if so, what plans they have to communicate this to such individuals. [HL1603]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The UK is a global leader in resettlement. Since 2015, we have resettled more than 27,000 refugees through safe and legal routes direct from regions of conflict and instability - around half of whom were children.

There are currently no plans to expand the terms of reference of the UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS). The UK will continue to work with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to receive referrals of vulnerable refugees from across the globe.

Our approach is to resettle refugees in line with the global need identified by UNHCR who will refer individuals in accordance with their standard resettlement categories and policies, based on an assessment of protection needs and vulnerabilities.

British nationals or their dependants would not be referred for resettlement under the UKRS. However, the government does seek to facilitate the return of British orphans and unaccompanied minors from North-East Syria where feasible, subject to national security concerns, and on a case-by-case basis. In line with this policy, the government has already facilitated the return of several orphaned and unaccompanied British children to the UK and will continue to do so.

Refugees: Ukraine

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Harrington of Watford on 13

July (HL1433), why the response given in that answer does not also appear on the gov.uk page 'Afghan citizens resettlement scheme'. [HL1765]

Lord Harrington of Watford: We are looking into updating the page in question so that UK phone numbers are not needed in order to receive updates on to the gov.uk page on Afghan Resettlement.

Religious Freedom

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Manchester

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the outcomes of the International Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief on 5 to 6 July; and what steps they are taking, if any, to review their strategy on freedom of religion or belief following that Conference. [HL1741]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The International Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) hosted by the UK brought together governments, faith and belief leaders and civil society for discussions to address challenges to the enjoyment of the right to FoRB, and had positive outcomes. The Conference gave a platform to those persecuted for their religion or belief. Forty-seven governments, international organisations and other entities pledged action in support of FoRB. Thirty four countries joined the UK in signing up to a set of statements found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/international-ministerial-conference-on-freedom-of-religion-or-belief-2022-conference-statements>. The Foreign Secretary outlined FCDO progress in implementing recommendations from the Bishop of Truro's report and noted the breadth of religion and belief groups that suffer from persecution. I [Lord Ahmad] announced new UK funding for support for defenders of FoRB, as well as funding and expertise for countries prepared to make legislative changes to protect FoRB.

Following the Conference, the UK Government remains committed to defending FoRB for all, and promoting respect between different religious and non-religious communities. Promoting the right to FoRB is one of the UK's longstanding human rights priorities, and as other human rights are, FoRB will continue to be considered in relevant Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office external and internal thematic or country strategies.

Rented Housing

Asked by Lord Goddard of Stockport

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the future demand for homes to rent. [HL1796]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: The English Housing Survey provides information on housing stock. The proportion of Private Rented Sector (PRS) households has remained relatively stable for nearly a decade. The PRS was 19% of stock in 2013-14, increased

to 20% in 2015-16 and 2016-17 and then went back to 19% thereafter.

We continue to monitor the Office for National Statistics rental price statistics as an indicator of demand and will evaluate the impact of the private rented reforms on the sector.

Rented Housing: Standards

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Chelmsford

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the upcoming Renter's Reform Bill will include a cost cap for bringing homes up to the Decent Homes Standard, like there is with the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard. [HL1840]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: We are continuing to develop the policy on introducing a decent homes standard in the private rented sector and will consider the potential for cost caps as part of our consultation and engagement with stakeholders.

Retail Trade: Sales

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to address falling retail sales. [HL1715]

Lord Callanan: The Government recognises that the rising cost of living has presented additional financial challenges to many consumers, reducing their spending power and impacting retail sales.

On 26th May, the Government announced a Cost of Living package, providing over £15bn of support targeted particularly at those with the greatest need. This package builds on the over £22bn already announced, bringing total government support for the Cost of Living to over £37bn this year.

The Retail Sector Council continues to work on the strategic issues facing the sector.

Right to Buy Scheme: Housing Associations

Asked by Lord Goddard of Stockport

To ask Her Majesty's Government what impact assessment they have carried out on the proposals to extend the Right to Buy of housing association properties on the availability of associations' (1) stock, and (2) homes to rent. [HL1793]

Asked by Lord Goddard of Stockport

To ask Her Majesty's Government what additional funds they will make available to Housing Associations to enable them (1) to increase their stock of properties ahead of proposals on extending Right-to-Buy, and (2) to offset the impact on their balance sheets. [HL1852]

Lord Harrington of Watford: This Government is committed to the Right to Buy, which has helped nearly

two million social housing tenants to realise their dream of home ownership.

We want housing association tenants to have the same opportunity as local authority tenants and to be able to enjoy the benefits that homeownership brings. That is why the Prime Minister announced on the 9 June 2022 the intention to extend the Right to Buy to housing association tenants.

We will work closely with the housing association sector on the design of the scheme, including consideration of the impact on housing association stock levels and their balance sheets. We will make sure that the scheme is designed in a way that enables the homes sold to be replaced one-for-one, and we will produce a full impact assessment of this policy in due course, ahead of the scheme's introduction.

Roads: Weather

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what advice they have given to local authorities on preventing roads melting in the extreme heat. [HL1901]

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what additional funding they are providing to local authorities to enable them to prevent roads melting in the extreme heat. [HL1902]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: As per section 41 of the Highways Act 1980, it is up to the respective local highway authority to decide how best they maintain their highway network, including during heatwaves, based on local needs and priorities. The Road Surface Treatments Association (RSTA), who work closely with the Department for Transport and are members of the UK Roads Liaison Group (UKRLG), advised highway authorities and road operators that applying granite grit dust on the road surface during high temperatures can help keep the highway network from melting excessively.

The Government has committed £915 million per year for local highways maintenance for local highway authorities outside London and Mayoral Combined Authorities, for the three years starting 2022-23. This represents a highways maintenance funding level consistent with 2021/22. The three-year settlement will enable local highway authorities to plan more effectively for managing their highways assets, preventing potholes and other road defects across their local highway networks.

Road Traffic Control

Asked by Baroness Merron

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to deliver traffic reduction schemes that (1) incentivise people to switch to cleaner modes of transport, and (2) support those who might struggle to

get around without a car, to access (a) newer, and (b) less polluting, vehicles. [HL1975]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Local authorities are responsible for delivering traffic reduction schemes as they are best placed to make the decisions that will deliver the practical changes required. However, as set out in the Transport Decarbonisation Plan, the Government is committed to supporting places reduce emissions from transport while making journeys better.

We have invested in a range of schemes to help local transport authorities to manage demand on their roads. This includes £4.8 billion of funding via the Levelling-Up Fund, which so far through Round One has allocated funding for 19 places to deliver transport-based projects with decarbonisation benefits. We have also supported innovative trials through the Future Transport Zones programme, such as the Transport for West Midlands Mobility Credits pilot which is helping Coventry residents switch their old, more polluting, cars for local bus and rail services as well as car clubs or bike share schemes.

In April, we published the Local Authority Decarbonisation Toolkit, which provides practical support to authorities to help encourage sustainable travel whilst also providing accessible transport services and access to newer and less polluting transport options, like car clubs. We will continue to support local authorities to drive improvements through their Local Transport Plans.

School Meals

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what data they collect on the compliance of relevant secondary schools with the Requirements for School Food Regulations 2014. [HL1619]

Baroness Barran: The department does not collect any centralised data on compliance with the school food standards in schools across England. However, the department is running a joint project with the Food Standards Agency (FSA) to design and test a new approach to help ensure compliance with the school food standards in England. This will help to build new evidence and understanding around this.

School Meals: Processed Food

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps, if any, they plan to take in response to the study in the journal *Nutrients*, published on 21 July, which found that ultraprocessed food consisted of 82 per cent of the calories in packed school lunches and 64 per cent in school meals, with calories provided by these foods being 61 per cent of primary pupils' diets and 77 per cent of secondary pupils'. [HL1991]

Baroness Barran: A diet high in processed foods is often high in calories, salt, saturated fat and sugar and low in fibre, which is associated with an increased risk of

developing chronic diseases. The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) is delivering a range of measures to help address the exposure and consumption of food and drink products high in saturated fat, sugar or salt, including restricting the advertising and promotions of these products, and a sugar reduction and wider reformulation programme.

Further to the work being done by OHID, the department encourages all schools to have a whole school approach to healthy eating, promoting healthy eating and providing healthy, tasty and nutritious food and drink. Compliance with the school food standards is mandatory for all maintained schools, including academies and free schools. The Requirements for School Food Regulations 2014 is available here:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/1603/contents/made>.

Schools may use the school food standards as a guide when writing their packed lunch policies. For example, confectionery is banned throughout the school day and foods high in salt, sugar and fat are restricted. Schools can also confiscate items that are banned by the school rules. More information is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation>.

The department also wants to make it easier for parents to feel confident that they are preparing healthy, balanced lunches for their children. Further information such as recipes, tips and swap suggestions for parents are available on the Change4Life website, which is available here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/change4life-beta/healthier-lunchboxes>.

Schools: Admissions

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government, how many children have moved schools in each year for the past five years in England; and how many school moves were due to families being forced to move due to no fault evictions. [HL1805]

Baroness Barran: Every year, the department collects and publishes data on the total number of applications and offers made for entry into primary and secondary school. The information is summarised in the table below and can be found at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/secondary-and-primary-school-applications-and-offers>.

Number of applications received for primary and secondary schools in England between 2018/19 and 2022/23					
	2018/19	2019/20	2022/21	2021/22	2022/23
Primary	608,180	608,957	612,146	580,771	576,147
Secondary	582,761	604,496	600,352	605,206	614,059

Parents may also request for their child to move schools at any other point, for example, due to a house move. These are called 'in year' admissions. The department

does not hold data on the total number of children admitted to school in-year each year. The department does not hold data on the number of school moves as a result of no fault evictions.

Schools: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Taylor of Bolton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations the Department for Education has made to either (1) the UK Health Security Agency, or (2) the Department of Health and Social Care, to encourage school staff to be given priority for COVID-19 booster vaccinations. [HL1940]

Baroness Barran: Identifying priority groups for vaccinations are clinical decisions taken by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), informed by advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccinations and Immunisation (JCVI). JCVI advised that the primary objective of the 2022 autumn booster programme is to augment immunity in those at higher risk from COVID-19 and thereby optimise protection against severe COVID-19, specifically hospitalisation and death, over winter 2022/23.

Other school staff are currently not eligible to receive an autumn booster as part of this programme. However, staff who meet the central eligibility criteria are entitled to a free flu vaccination through the NHS, and schools can choose to provide flu vaccines for their staff through their occupational health services.

Science: Finance

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the change in the level of collaborative scientific funding for UK organisations if the UK does not participate in the Horizon Europe programme, and (2) reports that the UK is losing out on £100 million as a result of not participating; and what assessment they have made of the reasons for any reduction in funding. [HL1632]

Lord Callanan: The UK stands ready to formalise our association to EU programmes at the earliest opportunity but the EU are not honouring commitments made when the TCA was agreed.

Spending Review 21 confirmed that if we are unable to associate to Horizon Europe, the funding allocated will go to other UK Government-funded R&D programmes, including those to support international partnerships.

The Government is providing the fastest ever sustained uplift in R&D funding, reaching £20 billion per annum by the end of the SR period – £5 billion more than 2021/2022 with HM Treasury committed to £22 billion in 2026/2027 as part of our commitment to the target of UK economy-wide R&D investment reaching 2.4% of GDP by 2027.

Sexual Offences: Private Rented Housing

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the consultation on sex for rent will be launched; and whether stakeholders and relevant organisations will be invited to take part. [HL1872]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government is clear that exploitation through 'sex for rent' has no place in our society.

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, there are two existing offences which can be used to prosecute this practice. In 2019, the CPS amended their guidance on 'Prostitution and Exploitation of Prostitution' to include specific reference to the potential availability of charges for offences under sections 52 and 53 of the 2003 Act when there is evidence to support the existence of 'sex for rent' arrangements. Both offences carry a maximum penalty of seven years' imprisonment.

In January 2021, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) authorised the first charge for 'sex for rent' allegations under Section 52. The individual against whom these allegations were made pleaded guilty to two counts of inciting prostitution for gain earlier this year.

These offences have also been included in Schedule 7 of the Online Safety Bill, which reflects the most serious and prevalent illegal content online. This will mean that services will be under a duty to proactively search for, remove and limit people's exposure to this content, while also protecting users' freedom of expression.

We are committed to improving the protection of vulnerable people from exploitation. In the cross-Government Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, which was published in July 2021, we committed to working with partners inside and outside of Government on the issue of sex-for-rent.

We have also committed to launching a public consultation on the issue of sex-for-rent to hear as wide a range of views as possible on the nature of sex-for-rent; the existing response and what more could be done to prevent exploitation and protect victims. We are working to launch this consultation soon.

Shaun Pinner

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they last had contact with Shaun Pinner, currently being held by the Donetsk People's Republic; what assessment they have made of his health; and what conversations are ongoing concerning his release. [HL1931]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are actively working on the cases of British Nationals who have been detained in non-government held areas of Ukraine, including Shaun Pinner, and are providing support to their families. The UK Government is in constant contact with the Ukrainian authorities on this issue as a matter of urgency

and is fully supportive of all their efforts to secure the release of the detainees. We have raised concerns with the Russian authorities about British detainees and reminded them of their obligations under International Humanitarian Law.

Shipbuilding: Finance

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made in implementing the Home Shipbuilding Credit Guarantee Scheme. [HL1870]

Lord Callanan: The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is working with partners to introduce a Home Shipbuilding Credit Guarantee Scheme, which is now in the final stages of development.

Shipping: Education

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to increase the uptake of maritime qualifications in (1) schools, and (2) colleges. [HL1869]

Baroness Barran: Provision is already available for both those under 16 in a school setting seeking to understand more about the industry, and for post-16 students studying at level 2 and 3, who may be seeking to undertake a qualification to progress into an apprenticeship or into employment and wish to take a qualification which will involve a work-based setting.

There are around 40 qualifications focusing on aspects of maritime studies approved for funding for young people and adults, some of which are available only to adults. Others are available to those of school age or in further education. There are 12 apprenticeship standards in this sector approved for delivery, including Maritime Mechanical and Electrical Mechanic, Marine Surveyor, and Seafarer.

The Careers & Enterprise Company is supporting schools and colleges to embed best practice in the delivery of careers information, advice, and guidance, so young people are aware of the full range of training and careers available to them and have access to a broad range of employers and workplaces, including those in the maritime sector. This will be delivered through the national roll-out of Career Hubs, Careers Leaders training, and the Enterprise Adviser Network.

The department has recently established the UK Shipbuilding Skills Taskforce (UKSST). This group is made up of representatives from across industry, trade unions, and training providers. It will look to address skills barriers in the sector by utilising and catalysing existing skills provisions. As part of this, existing provision will be reviewed to see how it can best meet the present skills demand and future needs. UKSST's work will be driven by the needs of stakeholders from across the sector.

Shipping: Exhaust Emissions

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made on implementation of the Clydebank Declaration since the agreement at COP26; and what support they are providing to businesses to develop green shipping corridors. [HL1830]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Clydebank Declaration for Green Shipping Corridors was launched at COP26 to help drive the decarbonisation of the maritime sector and 24 countries have now signed the Declaration.

Establishing green shipping corridors is a multi-year endeavour, and we are now moving, with other States and the industry, to explore and then deliver corridors involving the UK. As a first step, we recently invited funding proposals for detailed feasibility studies on UK green corridors under the second round of the Clean Maritime Demonstration Competition which was launched in May. The winners of the competition will be announced in due course.

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made in establishing clean maritime clusters. [HL1832]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Department for Transport (DfT) commissioned a study into maritime clusters. The work was delivered by E4Tech and UMAS in 2020 and identified a wide range of UK locations where innovation strengths could combine with local demand for clean solutions, providing a foundation for maritime clusters. Based on this work, clusters are being considered as one option as part of wider initiatives such as Centre for Smart Shipping, which forms a part of the newly established UK Shipping Office for Reducing Emissions (UK SHORE).

UK SHORE is a £206m Research and Development investment programme, which will work in partnership with industry to tackle the technological barriers to maritime decarbonization and speed the transition of the UK toward a decarbonised maritime sector. It will deliver a suite of interventions transforming the UK into a global leader in the design, manufacture and operation of clean maritime technology – boosting both jobs and economic growth.

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made in establishing clean maritime clusters. [HL1865]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Department for Transport (DfT) commissioned a study into maritime clusters. The work was delivered by E4Tech and UMAS and identified a wide range of UK locations where innovation strengths could combine with local demand for clean solutions, providing a foundation for maritime clusters. Based on this work, clusters are being considered as one option as

part of wider initiatives such as Centre for Smart Shipping, which forms a part of the newly established UK Shipping Office for Reducing Emissions (UK Shore).

UK SHORE is a £206m Research and Development investment programme, which will work in partnership with industry to tackle the technological barriers to maritime decarbonization and speed the transition of the UK toward a decarbonised maritime sector. It will deliver a suite of interventions transforming the UK into a global leader in the design, manufacture and operation of clean maritime technology – boosting both jobs and economic growth.

Shipping: Innovation and Research

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what proportion of the research and innovation budget they have allocated to support the maritime sector in (1) this, and (2) the next, financial year. [HL1867]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The proportion of DfT's R&D budget allocated to the maritime sector is 15.4% in 22-23, and 22.4% in 23-24.

Shipping: Private Sector

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what (1) support, and (2) incentives, they are providing for private-sector investment in (a) low-carbon maritime fuels, (b) engine technologies, and (c) energy storage facilities. [HL1831]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The UK has set a net zero by 2050 target across the economy. The 2019 Clean Maritime Plan and the 2021 Transport Decarbonisation outline the Department for Transport's pathway to net zero in the UK maritime sector. The department is taking a two-pronged approach to maritime decarbonisation: a comprehensive policy and regulatory programme; and R&D funding and investment. In January 2022, we extended the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation (RTFO), making renewable fuels of non-biological origin for marine use, such as hydrogen and ammonia, eligible for incentives under the RTFO.

Between March 2021 and March 2022, we ran the Clean Maritime Demonstration Competition (CMDC), which allocated over £23m of research and development funding to 55 projects across the UK. The competition included projects focusing on low-carbon fuels, engine technologies and storage facilities.

In March 2022, we announced a further £206m research and development funding for a newly established UK Shipping Office for Reducing Emissions (UK SHORE), which will deliver a suite of interventions aimed at addressing different barriers to maritime decarbonisation over a range of technology-readiness levels. This will help unlock an industry-led transition to clean maritime.

Sizewell C Power Station

Asked by Lord Marlesford

To ask Her Majesty's Government which minister from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy will be making the decision as to whether Sizewell C will be granted a Development Consent Order. [\[HL1743\]](#)

Lord Callanan: The decision on the application for development consent for Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station was announced on 20 July 2022. The then Parliamentary Under Secretary of State Paul Scully took the decision on behalf of the Secretary of State who had confirmed that his delegation of the decision-making powers to Minister Scully in respect of the Sizewell C application should continue, notwithstanding Minister Scully's move to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

Asked by Lord Marlesford

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to make a decision on (1) whether to grant Sizewell C a Development Consent Order, or (2) any commitment of public investment in Sizewell C, before the appointment of a new Prime Minister; and what assessment they have made of the conformity of any such decisions with the Prime Minister's statement to Cabinet on 6 July that major fiscal decisions should be left for the next Prime Minister. [\[HL1773\]](#)

Lord Callanan: The Secretary of State granted development consent for the Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station on July 20th 2022, after thorough consideration of all relevant information.

Commercial negotiations on the project are strictly separate from consideration of the application for development consent. To date these negotiations have been constructive, but are ongoing and no decisions have been made.

Small Businesses: Ethnic Groups

Asked by Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted

To ask Her Majesty's Government what statistics they collate on ethnicity in small and medium sized enterprises; and if they collate any such statistics, what are the numbers by ethnicity of (1) staff, and (2) owners, of small and medium sized enterprises, by sector, according to the most recent figures. [\[HL1723\]](#)

Lord Callanan: The Longitudinal Small Business 2020 Survey reported that 5% of SME employers were minority ethnic group led (MEG-led), defined as having a person in sole control of the business or having a management team with at least half of its members from ethnic minority groups.

MEG-led SME employers were more likely in information and communication (9%), accommodation and food (7%) sectors and less likely in primary (0%) and education sectors (1%).

Further reported about 4% of businesses with no employees were MEG-led. MEG-led businesses were most likely to be in the transport and storage (7%), information and communications and health (both 6%) sectors, and least likely in primary, education and accommodation and food services sectors (all 1%).

Further details can be found on the GOV.UK website. Data for 2021 will be published in August 2022.

Small Businesses: VAT

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to introduce VAT relief for small businesses until the end of the tax year. [\[HL1717\]](#)

Baroness Penn: The UK's VAT registration threshold is set at £85,000, which is the highest in the OECD and as compared to EU Member States. This keeps the majority of UK businesses out of VAT altogether. Whilst the Government keeps all taxes under review, it was announced at Budget 2021 that the VAT threshold will be maintained at its current level of £85,000 until 31 March 2024.

Social Security Benefits: Overpayments

Asked by Lord Allen of Kensington

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that families who receive no fault overpayments of benefits are not faced with additional costs when repaying the overpayments; and whether those steps include updating guidance to benefits staff, including around the discretion in the Social Security Administration Act 1992 and Her Majesty's Treasury guidelines Managing Public Money, to make a presumption of non-recovery of such overpayments during the current period of rising cost of living. [\[HL1819\]](#)

Baroness Stedman-Scott: The latest published statistics show that in 2021/22, Universal Credit Official Error overpayments were at their lowest recorded level of 0.7%, having fallen for the 3rd year in a row.

Where overpayments do occur, Section 105 of The Welfare Reform Act 2012 states that any overpayment of Universal Credit, new style JSA or ESA in excess of entitlement, is recoverable.

The Department therefore seeks to recover benefit overpayments accordingly, but remains committed to doing so without causing undue financial hardship.

We have lowered the standard cap on deductions from Universal Credit twice over recent years, firstly from 40% to 30% in October 2019 and then to 25% in April 2021. We also ensure that any deductions are taken in priority order, which effectively means that higher priority deductions, such as utilities payments, are taken first, with debt only taking up the balance of the overall cap.

Where a person feels they cannot afford the proposed rate of recovery, and the debt has not arisen as a result of fraud, they are encouraged to contact us. The Department can work with them, reviewing their financial circumstances and in most instances, agreeing a temporary reduction in their rate of repayment. We have recently extended the time period for any reduced repayment of this type to remain in place.

Whilst the Department does have discretion to waive recovery of debt, guidance is clear that this is only intended to happen in exceptional circumstances.

This guidance, which can be found at Chapter 8 of the Benefit overpayment recovery guide on the GOV.UK website, was updated in 2022 to ensure that all appropriate factors are taken into account when a case is being considered for waiver. We are looking to strengthen Operational guidance to ensure agents are aware of when a case is appropriate for waiver consideration.

Social Security: Veterans

*Asked by **Baroness Sherlock***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of (1) the social security system, and (2) the Department for Work and Pensions' services, in supporting armed forces veterans in making the transition to civilian life. [[HL1751](#)]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: Most veterans make a very successful transition back to civilian life. 83 percent of those supported by the Career Transition Partnership gain employment within 6 months of discharge – higher than the employment rate of the wider population.

This success will mostly be down to the efforts of the individuals concerned. But support from the Career Transition Partnership and DWP Work Coaches and Armed Forces Champions, as well as others, and wider partnership working to support veterans, may also play a part.

Soil

*Asked by **The Earl of Caithness***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park on 24 March (HL6855), in which he said that stakeholder engagement on the outline of Soil Health Action Plan for England (SHAPE) would start in the spring, and that stakeholder engagement not yet having commenced, when they will announce the timeline for that engagement. [[HL1996](#)]

Lord Benyon: The Government recognises the importance of stakeholder engagement for the development of a strategic and coherent plan for soil health measures. Further details regarding planned engagement with stakeholders on the importance of soil and the actions needed to ensure it remains a healthy and sustainable resource, will be published soon.

South Africa: AfriForum and Community Development

*Asked by **Lord Hain***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of South Africa about (1) the activities of AfriForum, and (2) community relations in that country. [[HL1897](#)]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Our High Commission in Pretoria regularly engages with the Government of South Africa and civil society regarding social issues including community relations. There have been no meetings with the Government of South Africa to discuss the activities of AfriForum.

South Africa: Contraceptives

*Asked by **Baroness Northover***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support women's access to contraceptive services in South Africa. [[HL1909](#)]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Women's empowerment and gender equity are top priorities for the UK Government in South Africa, including through work on skills and youth employment, and tackling gender based violence. While the UK does not currently provide support to women's access to contraceptive services in South Africa, the UK has supported 9.5 million women and girls to use modern methods of contraception since 2018 through the Women's Integrated Sexual Health (WISH) programme, across 17 African countries.

South Sudan: Armed Conflict

*Asked by **Lord Alton of Liverpool***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the 2022 Elie Wiesel Act report to Congress by the US State Department on the situation in Abyei, an area contested between Sudan and South Sudan, published on 15 July. [[HL1958](#)]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: We note the Elie Wiesel Act report to Congress by the US State Department and share the concerns highlighted regarding intercommunal violence in Abyei. The UK has taken a leading role in supporting the wider processes for justice and accountability in Sudan and South Sudan, and will continue to call for accountability for crimes committed in Abyei. We urge the Governments of Sudan and South Sudan to regularise meetings of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee and agree joint security mechanisms to improve stability in Abyei until its final status can be agreed. Most recently, the UK Special Representative to Sudan and South Sudan discussed Abyei with Sudanese authorities on 28 June in Khartoum, and will discuss this issue with the South Sudanese authorities in Juba later this month.

The UK Government is heavily engaged with the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) and we welcomed their mandate renewal from the UN Security Council on 12 May. We join the UN Secretary-General's call for the African Union to intensify its mediation efforts to help reach a political solution for Abyei. We will continue to work with the UN and the humanitarian community in Sudan and South Sudan to address humanitarian needs in Abyei and call on the governments of both countries to allow humanitarian actors to deliver aid without hindrance.

South Sudan: Environment Protection

*Asked by **Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking through (1) international diplomacy, (2) Official Development Assistance, or (3) other means, to protect the Sudd swamp in South Sudan. [HL1827]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The UK Government continuously monitors political, economic and environmental developments in South Sudan, including the possibility of dredging in the Sudd wetlands. UK Government officials have raised the Sudd wetlands with the Government of South Sudan where appropriate, most recently at a meeting between the UK's Special Representative for Sudan and South Sudan and the South Sudanese Ambassador to the UK on 22 June.

More broadly, tackling climate change and biodiversity loss is a UK Government international priority, as identified in our Integrated Review and International Development Strategy. We are committed to using our leadership to support the protection of natural wealth in South Sudan, including through funding projects for wildlife conservation, poverty reduction and building community resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Stamp Duty Reserve Tax

*Asked by **Lord Taylor of Warwick***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to remove stamp duty on purchases of (1) shares in investment trusts, (2) real estate investment trusts, and (3) venture capital trusts. [HL1754]

Baroness Penn: The Government has no current plans to remove stamp duty on purchases of shares in investment trusts, real estate investment trusts, and venture capital trusts, but it keeps all taxes under review.

Moreover, and as originally announced at Budget 2020, the Government is undertaking a review of the UK's Funds Regime. This covers both tax and relevant areas of regulation and is considering reforms which hold the potential to enhance the UK's attractiveness as a location for asset management and for funds in particular.

As part of this review, the Government carried out a 'Call for Input' in 2021. The Government's response to the Call for Input, which was published on 10 February

2022, set out a plan for further work, and can be found on the gov.uk website.

Syria: Refugees

*Asked by **Lord Hylton***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the establishment of a joint Lebanon, Syria, and UN Committee to oversee the return of refugees to Syria; and what plans they have to call on the Committee to ensure that all returns are voluntary. [HL1625]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK recognises the generosity shown by neighbouring countries in the region who are hosting so many Syrian refugees. Whilst we hope that Syrian refugees will ultimately be able to return home, the UK agrees with the UN judgement that conditions in Syria do not currently allow this. In light of recent announcements from the Government of Lebanon on its plan for the return of Syrian refugees, we urge that international law is respected and that any refugee returns are voluntary, safe and dignified. This is only likely to happen at scale in the event of a credible and inclusive political settlement. The UK will continue to support Syria's neighbours to deal with the destabilising impact of the Syrian conflict, equipping host communities, and enabling Syrian refugees to remain in the region until they can return safely to Syria.

Syria: Turkey

*Asked by **Lord Hylton***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to President Erdogan of Turkey threatening to launch a new military operation in Syria, what plans they have to suspend military cooperation with Turkey until the operation is renounced. [HL1627]

Baroness Goldie: In light of recent public statements, we are concerned about any potential military escalation in Northern Syria, which risks impacting the stability and security of the region, international efforts to defeat Daesh, and the already fragile humanitarian situation.

We continue to monitor the situation closely and to assess what impact military escalation in Syria might have.

Teachers: Recruitment

*Asked by **The Marquess of Lothian***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether initial teacher training (ITT) applications this year, particularly for (1) physics, (2) computing, and (3) modern languages, are sufficient for secondary school recruitment requirements; whether they estimate an increase in the shortage of qualified teachers; and if so, what steps they are taking to address the shortage. [HL1393]

Baroness Barran: Departmental targets, as estimated by the Teacher Workforce Model (TWM), are for 20,945 secondary teacher trainees to start their initial teacher training (ITT) in autumn 2022 (including high performance ITT (HPITT) trainees)[1]. Currently, there have been 10,106 acceptances to postgraduate secondary courses in England, (excluding HPITT acceptances)[2].

The computing TWM trainee target is 1,145 (including HPITT) and currently there have been 264 acceptances (excluding HPITT).

The modern foreign languages TWM trainee target is 2,140 (including HPITT) and currently there have been 618 acceptances (excluding HPITT).

The physics TWM trainee target is 2,610 (including HPITT) and currently there have been 361 acceptances (excluding HPITT).

The department has put in place a range of measures for trainees in 2021 and 2022, including bursaries worth up to £24,000 and scholarships worth up to £26,000, to encourage talented trainees to apply to train in key subjects such as chemistry, computing, mathematics, and physics. The department is offering a £15,000 bursary in design and technology, geography, and languages, including ancient languages, and a £10,000 bursary for biology trainees.

The department is exploring new ways to recruit trainee teachers in subjects where there is a shortage. For example, we will introduce a new scholarship to attract the most talented language graduates to the profession. We are also piloting a new ITT course designed to support more engineers to teach physics. The course is being delivered by six providers, each of whom have been supported with grant funding from the department.

To make teaching here even more attractive to the best teachers from around the world, the department will introduce a new relocation premium to help with visas and other expenses.

[1] [Postgraduate initial teacher training targets: 2022 to 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/postgraduate-initial-teacher-training-targets-2022-to-2023)

[2] Acceptances- up to 20th June 2022 excluding HPITT (sum of recruited and pending conditions), [Initial teacher training application statistics for courses starting in the 2022 to 2023 academic year - Apply for teacher training - GOV.UK \(apply-for-teacher-training.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/initial-teacher-training-application-statistics-for-courses-starting-in-the-2022-to-2023-academic-year)

Telephone Services

Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay on 20 July (HL1533), whether existing landline connections will remain available to all those that wish to retain them. [HL2035]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: The requirements set out in the Schedule to the Electronic Communications (Universal Service) Order 2003 mean certain providers

(currently BT and KCOM) must continue to meet reasonable requests to provide a connection capable of allowing end-users to make and receive local, national and international telephone calls and facsimile.

Accordingly, landline-only connections will remain available for customers who wish to retain them.

Increasingly, telecommunications providers are moving customers away from the traditional telephone network to a digital alternative, which means it is likely these customers will increasingly be provided with their landline services over a fixed voice-over-IP connection.

Telephone Services: Universal Service Obligation

Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay on 20 July (HL1533), whether the Electronic Communications (Universal Service) Order 2003 requires the provision of landlines to all (1) homes, (2) businesses, and (3) public sector organisations, in the UK. [HL2034]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: The Electronic Communications (Universal Service) Order 2003 requires at least one designated universal service provider to meet all reasonable requests by end-users for connection at a fixed location to the public electronic communications network and for access to publicly available telephone services over that communications network. The connection must be capable of allowing end-users to make and receive local, national and international telephone calls and facsimile.

These connections are available to residential premises, businesses and public sector organisations where a reasonable request is made.

Temperature: Health Hazards

Asked by Baroness Merron

To ask Her Majesty's Government how the (1) UK Health Security Agency, and (2) NHS, are monitoring heat-related illnesses; and how other government departments are assessing the broader impacts of the hot weather on public services. [HL1874]

Lord Kamall: The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) coordinates national syndromic surveillance of public health indicators for heat-related illnesses in individuals presenting to the National Health Service. This includes calls to NHS 111 and the ambulance service; online assessments; accident and emergency attendances; and general practitioner consultations.

The UKHSA supports the cross-Government response by providing information on impacts observed across the health system due to high temperatures. This provides advice to Government agencies at regular Ministerial meetings to co-ordinate the response and improve

preparedness for future events. In addition, UKHSA publishes an online annual heat mortality report following each summer, which shows the impacts over a continuous period.

Temperature: Public Sector

Asked by Baroness Merron

To ask Her Majesty's Government (1) how, and (2) when, they will report on the broader impacts of the hot weather on public services. [\[HL1875\]](#)

Lord True: All departments are responsible for monitoring and reporting on impacts from the extreme heat in their own sectors.

For example, Network Rail are communicating regularly with the public on rail disruption.

However, impacts related to the extreme heat were limited by the early and accurate weather forecasting by the Met Office, the effective preparedness and response at the local and national levels, and the positive response of the British public to warnings and advice issued by all sectors to take pressure off vital public services.

Trade Agreements

Asked by Lord Clement-Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of their decision to expand the text and data mining exception on future trade negotiations; and in particular, with regard to upholding the UK intellectual property framework internationally. [\[HL1727\]](#)

Lord Callanan: The Government supports an effective international intellectual property framework which supports creative and innovative businesses at home and abroad. The UK has recently agreed trade deals with countries including Japan, Australia and New Zealand which commit them to higher standards on copyright. We will continue to advocate for and uphold high international standards for intellectual property, and any reforms to UK copyright law will comply with our international obligations.

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they measure the success of Free Trade Agreements. [\[HL2054\]](#)

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The Department for International Trade (DIT) has committed to publishing a biennial free trade agreement (FTA) monitoring report, starting in 2023, covering key monitoring indicators.

DIT has also committed to publishing comprehensive ex-post evaluation reports for the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement, the UK-Australia FTA and UK-New Zealand FTA within 5 years of these agreements entering into force. These reports will use a mixed methods analytical approach

aiming to show how, why, and for whom the agreements and their implementation have generated outcomes.

Trade Promotion

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they measure the success of the Prime Minister's Trade Envoys. [\[HL2055\]](#)

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The Prime Minister's Trade Envoys showcase the UK's world class expertise and promote the UK as the destination of choice for inward investment.

Trade Envoys add value to the efforts of HMG in their respective markets, through the soft power influence they bring in developing relationships with key influencers and feedback has been very positive. Trade Envoys are one part of the Department for International Trade's support for British businesses seeking to export and win contracts overseas and we do not separate out the impact of Trade Envoys from our broader measures as part of the Outcome Delivery Plan.

Trade Promotion: India

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what were the criteria for selecting the countries to which the Prime Minister has appointed trade envoys; and when all national priority countries will have trade envoys appointed. [\[HL1949\]](#)

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Prime Minister has appointed a trade envoy to India; and if not, why not. [\[HL1950\]](#)

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to appointing four trade envoys to India to ensure that all economic regions are covered. [\[HL1951\]](#)

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The Trade Envoy Programme supports British businesses and attracts investment into the UK. The programme works in collaboration with other trade promotion activities and focuses on emerging and high growth markets where additional senior interactions can be valuable, or larger economies where multiple interactions at different levels are effective.

We are regularly reviewing countries and markets to identify where the appointment of a Trade Envoy can be of greatest benefit to the trade and investment aims of the UK with the Prime Minister ultimately making that decision. Consideration is also given to appointing multiple trade envoys where this could be advantageous to the UK.

The Prime Minister has not appointed a Trade Envoy to India.

The UK remains committed to strengthening its long, positive and wide-ranging trading relationship with India which was worth £24.3 billion in 2021 by continued ministerial engagement and dialogue including the desire to secure a Free Trade Agreement.

The Department for International Trade (DIT) analyses suitable countries, regions, and markets to identify where the appointment of a Trade Envoy can be of greatest benefit to the trade and investment aims of the UK, with the Prime Minister ultimately making the decision to appoint.

DIT following a review will make recommendations of the future size and scope of the Trade Envoy programme, including for India, to the next Prime Minister in due course.

Trade Promotion: India

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the (1) status, and (2) timetable, for the conclusion of a free trade agreement with India; and whether the (a) sectorial, and (b) regional, diversity in India will be included in that agreement. [HL1952]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: HM Government will soon conclude round 5 of negotiations, which is taking place from 18th -29th July. Both countries have committed to concluding the majority of talks on a comprehensive trade deal by Diwali in October 2022. We are in detailed discussions on text and are confident in our progress as we work towards a comprehensive deal for the whole of the United Kingdom.

We are negotiating with the Indian Ministry of Commerce and Industry, responsible for negotiating trade deals on behalf of the Government of India.

Trade Promotion: Prime Minister

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the criteria for selection to be a Prime Minister's trade envoy. [HL1947]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: Prime Minister's Trade Envoys are drawn from both Houses and from across the political spectrum. As unpaid roles they are chosen based on relevant skills, experience and their appetite to undertake the role. Experience can be related to a particular market or UK industry knowledge, or their Government-to-Government experience, as well as willingness and an ability to undertake some international travel.

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the priority objectives of a Prime Minister's trade envoy. [HL1948]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: Prime Minister's Trade Envoys support the UK's economic growth and help businesses take advantage of the overseas opportunities arising from our global trade agenda.

They champion Global Britain and promote the UK as a destination of choice for inward investment across all regions of the UK, helping to level up the country by supplementing the UK's existing trade relations in their respective markets, working with our regional Trade Commissioners and global network to promote British business across the globe.

Turing Scheme

Asked by Baroness Coussins

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the success rate of schools applying to participate in the Turing Scheme. [HL1728]

Asked by Baroness Coussins

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the success rate of applications to the Turing Scheme by disadvantaged pupils and students from each (1) sector of the education system, and (2) region. [HL1729]

Asked by Baroness Coussins

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the regional breakdown of successful applications to the Turing Scheme from (1) schools, (2) further education, and (3) universities. [HL1730]

Baroness Barran: The success rate of schools applying to participate in the Turing Scheme over the two years the scheme has operated are:

- 2021/22 academic year: 131 schools applied, 114 were successful, 87% success rate, which equated to 5,139 individual student placements.
- 2022/23 academic year: 157 schools applied, 70 were successful, 45% success rate, which equated to 4,721 individual student placements.

The Turing Scheme is demand-led and competitive. There has been significant interest in the Turing Scheme this year, with many more applications than last year. All successful applications received funding, but may not have received their full requested budget due to high demand.

Successful applications are required to score at least 50 marks out of 100, and at least 50% in each of four qualitative criteria which are:

- Global Britain
- Levelling up
- Positive impact and value for money
- Project planning

All applications were independently assessed by sector experts, who ensured all successful projects met the quality standards required. 70 applications failed on the levelling up criterion. Others had less well-developed projects. This could be due to some of those applicants having less experience in designing projects of this type and securing funding for them. 67% of applicants for the 2022/23 academic year were new applicants, and 71% of applicants that failed were new applicants.

The Turing Scheme has a strong focus on supporting levelling up by providing opportunities for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. In the 2021/22 academic year, 48% of 41,000 approved placements for all sectors, which includes schools, further education/vocational education and training, (FE/VET) and higher education (HE), were for participants from disadvantaged backgrounds. 52% of 38,000 approved placements for all sectors in the 2022/23 academic year are for participants from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Turing Scheme uses a range of measures based on sector standards across the UK to define what we mean by participants from disadvantaged backgrounds. These are listed in full on the Turing Scheme website: <https://www.turing-scheme.org.uk/about/widening-access/>.

The tables below show the percentage of placements allocated for participants from disadvantaged backgrounds, by sector, for the 2021/22 and 2022/23 academic years.

Table 1: Placements by sector for the 2021/22 academic year				
Sector	HE	FE/VET	Schools	Totals
Total no. of participants	28,997	6,888	5,139	41,024
No. of participants from disadvantaged backgrounds	13,817	3,843	2,053	19,713
% of participants from disadvantaged backgrounds	47.60%	55.80%	39.90%	48.10%
Table 2: Placements by sector for the 2022/23 academic year				
Sector	HE	FE/VET	Schools	Totals
Total no. of participants	23,986	9,605	4,721	38,312
No. of participants from disadvantaged backgrounds	12,356	5,554	2,022	19,932

% of participants from disadvantaged backgrounds	52%	58%	43%	52%
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A full regional breakdown of schools, FE/VET, and HE is provided on the Turing Scheme website: <https://www.turing-scheme.org.uk/funding-opportunities/funding-results-2022-23/>. Data is subject to change until grant agreements are in place.

Asked by **Baroness Garden of Frognal**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the success rate of schools applying to the Turing Scheme. [HL1732]

Asked by **Baroness Garden of Frognal**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the percentage of disadvantaged participants by sector in the Turing Scheme. [HL1733]

Asked by **Baroness Garden of Frognal**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to simplifying the application forms for the Turing Scheme. [HL1734]

Baroness Barran: The success rate of schools applying to participate in the Turing Scheme over the two years the scheme has operated are:

- 2021/22 academic year: 131 schools applied, 114 were successful, 87% success rate, which equated to 5,139 individual student placements.
- 2022/23 academic year: 157 schools applied, 70 were successful, 45% success rate, which equated to 4,721 individual student placements.

All applications were independently assessed by sector experts, who ensured all successful projects met the quality standards required. 70 applications failed on the levelling up criterion. Others had less well-developed projects. This could be due to some of those applicants having less experience in designing projects of this type and securing applying for funding for them. 67% of applicants for the 2022/23 academic year were new applicants, and 71% of applicants that failed were new applicants.

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The tables below show the percentage of placements allocated for participants from disadvantaged backgrounds, by sector, for the 2021/22 and 2022/23 academic years.

Table 1: Placements by sector for the 2021/22 academic year

<i>Sector</i>	<i>HE</i>	<i>FE/VET</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>Totals</i>
Total no. of participants	28,997	6,888	5,139	41,024
No. of participants from disadvantaged backgrounds	13,817	3,843	2,053	19,713
% of participants from disadvantaged backgrounds	47.6%	55.8%	39.9%	48.1%

Table 2: Placements by sector for the 2022/23 academic year

<i>Sector</i>	<i>HE</i>	<i>FE/VET</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>Totals</i>
Total no. of participants	23,986	9,605	4,721	38,312
No. of participants from disadvantaged backgrounds	12,356	5,554	2,022	19,932
% of participants from disadvantaged backgrounds	52%	58%	43%	52%

A full breakdown is provided on the Turing Scheme website.

The application form for the Turing Scheme is framed around the main objectives of the scheme, requiring applicants to set out how their planned projects will support priorities, including Global Britain and levelling up. This year's application form entailed fewer questions than last year's, in response to feedback from applicants.

The department will keep engaging with stakeholders so that we can continue to develop the scheme in subsequent years, to ensure it delivers on its objectives, supports students to make the most of their international experiences, and is aligned with government priorities. This will include the application experience.

UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement

Asked by Lord Trees

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of their progress in meeting the

commitment in the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement to "ensure that ... sanitary and phytosanitary measures do not create unnecessary barriers to trade". [HL1757]

Lord Benyon: The Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) includes a sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) chapter which allows the UK and the EU to take a risk-based approach to our respective SPS border controls and provides a basis for cooperation on avoiding unnecessary barriers to trade. Officials meet their counterparts on a regular basis to discuss the SPS provisions of the TCA.

Where issues are raised, we are happy to pursue appropriate resolution. For example, through the provisions of the SPS Chapter, the UK is working with the EU to take forward electronic certification, which will facilitate trade through reducing delays and reducing business administration.

Ukraine: Armed Conflict

Asked by Lord Selkirk of Douglas

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 7 July (HL1116), what steps they will take, together with international partners, to seek restitution from the government of Russia for civilian populations in Ukraine which has resulted in (1) extensive loss of life, and (2) damage to buildings in that country. [HL1749]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Putin alone is responsible for the damage and destruction caused by his illegal war in Ukraine. This requires full and urgent reparation by Russia.

The UK Government is considering all options for seizing assets that could be used to support the people of Ukraine and contribute towards the reconstruction of their country, closely with international partners.

The Foreign Secretary announced (<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/ukraine-recovery-conference-foreign-secretarys-remarks-4-july-2022>) the UK vision for supporting Ukraine's Reconstruction and Development Plan at the Lugano Ukraine Recovery Conference (4-5 July) and the UK's commitment to host next year's 2023 Reconstruction Conference.

Ukraine: Defence Equipment

Asked by Lord Goddard of Stockport

To ask Her Majesty's Government which departmental budget funds the purchases of military equipment from third (1) nations, or (2) parties, for onward supply to Ukraine; and what is the current anticipated spend in 2022-23. [HL1964]

Baroness Goldie: Her Majesty's Treasury are funding all Ukraine associated procurement. The Department does not routinely release forecast spending figures and all spend in the current financial year will be captured and

published in the Department's Annual Reports and Accounts in due course.

Ukraine: Development Aid

*Asked by **Baroness Helic***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much Official Development Assistance funding originally earmarked for other countries has been reallocated to Ukraine. [HL1799]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Annex A to the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's (FCDO) Annual Report and Accounts show that the FCDO spent £103,424 in Ukraine in 2021-22. This was funded through the normal allocations process plus underspends which emerged elsewhere, mainly ODA-eligible operating expenditure. We cannot comment on other government departments' ODA allocations.

Ukraine: Refugees

*Asked by **Baroness Sugg***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the cost of hosting refugees from Ukraine for the calendar year 2022; and whether this cost will be borne by the Official Development Assistance budget. [HL1714]

Baroness Penn: The cost of hosting refugees from Ukraine for the calendar year 2022 will be determined by the number of arrivals by year end. As of 14 July, total arrivals of Ukraine Scheme visa holders in the UK are 95,400, of which 29,700 have arrived under the Ukraine Family Scheme and 65,600 have arrived under the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme.

Under the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme, the government is providing sponsors £350 per month per address for up to 12 months. Local Authorities will also receive an extra £10,500 for every arrival under this scheme. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has published Local Authority funding allocations for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland[1]. An extra tariff has also been agreed for children's education costs. Arrivals under both schemes have immediate entitlement to employment support, pensions, health provision, education and access to benefits.

Eligible costs will be reported as ODA and counted towards the 0.5% GNI ODA spending commitment. ODA eligible spend will be reported in the annual Statistics on International Development publication.[2]

[1]

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homes-for-ukraine-funding-march-to-may-2022>

[2]

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-on-international-development>

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

*Asked by **Lord Rosser***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 11 July (HL1285), how many individuals travelling in small boats across the English Channel they expect to arrive from France in (1) 2022, and (2) 2023. [HL1923]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office does not make forecasts of numbers crossing, given the multiplicity of variables involved.

*Asked by **Lord Rosser***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 11 July (HL1285), whether they consider as a matter of policy that all asylum seekers travelling to the UK from France have done so unlawfully and are therefore unable to claim asylum; if so, on what grounds; and how many individuals seeking asylum after crossing the English Channel in small boats have been granted asylum in each of the last five years. [HL1924]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Asylum seekers who travel to the UK from France either commit a criminal offence of entering the UK without leave under section 24(B1) of the Immigration Act 1971, or of arriving in the UK without an entry clearance under section 24 (D1), depending on their method of entry or arrival. In line with the Kakaei and Bani judgments, those who are rescued and brought ashore (the majority of those crossing the channel in small boats) are deemed to have arrived without permission

The Home Office are able to provide the total number of individuals seeking asylum after crossing the English Channel in small boats who have been granted asylum in each of the last four years, from 2018-2021. However are not able to provide information prior to this date as there were no small boat crossing attempts.

Universal Credit

*Asked by **Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of recipients of universal credit discouraged from taking employment by the low level of net financial benefit from being employed due to associated costs, such as transport and childcare, known as the "benefit trap". [HL1592]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: No such assessment has been undertaken.

UC recipients in work now benefit from a reduction in the UC taper rate from 63% to 55%, and for those eligible customers an increase in the work allowance by £500 per year meaning that working households will be able to keep more of what they earn and strengthening incentives to move into and progress in work.

The National Living Wage has risen from £8.91 to £9.50 an hour from 1 April. That means a pay rise for millions of the country's lowest paid workers – worth an increase of over £1,000 to the annual earnings of a full-time worker on the National Living Wage.

The Department is aware that for some UC claimants' childcare costs present challenges to entering employment. To support parents to become financially resilient by moving into work and progressing in work, eligible UC claimants can claim back up to 85% of their registered childcare costs each month regardless of the number of hours they work, compared to 70% in Tax Credits. This is up to the maximum amount of £646.35 per month for one child and £1,108.04 per month for two or more children. For families with two children, this could be worth over £13,000 a year.

This support is available to all lone parents and couples, regardless of the number of hours they work. For couples, both parents need to be in paid work to be eligible unless one of the allowable exceptions is met.

The UC childcare policy aligns with the wider government childcare offer in England and there are similar funded early learning offers in devolved nations. The Free Childcare offer provides 15 hours a week of free childcare in England for all 3- and 4-year old's and disadvantaged 2 year old's, doubling for working parents of 3 and 4 year old's to 30 hours a week.

The UC childcare element can be used to top up a claimant's eligible free childcare hours if more hours are worked and childcare required. This offer means that for some claimants' childcare costs should not present any barriers to entering work.

UC claimants who need help with upfront childcare costs to enter employment or significantly increase their working hours can apply for help from the Flexible Support Fund (FSF). This is a non-repayable payment that will pay their initial childcare costs directly to the provider up to the first salary received.

In order to achieve our long-term goals of driving up productivity and levelling up, we are supporting people in work to ensure they have the right skills and opportunities to progress out of low pay. Through providing right infrastructure we will support an ambitious and productive workforce suited to meet the UK's future demand.

Through a staged rollout from April 2022 onwards, 2.1m low paid Universal Credit claimants will be eligible for support to progress into higher paid work. This will be provided by work coaches and focus on career progression advice, such as considering skills gaps, identifying training opportunities, or looking for opportunities for the claimant to progress in their current role or in a new role. Jobcentres will be supported in this new role by a network of 37 Progression Champions across Great Britain who will spearhead the scheme. They will work with partners to address local barriers that limit progression, such as transport and childcare.

Universal Credit and Jobseeker's Allowance (Work Search and Work Availability Requirements - Limitations) (Amendment) Regulations 2022

*Asked by **Baroness Lister of Burtersett***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the letter from the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to the Chair of the Social Security Advisory Committee on 3 February, when they intend to complete their evaluation of the Universal Credit and Jobseeker's Allowance (Work Search and Work Availability Requirements – limitations) (Amendment) Regulations 2022; and whether the evaluation will take account of the Social Security Advisory Committee's letter to the Secretary of State on 23 June. [[HL1643](#)]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: We have achieved our Way to Work target of moving 500,000 claimants into work by the end of June. The Department is looking at how it might be able to evaluate different aspects of the campaign. The analysis is in ongoing development and the advice from SSAC will be considered.

Universal Credit: Children

*Asked by **Lord Allen of Kensington***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to abolish the two-child cap on claims for universal credit and child tax credit in order to assist families with the increased cost-of-living; and what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of the cap on meeting its original policy aim. [[HL1821](#)]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: There are no plans at this time to abolish the two-child cap on claims for universal credit and child tax credit.

Statistics on the policy to provide support for a maximum of two children are published every year. The latest stats for April 2022 were published on July 14. These can be found on the GOV.UK website.

Universal Credit: Debts

*Asked by **The Lord Bishop of Durham***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effect of government debt deductions on Universal Credit recipients' ability to afford essential items; and what steps they are taking to prevent debt deductions contributing to destitution as the cost of living increases. [[HL1961](#)]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: The Department has not made an assessment. However, DWP takes every care to recover benefit debt without causing undue financial hardship.

To that end we have lowered the standard cap on deductions from Universal Credit twice over recent years, firstly from 40% to 30% in October 2019 and then to 25% in April 2021.

We also ensure that any deductions are taken in priority order, which effectively means that higher priority deductions, such as utilities payments, are taken first, with debt only taking up the balance of the overall cap.

Where a person feels they cannot afford the proposed rate of recovery, and the debt has not arisen as a result of fraud, they are encouraged to contact us. When they do, we work with them, reviewing their financial circumstances and in most instances, agreeing a temporary reduction in their rate of repayment. We have recently extended the time period for any reduced repayment of this type to remain in place.

In exceptional circumstances, the Department does have discretion to waive recovery of debt. Guidance on this can be found in full at Chapter 8 of the Benefit overpayment recovery guide, on the GOV.UK website, which was updated in 2022 to ensure that all appropriate factors are taken into account when a case is being considered for waiver.

In recognition of the financial pressures people are currently facing the Government is providing over £15bn in further support, targeted particularly on those with the greatest need. This

package is in addition to the over £22bn announced previously, with Government support for the cost of living now totalling over £37bn this year.

*Asked by **The Lord Bishop of Durham***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what support they are providing to Universal Credit claimants who are in debt to become debt free. [HL1963]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: DWP staff provide benefit and employment support across Great Britain through our national network of Jobcentres, who work in partnership with a variety of organisations that offer local budgeting and debt advice support.

The Government is keen to ensure that everyone accesses the benefits they are entitled to, which is why we have just launched an eligibility checker that can be found on the GOV.UK website. DWP also funds the Money and Pensions Service that provides additional support to help people, particularly those most in need to improve their financial wellbeing. It provides access to high-quality money and debt advice through its Money Helper services and signposting to third party organisations best placed to help.

Universities

*Asked by **Lord Taylor of Warwick***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to encourage universities to advertise (1) subject drop-out, and (2) employment, rates for courses. [HL1656]

Baroness Barran: Students should be made fully aware of subject completion rates and graduate outcomes data, so that they can make meaningful decisions about what course to take and where to study.

On 1 July 2022, the department published guidance asking higher education providers to improve the transparency and consistency of advertising at provider and subject level. Published guidance is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transparency-in-advertising-for-higher-education-providers>.

We expect that providers will incorporate this data into any newly commissioned advertising, as it is right that applicants are made aware of it before they commit to applying for a particular course or institution.

Universities: Freedom of Expression

*Asked by **Lord Browne of Belmont***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the action required to safeguard universities as places of (1) free speech, and (2) challenging ideas. [HL1680]

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

The government supports free speech which generates rigorous debate and advances understanding.

It is the freedom to think independently, express and challenge ideas, and put forward lawful, new and controversial ideas, that makes our universities world-renowned. These are essential skills in a modern, forward-facing society. It is this freedom that the government strives to protect.

The Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill has been introduced for this reason. The bill will strengthen existing freedom of speech duties and directly address gaps within the existing law. The bill also applies the duties directly to students' unions and constituent colleges, including those at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

The changes will introduce clear consequences for breaches of the new duties and ensure that these principles are upheld.

The bill is currently passing through the House of Lords.

Vacancies: Advertising

*Asked by **Lord Taylor of Warwick***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to require salaries to be published on job advertisements. [HL1755]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: There is growing evidence to show that when salary information is not transparent, it has an impact on how people, particularly women and those from ethnic minorities, negotiate pay. This can ultimately result in lower starting salaries and smaller pay rises.

On International Women's Day this year, we called on all employers to provide salary information in all of their job adverts, and to stop asking about previous salary during recruitment.

In order to encourage and assist employers in taking these steps, we will build the evidence base on the impact of transparency, through a pilot study with businesses. We will also work with employers to develop a methodology to support them to adopt these measures.

Veterans: Civil Proceedings

Asked by Lord Browne of Belmont

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the adequacy of support available to veterans subject to ongoing historic investigations. [HL1678]

Baroness Goldie: The Ministry of Defence (MOD) is committed to supporting its people who act reasonably and in good faith in the course of their duties or work-related activities. All members of the Armed Forces, including the Reserve Forces, are entitled to legal support (regardless of the type of legal proceeding) at public expense where they face allegations that relate to actions taken during their employment or service, and where they were performing their duties. This is the case irrespective of the individual's length of service, the duration of any proceedings, and the length of time that has passed since the incident in question. The entitlement to legal support also applies to former service personnel, provided that the incident in question occurred while they were serving in the Armed Forces or employed by the MOD.

The MOD has also developed a comprehensive package of welfare support for veterans, including the establishment of the Army Operational Legacy Branch (AOLB) in 2020. The full range of legal and pastoral support available to veterans is set out in the Written Ministerial Statement made by the Secretary of State for Defence on 13 April 2021.

The MOD also works closely with the Office for Veterans' Affairs to ensure individuals can be signposted to the right additional support should they need it.

Visas

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will publish their review of Tier 1 (Investor) visas granted between June 2008 and April 2015. [HL1777]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The review of visas issued under the Tier 1 (Investor) route between 2008 and 2015 is being finalised and we aim to publish it in the near future.

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to extend the short-term study visa from six months to one year. [HL1927]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Under the new simplified immigration rules which came into effect on 1

December 2020, study for up to six months at an accredited institution is permitted under the visitor route.

The Short-Term Student (English Language) route remains open for those wishing to study an English Language course for 6 -11 months. Any other study of longer than 6 months should be undertaken using the Student or Child Student routes.

There are no plans to allow study of longer than six months on the visitor route.

Visas: Agriculture

Asked by The Earl of Leicester

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many short-term visas were granted for people working in the farming sector in (1) January, (2) February, and (3) March. [HL1697]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The most recent data available on the seasonal worker visa scheme is released quarterly and contained within published tables at: ([entry clearance detailed dataset Vis_D02](#) - attached).

It is worth noting that while most short-term jobs in the agriculture sector are under the seasonal worker visa, a small number may be on other visa types and not all seasonal worker visa jobs will relate to farming.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

entry clearance detailed datasets [entry-clearance-visa-outcomes-datasets-mar-2022 (1).xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-07-12/HL1697>

Visas: Applications

Asked by Baroness Helic

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the average waiting time for (1) all visa applications, and (2) visa applications from (a) Albania, (b) Bosnia and Herzegovina, (c) Kosovo, (d) Montenegro, (e) North Macedonia, and (f) Serbia. [HL1801]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Average waiting times are not published for a) Albania, (b) Bosnia and Herzegovina, (c) Kosovo, (d) Montenegro, (e) North Macedonia, and (f) Serbia. To capture the requested data would incur a disproportionate cost.

The processing times for visas can be found on the GOV.uk webpage:

- Out of country [Visa decision waiting times: applications outside the UK - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- In country [Visa decision waiting times: applications inside the UK - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

The Home Office's performance against its service standard by nationality can be found in our transparency data, which is attached and at the following link: [Visas and Citizenship data: Q1 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Transparency data [UKVI_VC_Transparency_Q1_2022.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-07-15/HL1801>

Asked by Lord Oates

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they plan to take to reduce the processing time for visas to enter the UK. [HL1911]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office is pursuing a programme of transformation and business improvement initiatives which will speed up decision making, reduce the time people spend in the system and reduce the numbers who are awaiting an interview or decision.

UKVI has recently reintroduced Priority Visa services for Visitor visa applications in the majority of overseas locations.

UKVI continues to prioritise urgent and compassionate cases where notified.

Asked by Lord Oates

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of extended visa processing delays on the UK's reputation as a place to do business. [HL1912]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office recognises there are ongoing delays to visa processing times, largely impacted by requirement to prioritise applications submitted for the Ukraine Schemes, and is working hard to reduce these as quickly as possible.

The GOV.UK webpage is updated regularly with details of average visa decision waiting times

- Out of country [Visa decision waiting times: applications outside the UK - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)
- In country [Visa decision waiting times: applications inside the UK - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Many business activities can be undertaken under our generous visitor route provisions, meaning non-visa nationals can undertake them without applying for entry clearance beforehand.

Visas: Dependants and Married People

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to reduce the current waiting times for (1) spousal, and (2) dependant, visa applications. [HL2053]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office had been prioritising Ukraine Visa Schemes applications in response to the humanitarian crisis caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Staff from other government departments, including DWP and HMRC, have been surged into the department to help with Ukraine work and enable normal visa routes to return to normal service levels in due course.

Visas: South Africa

Asked by Lord Oates

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the current average processing time, from application to decision, for UK visas for South African citizens. [HL1910]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: UKVI does not publish average processing times by location, however, the average visa decision waiting times by category, which is regularly updated, can be found on the GOV.uk webpage: [Visa decision waiting times: applications outside the UK - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Visual Impairment: Older People

Asked by Lord Low of Dalston

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to raise awareness of common eye conditions that affect elderly people, such as geographic atrophy, among clinicians and patients. [HL1971]

Lord Kamall: Regulated healthcare professionals are required to maintain their clinical knowledge through continued professional learning as part of their registration to practice.

In 2022, NHS England has developed 28 eye care related videos for patients, which include information on age-related macular degeneration, glaucoma and cataracts. These videos are shared by clinicians with patients, including the elderly and some have been promoted on social media.

NHS England provides online resources for clinicians and commissioners of eye care services through the Future NHS Eye Care Hub. The National Health Service also provides online information on a range of eye care conditions for patients and their carers, including age-related macular degeneration. The Department also participates in National Eye Health Week, to promote the importance of good eye health, the need for regular sight tests and the availability of free NHS sight tests for eligible groups, including those aged 60 years old and over

Warships: Repairs and Maintenance

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Exeter

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the announcement of the £55 million contract to regenerate HMS Quorn, a former Royal Navy mine-hunting vessel, what plans they have for further refurbishment of naval vessels to bolster NATO's maritime capability. [HL1850]

Baroness Goldie: There are currently no plans for the refurbishment of any former naval vessels.

The Royal Navy routinely sells its surplus units to key allies and partners as new capabilities are brought into service.

HMS Quorn is well suited to the Lithuanian Navy's requirements and will continue to support NATO maritime capability for many years to come.

Water Supply: Weather

Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what assessment they have made of the current level of water supply given the heatwave in parts of the UK; and what plans they have to deal with any shortage of supply. [HL1772]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Water companies are reporting that water storage levels are adequate for supply this summer. Water companies have a statutory duty to provide a secure supply of wholesome water at all times. They are legally required to have robust plans in place to maintain the supply of water in a range of hazards, including heatwaves.

Water companies use a range of measures to manage higher water demand expected during heatwaves and respond to any disruption. These measures include ensuring their networks are prepared, customer communications to help manage demand, rerouting of water via their networks, and the provision of alternative water supplies, for example via tanker deliveries. In the event of disruptions, water companies also maintain priority access registers, which vulnerable customers can register with for provision of bottled water.

The Government is communicating frequently with water companies to monitor their performance and reiterate the importance of maintaining supplies to customers.

Water: Sewage

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Storm Overflow Discharge Reduction Plan will be ready by 1 September 2022; and when it will be published. [HL1606]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: As set out in the Environment Act (2021), the Government will publish the Storm Overflows Discharge Reduction Plan by 1st September 2022.

Windrush Lessons Learned Review

Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect to complete the Home Office review of the 'compliant environment'. [HL1641]

Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to respond to the Wendy Williams report Windrush Lessons Learned Review: progress update, published on 31 March; and what mechanisms they plan to put in place to monitor future

progress in implementing the findings of the Lessons Learned Review. [HL1642]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: In response to Recommendation 2 of the Windrush Lessons Learned Review, Wendy Williams returned to the Department in September 2021 to review our progress in implementing the recommendations of that Review and the commitments we made in the Comprehensive Improvement Plan. Her Progress Update was published in March this year.

Wendy concludes that there is no doubt the Department has risen to the challenge she set for us, and she acknowledges there are several areas where very good progress has been made. Wendy also rightly holds us to account where we have not made sufficient progress and we know there is more to do.

The progress update does not include new recommendations and we will continue to drive forward progress on Wendy's original 30 recommendations. We have laid the foundations for radical change in the department and a total transformation of culture. We are committed to long-lasting meaningful improvement of how the Home Office delivers.

Turning to the review of the compliant environment – recommendation 7 of the Review – evaluation of these measures individually and cumulatively will be an ongoing process. The compliant environment is made up of a complex set of measures. The approach to evaluation is staged, delivering a range of outputs at different times as is standard practice in establishing an evaluation. I can offer an assurance that we will not wait to make changes where they are needed and policies will be kept under review.

Working Conditions: Temperature

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to set upper-temperature limits for workplaces. [HL1886]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: Workplace temperature is one of the potential hazards that employers should address to meet their legal obligations under health and safety law.

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 place a legal obligation on employers to provide a 'reasonable' temperature in indoor workplaces. Detailed guidance for employers on workplace temperature and thermal comfort is available on the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) website. This guidance includes information on how to undertake a thermal comfort assessment and specific measures that can be taken to improve thermal comfort.

Responsibility to make workplaces safe and healthy lies with employers, who should consult with employees or their representatives to establish sensible means to cope with high temperatures.

No maximum workplace temperature exists because every workplace is different. No meaningful upper limit can be imposed because in many indoor workplaces extreme temperature is not seasonal, but is created by work activity, for example, in a glass works or foundry. In such environments factors other than air temperature, including radiant temperature, humidity and air velocity, become more significant and the interaction between them becomes more complex with rising temperatures. However, it is still possible to work safely provided appropriate controls are present.

HSE regularly reviews and, where necessary, refreshes the guidance published on its website.

Yazidis: Genocide

Asked by Baroness Kennedy of The Shaws

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the Yazidi Justice Committee State Responsibility and the Genocide of the Yazidis, published on 6 July; and what steps they plan to take in response. [\[HL1634\]](#)

Asked by Baroness Kennedy of The Shaws

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by the Yazidi Justice Committee State Responsibility and the Genocide of the Yazidis, published on 6 July, what plans they have to prevent any acts in contravention of the Genocide Convention from being carried out against the Yazidis. [\[HL1635\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We note the Yazidi Justice Committee's report on "State Responsibility and the Yazidi Genocide". The UK is supporting the Government of Iraq to take the necessary actions to secure justice for victims of Daesh's crimes in Iraq, including the Yazidis. The UK advocated strongly for the passing of the Yazidi Survivors Law in March 2021 and continues to advocate for the work of the Directorate of Yazidi Affairs, which is responsible for providing reparations to survivors and supporting judicial bodies hold perpetrators to account. UK Ministers regularly raise the importance of full implementation of the Yazidi Survivors law with the Government of Iraq and Kurdistan Regional Government, most recently by me in the week 4 July. In parallel, we have also provided £2 million to the UN Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Daesh (UNITAD).

Asked by Baroness Kennedy of The Shaws

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by the Yazidi Justice Committee State Responsibility and the Genocide of the Yazidis, published on 6 July, what plans they have to use dispute resolution mechanisms such as the International Court of Justice to ensure that (1) Syria, (2) Iraq, and (3) Turkey, adhere to their responsibilities under the Genocide Convention. [\[HL1636\]](#)

Asked by Baroness Kennedy of The Shaws

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the Yazidi Justice Committee State Responsibility and the Genocide of the Yazidis, published on 6 July; and in particular, the conclusion that Syria failed in its obligation to (1) prevent, and (2) punish, genocides against the Yazidis; and what steps they are taking to hold Syria to account. [\[HL1637\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We note the findings from the Yazidi Justice Committee report. The UK is supporting the Government of Iraq to take the necessary actions to secure justice for the Yazidi people and many other victims of Daesh's crimes. We regularly emphasise the need for dialogue and cooperation between Turkey and Iraq, including the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, to combat terrorism, ensure regional security, and protect civilians including religious and ethnic minorities.

We will continue to use our position at the UN, including as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, and our leadership of the regular Syria resolutions at the UN Human Rights Council to draw international attention to the ongoing human rights violations and abuses in Syria, to raise situations of concern and to deploy all appropriate tools available to the UN in dealing with potential mass atrocities. Our focus is always on securing an end to violence, protecting civilians and calling for accountability.

Asked by Baroness Kennedy of The Shaws

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by the Yazidi Justice Committee State Responsibility and the Genocide of the Yazidis, published on 6 July, what steps they will take if Syria does not punish the perpetrators of genocide resident in that country; and what plans they have, if any, to urge the UN Security Council to refer Syria to the International Criminal Court. [\[HL1638\]](#)

Asked by Baroness Kennedy of The Shaws

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by the Yazidi Justice Committee State Responsibility and the Genocide of the Yazidis, published on 6 July, what steps they are taking to urge Syria to enact domestic legislation to ensure that the Genocide Convention is upheld in that country. [\[HL1639\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is committed to highlighting the appalling violations of international humanitarian and human rights law in Syria and to pursuing accountability for the most serious crimes. We use our position at the UN General Assembly, the UN Security Council and our leadership of the regular Syria resolutions at the UN Human Rights Council to draw international attention to the ongoing human rights violations and abuses in Syria, and consistently call for Syria to abide by international human rights conventions and norms. The UK Government supports efforts to

pursue accountability for the most serious crimes committed in Syria, including through the UN Commission of Inquiry and the International Impartial and Independent Mechanism with which we signed a Memorandum of Understanding in March this year. These bodies were established with the express purpose of

inquiring into and investigating potential war crimes. The UK has previously voted at the UN Security Council to refer the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court but such action has been blocked by Russia and China.

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