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

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Written Statements

Monday, 10 October 2022

Cabinet Committees

[HLWS298]

Lord True: My Rt Hon Friend the Prime Minister has made the following statement:

Today I am publishing an updated Cabinet Committee list. I have placed a copy of the new list in the Libraries of both Houses.

Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Bill

[HLWS296]

Lord Callanan: My Right Honourable friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department has today made the following statement:

The Government is today introducing the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Bill, as committed to in the Queen's Speech at the start of this Parliamentary session. Building on the recently enacted Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Act 2022, the measures in this new, significant Bill enable us to bear down further on kleptocrats, criminals and terrorists who abuse our open economy, strengthening the UK's reputation as a place where legitimate business can thrive while driving dirty money out of the UK.

The UK is at the forefront of global efforts to tackle illicit finance and economic crime. There have already been a number of important strides forward in the effort to confront and address economic crime in recent years, including

- being the first G20 country to establish a public register of domestic company beneficial ownership in 2016 (the People with Significant Control Register);
- the introduction of new powers in the Criminal Finances Act 2017 to include Unexplained Wealth Orders and Account Freezing Orders;
- allocating £400m through the Spending Review and new Economic Crime Levy to support law enforcement over the next three years, as well as a £63m Spending Review settlement over the next three years for implementation of Companies House's transformation programme;
- the publication of the Economic Crime Plan in 2019 and the progress made against it by both the public and private sector;
- establishing the National Economic Crime Centre to co-ordinate the law enforcement response to economic crime and the Combatting Kleptocracy Cell in the National Crime Agency to focus on targeting corrupt elites and their assets in the UK; and
- most recently, passing the expedited Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Act.

The Economic Crime landscape is constantly evolving, and we cannot be complacent about the threat. That is why we are bringing forward this further legislation to help tackle these problems and transform our fight against illicit finance.

The key elements of the Bill include:

- Broadening the Registrar's powers so that the Registrar becomes a more active gatekeeper over company creation and custodian of more reliable data, including new powers to check, remove or decline information submitted to, or already on, the companies register.
- Introducing identity verification requirements for all new and existing registered company directors, People with Significant Control, and those delivering documents to the Registrar.
- Providing Companies House with more effective investigation and enforcement powers and introducing better cross-checking of data with other public and private sector bodies.
- Tackling the abuse of limited partnerships (including Scottish limited partnerships) by strengthening transparency requirements and enabling them to be deregistered.
- Creating powers to more quickly and easily seize and recover cryptoassets.
- Creating new exemptions from the principal money laundering offences to reduce unnecessary reporting by businesses carrying out transactions on behalf of their customers.
- Enabling businesses in certain sectors to share information more effectively to prevent and detect economic crime.
- Providing new intelligence gathering powers for law enforcement.

These new measures will tackle economic crime, including fraud and money-laundering, by delivering greater protections for consumers and businesses, boosting the UK's defences, and allowing legitimate businesses to thrive. They will also protect our national security, by making it harder for kleptocrats, criminals and terrorists to engage in money laundering, corruption, terrorism-financing, illegal arms movements and ransomware payments. And they will support enterprise by enabling Companies House to deliver a better service for over four million UK companies, maintaining our swift and low-cost routes for company creation and improving the provision of data to inform business transactions and lending decisions across the economy.

This Bill forms a key part of the wider Government approach to ensure that law enforcement and the private sector have the tools needed to help tackle economic crime, sitting alongside the key provisions in the Online Safety Bill which will tackle online fraud, as well as the upcoming Second Economic Crime Plan and Fraud Action Plan.

This Bill has been developed in close partnership with law enforcement agencies, as well as with the financial sector, professional and business groups, and civil society organisations. This reflects the breadth of the measures in the Bill, the nature of the threats posed and the importance of working across sectors to tackle economic crime.

The Government remains committed to tackling economic crime and illicit finance, and to strengthening the business environment across all of the UK. We will continue to work with the Devolved Administrations on these measures and the formal Legislative Consent Motion process.

Energy Update

[HLWS292]

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

Energy Prices Support Package

Following the Prime Minister's announcement on 8 September, yesterday the Government published further details of the support we are offering to people and businesses in the face of soaring energy prices. This package of unprecedented assistance for the whole UK provides the certainty families and business owners need to help them manage their energy bills.

Details of the Energy Price Guarantee for domestic consumers and the Energy Bill Relief Scheme for business and non-domestic properties are available on gov.uk. The Chancellor of the Exchequer will set out more details of the costs of the Government's support as part of his fiscal statement on 23 September.

We have designed the schemes to be simple for energy consumers. Families and eligible businesses do not have to take action or apply for support, energy suppliers will automatically apply the appropriate reduction via their energy bill. Households will receive an equivalent level of financial support wherever they are in the UK. The same is true for businesses across the UK too.

The Energy Price Guarantee will ensure that a typical household in Great Britain pays an average £2,500 a year for their energy from 1 October 2022 for the next two years. Households in Northern Ireland will see equivalent benefits on the energy bills. On average usage, a household in Great Britain will save £1,000 a year. This is in addition to the already announced £400 Energy Bills Support Scheme for households across the UK. The most vulnerable UK households will also continue to receive £1,200 of support. For consumers in Great Britain who pay for their energy through a monthly, quarterly or other regular bill, the Energy Price Guarantee will be applied when their bill is calculated. The Guarantee limits the amount the bill payer can be charged per unit of gas or electricity, so the exact bill amount will continue to be influenced by how much energy is used.

The Energy Bill Relief Scheme will provide protections for all businesses, voluntary sector and public sector organisations in Great Britain which face excessively high energy bills over the winter period, whether they are on existing fixed price contracts agreed on or after 1 April 2022, signing new fixed price contracts, variable or deemed tariffs or flexible purchase contracts. To administer support, the Government has set a Supported Wholesale Price – expected to be £211 per MWh for electricity and £75 per MWh for gas, less than half the wholesale prices anticipated this winter – which is a discounted price per unit of gas and electricity. Suppliers will pass the reduction in the wholesale price through to their customers.

The Energy Bill Relief Scheme will run initially for 6 months covering energy use from 1 October 2022 until 31 March 2023. There will be a review of the operation of the scheme, to be published in three months' time. This review will consider how best to offer further support to customers who are the most vulnerable to energy price increases. These are likely to be those who are least able to adjust, for example by reducing energy usage or increasing energy efficiency.

A similar scheme will be established in Northern Ireland, providing a comparable level of support. We intend to provide more information on the comparable support for non-domestic customers in Northern Ireland by the end of September.

The scheme for domestic consumers will be different, because of the different way the electricity and gas market operates in Northern Ireland. But it will provide households with an equivalent level of support as for those in Great Britain. Households do not need to take any action to receive this support although it may take a little longer than for Great Britain for relief to take effect. However, the savings will be applied to energy used from October onwards so that households get the same overall benefit as those in Great Britain. The Energy Price Guarantee limits the amount you can be charged per unit of gas or electricity, so households' exact bill will continue to be influenced by how much energy is used.

Households in Northern Ireland will also receive the £400 discount on their bills through the Northern Ireland Energy Bills Support Scheme, which will offer the same level of support as for households in Great Britain. We aim to provide this £400 discount for Northern Ireland as soon as possible.

A comparable scheme to the Energy Bill Relief Scheme will be in place for businesses and other non-domestic customers in Northern Ireland. This will follow a similar structure to the GB scheme. We intend to provide more information on the comparable support for non-domestic customers in Northern Ireland by the end of September.

As the Prime Minister said on 8 September, the Government is bringing forward emergency legislation to underpin the delivery of our support package. We will introduce a Bill immediately after Parliamentary Recess. It will include measures for the GB Energy Price Guarantee for domestic consumers and Energy Bill Relief

Scheme for businesses and non-domestic properties so all of GB receives equivalent support; and enable the delivery of comparable schemes in Northern Ireland. It will provide powers to enable low carbon generators to move onto fixed prices to end the situation where electricity prices are set by the marginal price of gas ensuring consumers pay a fair price for their energy.

Contingent Liabilities

I have laid before Parliament a Departmental Minute describing contingent liabilities arising from the Energy Price Guarantee. 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 regret that because of the urgency of establishing this scheme before 1st October, I have not been able to follow the usual timelines for issuing notice at least 14 parliamentary sitting days before the liability begins to be incurred.

The Treasury has approved the scheme in principle. I will continue to update Parliament on this scheme.

New Oil and Gas Licensing

We are scaling up renewables, nuclear, and lower carbon energy sources, to boost Britain's energy security in the long term, and reduce our exposure to high fossil fuel prices set by global markets outside our control. While we do this, there will continue to be ongoing demand for oil and gas over the coming years during this transition, with oil and gas needed to maintain the security of the UK's energy supply. Making the most of our own domestic resources under the North Sea will make us less dependent on foreign imports.

In light of Putin's illegal invasion of Ukraine and weaponisation of energy, strengthening our energy security is an absolute priority, and – as the Prime Minister said – we are going to ensure the UK is a net energy exporter by 2040. To get there we will need to explore all avenues available to us through solar, wind, oil and gas production - so it's right that we've lifted the pause to realise any potential sources of domestic gas.

In 2021, it was decided that a climate compatibility checkpoint should be put in place, so that compatibility with the UK's climate objectives is assessed as part of the decision on whether or not to endorse continued oil and gas licensing rounds.

In December 2021, a consultation on the design of this checkpoint was launched, running until the end of February 2022. A large number of detailed and thoughtful responses were received. The HM Government response, which is being published today, engages with many of the arguments put forward, and sets out the Government's position on these. HM Government has also designed a checkpoint which takes the responses to the consultation into account; a document setting out this design and the tests to be included in the checkpoint is also being published today.

Having reviewed the results of these tests in the context of a 33rd licensing round, it has been decided that a 33rd licensing round is compatible with the UK's climate objectives.

The Government understands that the North Sea Transition Authority will shortly be launching a new licensing round for oil and gas exploration. This round could result in the award of more than 100 licences to developers, strengthening the UK's vital offshore oil and gas sector, putting more UK gas on the grid for longer, and bolstering the future energy security of the UK.

Shale Gas Extraction

The current pause (moratorium) on shale gas extraction was put in place on the basis that HM Government would only support shale gas exploration if it could be done in a safe and sustainable way, and that it would be led by the science on whether this was possible. The stated policy aim was to minimise disturbance to those living and working nearby, and to prevent the risk of damage.

Much has changed, however, since 2019.

In April this year, HM Government commissioned the British Geological Survey to advise on the latest scientific evidence around shale gas extraction, to assess progress in the scientific understanding which underpins government policy, and to allow ministers to consider next steps. Having considered their advice carefully, HM Government is publishing this report today.

The report makes clear that forecasting the occurrence of felt seismic events remains a scientific challenge for the geoscience community. It also makes clear that to improve our understanding we need more exploratory sites to gather the necessary data.

Geomechanical modelling has been an important tool in the United States for this purpose, but requires accurate mapping of sub-surface faults, for which more data is required in the UK. There have only been three test wells which have been explored for shale gas in the UK to date.

On the wider geopolitical stage, Putin's invasion of Ukraine and the resulting restrictions on gas supply to Europe have impacted on global energy prices and the energy security of our neighbours and allies. This emphasises the need for 'home grown' sources of energy to reduce our reliance on imports.

The Government remains committed to net zero by 2050, but we have to get there, and to get there we are going to need oil and gas. And domestic sources of gas clearly have a lower climate impact than shipping Liquefied Natural Gas by tankers halfway across the world.

Under these circumstances, HM Government considers it appropriate to pursue all means for increasing UK gas production, including shale gas extraction. The Government is therefore lifting the pause on shale gas extraction and will consider future applications for Hydraulic Fracturing Consent with the domestic and global need for gas, and local support for developments, in mind.

While HM Government will always try to limit disturbance to those living and working near to sites, tolerating a higher degree of risk and disturbance appears to us to be in the national interest given the circumstances described above. With this in mind, it is important that the policy relating to shale gas extraction reflects this. HM government will be reviewing this aspect of shale gas policy as part of a wider reflection on how to better support the industry throughout the whole life cycle of the investment, from initial exploration to large scale production and I will provide an update on this in due course.

We will look to the North Sea Transition Authority and other licensing authorities to be proactive in extending existing consents and permissions where practicable, to support the development of energy resources in the National interest.

It is clear that we need more exploratory sites in order to gather better data and improve the evidence base and we are aware that some developers are keen to assist with this process. We look forward to seeing these proposals in detail.

Offshore Energy Strategic Environmental Assessment

HM Government has completed an Offshore Energy Strategic Environmental Assessment (OESEA) of a draft plan/programme to enable further offshore licensing/leasing for offshore marine renewables including wind, wave and tidal energy, oil and gas, gas storage including carbon dioxide storage, and offshore production and transport of hydrogen.

The renewable energy elements of the draft plan/programme cover the relevant parts of the UK Exclusive Economic Zone and the territorial waters of England and Wales; for hydrocarbon gas storage it applies to UK waters (territorial sea and the relevant parts of the UK Exclusive Economic Zone) and for carbon dioxide storage it applies to UK waters (the UK Exclusive Economic Zone and relevant territorial sea, excluding the territorial sea in Scotland); for hydrocarbon exploration and production it applies to the UK territorial sea and the UK Continental Shelf; and for offshore production and transport of hydrogen it applies to UK waters.

A public consultation on the OESEA4 Environmental Report was undertaken between 17 March 2022 and 27 May 2022. All comments received on the draft plan/programme and the Environmental Report have been considered by HM Government and a HM Government Response for OESEA4 has been prepared and will be placed on the GOV.UK website (as per above link). This summarises stakeholder comments and HM Government's clarifications and responses to them. The Environmental Report and the comments received have informed the HM Government's decision on whether to proceed with the draft plan/programme.

HM Government has decided to adopt the draft plan/programme, with the area offered restricted spatially through the exclusion of certain areas together with a number of mitigation measures to prevent, reduce and

offset significant adverse impacts on the environment and other users of the sea. On the basis of the evidence set out in the Environmental Report, which discussed the alternatives to the chosen approach, and the comments received during consultation, HM Government concludes that there are no overriding environmental considerations that would prevent the achievement of our draft plan/programme of offshore marine renewables leasing (wind, wave and tidal technologies), offshore oil and gas licensing, offshore gas storage and carbon dioxide storage leasing/licensing, and offshore production and transport of hydrogen, provided appropriate mitigation measures are implemented along with future research. In all cases, the relevant competent authority should undertake any appropriate assessments(s) prior to awarding licences or leases, where screening in accordance with the relevant conservation of habitats regulations shows this to be necessary.

The plan/programme based on OESEA4 will have a lifespan of approximately four years. HM Government, therefore, commits to refreshing the OESEA in two to three years' time to account for the higher ambitions relating to offshore wind and hydrogen in the BESS that are expected to be delivered in the period 2026-2030 and any additional changes to the energy policy context, technology, and understanding of the environmental baseline and effects assessment.

The associated documents have been placed in the Library of both Houses.

Planning Update

[HLWS293]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: My Right Honourable friend, the Secretary of State for Transport (Anne-Marie Trevelyan), has made the following Ministerial Statement:

This statement confirms that it has been necessary to extend the deadline for a decision on the A47/A11 Thicket Junction Development Consent Order made under the Planning Act due to the National mourning period.

The DCO would authorise works for the improvement to Thicket Junction and related works linking the A47 to the A11. The Proposed Development is situated within the administrative boundaries of Norfolk County Council and South Norfolk District Council. The Secretary of State received the Examining Authority's report on 20 June 2022 and the current deadline for a decision is 20 September 2022. The deadline is now extended to 14 October 2022.

Under section 107(1) of the Planning Act 2008, the Secretary of State must make her decision within 3 months of receipt of the Examining Authority's report unless exercising the power under section 107(3) to extend the deadline and make a Statement to the House of Parliament announcing the new deadline.

The decision to set new deadlines is without prejudice to the decisions on whether to give development consent for the above applications.

Retained EU Law

[HLWS294]

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

On the 31st January, to mark the two-year anniversary of the UK's departure from the European Union, the Government set out its plans to bring forward the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill.

Retained EU law is a category of domestic law created at the end of the transition period. It consists of EU-derived legislation that was preserved in our domestic legal framework by the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 to ensure continuity as we left the EU.

However, retained EU law was never intended to sit on the statute book indefinitely. The time is now right to bring the special status of retained EU law in the UK statute book to an end on 31st December 2023, in order to fully realise the opportunities of Brexit and to support the unique culture of innovation in the UK.

To achieve this, the Bill I have introduced today includes the following provisions.

Sunset of Retained EU Law

The Bill will sunset the majority of retained EU law so that it expires on 31st December 2023. All retained EU law contained in domestic secondary legislation and retained direct EU legislation will expire on this date, unless otherwise preserved. Any retained EU law that remains in force after the sunset date will be assimilated in the domestic statute book, by the removal of the special EU law features previously attached to it. This means that the principle of the supremacy of EU law, general principles of EU law, and directly effective EU rights will also end on 31st December 2023. There will no longer be a place for EU law concepts in our statute book.

Before that date, Government Departments and the Devolved Administrations will determine which retained EU law can be reformed to benefit the UK, which can expire, and which needs to be preserved and incorporated into domestic law in modified form. They will also decide if retained EU law needs to be codified as it is preserved, in order to preserve specific policy effects which are beneficial to keep.

The Bill includes an extension mechanism for the sunset of specified pieces of retained EU law until 2026. Should it be required, this will allow departments additional time where necessary to implement more complex reforms to specific pieces of retained EU law, including any necessary legislation.

Ending of Supremacy of retained EU law in UK law by 2023

Currently, retained direct EU legislation still takes priority over domestic UK legislation passed prior to the

end of the Transition Period when they are incompatible. This is not in keeping with our status as an independent, sovereign trading nation, and the Government's 2019 commitment to remove this.

Therefore, the Bill will reverse this order of priority, to reinstate domestic law as the highest form of law on the UK statute book. Where it is necessary to preserve the current hierarchy between domestic and EU legislation in specific circumstances, the Bill provides a power to amend the new order of priority to retain specific legislative effects.

Assimilated law

Following the removal of the special features of EU law from retained EU law on 31st December 2023, any retained EU law that is preserved will become "assimilated law" to reflect that EU interpretive features no longer apply to it.

Facilitating Departures from Retained EU Case Law

To ensure that EU law concepts do not become 'baked in' through over cautious court judgments, the Bill will also provide domestic courts with greater discretion to depart from the body of retained case law. It will also provide new court procedures for UK and Devolved Law Officers to refer or intervene in cases involving retained EU case law.

Modification of Retained EU Legislation

To correct an anomaly created by European Union Withdrawal Act which gave some retained direct EU legislation legislative parity with Acts of Parliament for some purposes, despite it not having been properly scrutinised, the Bill will downgrade the status of retained direct EU law for the purposes of amendment. The Bill will modify powers in other statutes, to facilitate their use to amend retained direct EU law in the same way they can be used on domestic secondary legislation. This will enable the amendment of retained direct EU law, with the appropriate level of Parliamentary scrutiny.

Powers relating to Retained EU Law

The Bill will also create powers to make secondary legislation so that retained EU law or assimilated law can be amended, repealed and replaced more easily. This Bill will allow Government via Parliament to clarify, consolidate and restate legislation to preserve its current effect. Using these powers, the Government via Parliament will ensure that only regulation that is fit for purpose, and suited for the UK will remain on the statute book.

Business Impact Target

Having left the EU, the UK has further opportunities to reform its regulatory regime. The UK Government published its consultation response to the 'Reforming the Better Regulation Framework' and is in the process of implementing the wider reforms outlined.

As part of these reforms, the Bill repeals the Business Impact Target, which is outdated and not fit for purpose. Any subsequent replacement of the Business Impact Target, when combined with the other wider reforms, will

ensure that the UK's regulatory framework is fit for the UK economy, business and households, into the future.

Trade Negotiations Update

[HLWS297]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade (Kemi Badenoch MP) has today made the following statement:

The first round of United Kingdom-Israel Free Trade Agreement negotiations took place between 12 and 20 September.

In parallel, the third round of United Kingdom-Canada Free Trade Agreement negotiations commenced on 12 September and concluded on 16 September.

Following the death of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, these rounds proceeded, with appropriate adjustments.

The round of negotiations with Israel was conducted in a hybrid fashion; a small group of United Kingdom officials travelled to Jerusalem for in-person discussions, with further officials attending virtually from the United Kingdom. During this initial round, talks focused on gathering insights on key interests and priorities across policy areas as well as building a shared understanding of each other's initial positions. Technical discussions focused on 29 policy areas in over 50 sessions.

A new agreement with Israel – with services and innovation at its heart - will build upon our existing Trade and Partnership Agreement. It will cement our relationship with a rapidly growing economy and take our trading relationship to the next level. It will support United Kingdom jobs, and update outdated trade rules, unleashing our high-tech innovative economies.

The negotiations with Canada were conducted in a fully virtual format. Technical discussions were held across 26 policy areas across over 50 separate sessions.

Talks focused on reaffirming the United Kingdom's positions, having tabled and presented text across the majority of chapters in the previous round. The United Kingdom's negotiating team made progress on understanding areas of policy convergence and divergence with Canada. They agreed text where possible and in the United Kingdom's interests and objectives to support economic growth.

The negotiations continue to reflect a shared ambition to secure a progressive deal which looks to build on the United Kingdom-Canada Trade Continuity Agreement, and strengthens our existing trading relationship, already worth over £21 billion in 2021.

We are clear that any deals we sign will be in the best interests of the British people and the United Kingdom economy. We will not compromise on our high environmental and labour protections, public health, animal welfare and food standards, and we will maintain our right to regulate in the public interest. We are also clear that during these negotiations, the NHS and the services it provides is not on the table.

We are working towards holding a second and fourth round of negotiations with Israel and Canada respectively in due course.

Parliament will be kept updated as these negotiations progress.

UK's Updated 2030 Nationally Determined Contribution

[HLWS295]

Lord Callanan: My Right Honourable friend the Minister of State for Climate (Graham Stuart) has today made the following statement:

The Glasgow Climate Pact, agreed by almost 200 countries at COP26 in November 2021, recognised the need for accelerated action to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial temperatures. It called for all countries to “revisit and strengthen the 2030 targets in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) as necessary to align with the Paris Agreement temperature goal by the end of 2022, taking into account different national circumstances”.

During its COP Presidency, the UK has been working with partner countries, non-state actors and civil society to encourage countries, particularly major emitters, to respond to this call. And the UK has shown leadership by revisiting its own NDC to ensure it remains a fair and ambitious contribution to global action on climate change. The latest science from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published earlier this year highlighted the closing window for action to keep 1.5°C in reach and made clear the urgency of delivering on the Glasgow Climate Pact.

In revisiting the UK NDC, the Government considered a range of factors including the latest available science, expectations in the Paris Agreement and the Glasgow Climate Pact, the UK's existing 2050 net zero commitment, and energy security, as well as advice and evidence from the Climate Change Committee and other independent commentators.

The UK has strengthened its NDC by making the following updates to the accompanying information to facilitate clarity, transparency and understanding (ICTU), in line with international best practice and the Paris Agreement rulebook:

1) clarified how the target – which remains a commitment to reduce all greenhouse gas emissions by at least 68% by 2030 on 1990 levels - aligns with the Paris Agreement temperature goal;

2) explained more fully how the UK will deliver the NDC by 2030;

3) updated on the progress made in expanding the territorial scope of the NDC to include the UK's Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories; and

4) included more detail on levelling up, gender, green skills, public engagement, Just Transition and how the UK is supporting other countries with delivery of their NDCs.

The UK's NDC requires the fastest rate of reduction in greenhouse gases between 1990 and 2030 of any major economy and is on a trajectory to net zero by 2050. The Government is committed to net zero by 2050 and looks forward to the review led by Chris Skidmore to ensure that it is delivered in a way that is pro-business and pro-growth.

Since submitting the NDC in December 2020, the UK has published a range of sectoral strategies and plans and

has signed up to numerous pledges and actions to deliver on the 2030 target. The Prime Minister has also announced an ambitious package of measures to tackle soaring energy prices and ensure the UK's energy security, following Putin's illegal invasion of Ukraine.

The UK will submit its updated NDC to the UNFCCC in time for the deadline for inputs to the NDC synthesis report (23 September 2022) and will lay a copy in the House at the same time.

Written Answers

Monday, 10 October 2022

Abdel Fattah, Alaa

Asked by *The Earl of Sandwich*

To ask His Majesty's Government what progress they have made with negotiations with the government of Egypt regarding the release of Alaa Abd el-Fattah, who has been in prison in that country on hunger strike since April. [HL2309]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Since his sentencing in December 2021, FCDO officials have consistently called on the Egyptian Government urgently to grant consular access to Alaa Abdel Fattah. Lord (Tariq) Ahmad and the then Foreign Secretary also raised the case with Foreign Minister Shoukry during his visit to London in July. The previous Prime Minister raised the case with President Sisi during a call on 25 August, expressing his hope for swift and positive progress. We continue to support the family of Alaa Abdel Fattah.

Abortion: Analgesics

Asked by *Baroness Eaton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to review the standard NHS practice of not using foetal painkillers before abortion; and what assessment they have made of the consistency of this approach with the current standard NHS practice of using foetal painkillers before foetal surgery from 19 weeks. [HL2096]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: The Department does not set or review clinical practice and no specific assessment has been made. The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists has established a review group to consider the latest evidence on foetal pain and foetal awareness, which is expected to report on its findings by the end of 2022.

Abortion: Clinics

Asked by *Baroness Eaton*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the policy of supporting a locally-driven response to demonstrations at abortion clinics; and whether they still consider that local authorities have sufficient powers to address any potential challenges arising in relation to such demonstrations. [HL2347]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: The Government is clear that it is unacceptable that patients seeking healthcare advice or staff working in healthcare facilities should feel intimidated or harassed. Since the 2018 review, the Government has continued to keep the matter of abortion-related protest outside clinics under review and continues

to believe that a locally-driven response to demonstrations outside abortion clinics in England and Wales is proportionate.

The existing laws give the police and local authorities the powers they need to deal with harmful protests, and the Government expects the police and local authorities to use their existing powers appropriately.

Afghanistan: Development Aid

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask His Majesty's Government how much UK overseas aid they provided to Afghanistan in (1) 2017, (2) 2018, (3) 2019, (4) 2020, and (5) 2021. [HL2303]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK has provided the following amounts of overseas aid to Afghanistan over 2017 to 2021:

2017 £235 million
2018 £249 million
2019 £290 million
2020 £226 million
2021 £150 million

The 2017-2020 figure represent the total UK bilateral Overseas Development Assistance across Government reported in Statistics on International Development (SID). The SIDS data for 2021 is provisional and does not include detail by country, the 2021 figure noted represents only the FCDO's spend for 2021.

Afghanistan: Ethnic Groups

Asked by *Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they are giving to the report by the Hazara Inquiry The Situation of the Hazaras in Afghanistan, published on 3 September. [HL2058]

Asked by *Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the Hazara Inquiry The Situation of the Hazara in Afghanistan, published on 3 September, which found that this religious and ethnic minority are at serious risk of genocide at the hands of both the Taliban and the Islamic State-Khorasan Province. [HL2059]

Asked by *Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the conclusion of the report by the Hazara Inquiry The Situation of the Hazara in Afghanistan, published on 3 September, that under the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (the Genocide Convention) and customary international law, it is the responsibility of all signatory states to protect the Hazara and prevent a possible genocide; and what steps they are taking to comply with these duties. [HL2060]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are carefully reviewing the findings of the Hazara Inquiry. We fully recognize that Hazaras have long faced attacks and discrimination from the Taliban, Daesh Khorasan Province and other groups. We regularly press the Taliban to respect the human rights of all Afghans and to protect the Hazara community from terrorist attacks.

We are working closely with international partners, including through multilateral fora, to ensure there are credible monitoring mechanisms in place and to hold those responsible for human rights abuses to account. In March 2022, we worked through the UN Security Council to strengthen human rights monitoring in the UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan mandate (UNAMA). We also supported a UN Human Rights Council resolution that led to the appointment of Richard Bennett as Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan on 1 April 2022. I met the Special Rapporteur on 9 August ahead of his report to the Human Rights Council on 12 September. We will continue to regularly engage with Hazara representatives, who provide vital insight into and advise on the situation in Afghanistan.

Agriculture and Food Supply: Carbon Dioxide and Fertilisers

Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking, if any, to ensure the availability of fertiliser and carbon dioxide to the farming and food sectors following the announcement by CF Fertilisers that they are halting production in the UK. [HL2271]

Lord Benyon: It is disappointing that CF Fertilisers has taken the decision to halt ammonia production at Billingham. However, since last autumn the CO2 market's resilience has improved, with additional imports, further production from existing sources such as anaerobic digestion and bioethanol and better stockpiles. We expect the supply of ammonia (from imports by CF Fertilisers) and production of nitric acid and fertiliser to be unaffected. While the Government continues to examine options for the market to improve resilience over the longer term, we urge industry to do anything it can to meet demand, which is in the best interest of businesses and the public.

National Fertiliser Supplies

CF Fertilisers produces ammonium nitrate fertiliser and nitric acid in the UK at Billingham. The company expects to fulfil all ammonia and nitric acid contracts and all orders of Ammonium Nitrate contracted for delivery in the coming months. The supply and price of these products is a commercial matter for CF Fertilisers, and we expect supply to continue.

While global fertiliser prices have risen, the supply chain providing imports of fertiliser to the UK has remained dynamic. We are continuing to monitor the security and stability of fertiliser and other supply chains

and work closely with colleagues across government and devolved administrations as well as industry figures.

Carbon Dioxide Supplies

Defra is working with sector stakeholders to encourage contingency planning and resilience and understand that various CO2 supply companies in the UK are working on or have secured additional CO2 to mitigate shortages. We are confident CO2 stocks are secure for the coming winter.

Agriculture: Land

Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the CPRE report Building on our Food Security, published on 22 July, which identified a hundredfold increase in house and infrastructure construction on prime agricultural land since 2010. [HL2273]

Lord Benyon: We welcome the CPRE report and analysis on development on prime agricultural land. This report highlights some of the ongoing and emerging challenges of use of land to achieve food security, housing need and energy security.

The Government recognises the importance of food security, which is why we published the Food Strategy earlier this year. The Food Strategy puts food security at the heart of the government's vision for the food sector. It aims to broadly maintain the current level of food that we produce domestically and boost production in sectors where there are the biggest opportunities. We are seeking to deliver as much as we can on our limited supply of land, to meet the whole range of Government commitments on food, housing, climate, and the environment. To help achieve this, we will publish a Land Use Framework in 2023 which will set out land-use change principles to balance these outcomes.

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out clearly that local planning authorities should consider all the benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land when making plans or taking decisions on new development proposals. Where significant development of agricultural land is shown to be necessary, planning authorities should seek to use poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality.

We work closely with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to ensure that planning policy continues to support agriculture and food production as well as delivering other goals for housing, infrastructure and the environment.

Aircraft Carriers

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer from Baroness Goldie on 20 September (HL2197), how many days at sea (1) HMS Queen

Elizabeth, and (2) HMS Prince of Wales, have had since their acceptance by the Royal Navy; and on how many of those days operational F-35 jets have embarked. [HL2379]

Baroness Goldie: HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH has had 603 days at sea since vessel acceptance date, with operational F-35 jets embarked on 278 of those days.

HMS PRINCE OF WALES has had 267 days at sea since vessel acceptance date, with operational F-35 jets embarked on 13 of those days.

The normal operating cycle of every ship involves them entering different readiness levels depending on their programmes, periods of refit and Departmental planning requirements. In addition, these figures represent days at sea and it should be noted that, while deployed away from the UK, ships will spend both days at sea and alongside in ports around the world.

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask His Majesty's Government when the last aircraft carrier was lost by the Royal Navy; and whether she had her airwing embarked. [HL2380]

Baroness Goldie: Chronologically the last aircraft carrier lost by the Royal Navy was the Escort Carrier HMS DASHER which sank as a result of an internal explosion in the Clyde on 27 March 1943.

The aircraft embarked were Sea Hurricanes from 891 Naval Air Squadron and Swordfish from 816 Naval Air Squadron.

Aircraft Carriers: F-35 Aircraft

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask His Majesty's Government whether all UK F35 jets deployed for UK carrier operations off the Eastern seaboard of the USA will be embarked in the ship with their maintainers and aircrew. [HL2316]

Baroness Goldie: The next period of F-35B Lightning activity on UK Queen Elizabeth Class Carriers off the Eastern seaboard of the USA will be a four-week test period conducted by the Joint Programme Office (JPO) Integrated Test Force (ITF) using embarked ITF aircraft, maintainers, support personnel and pilots.

Whenever UK F-35B Lightning aircraft are embarked on Queen Elizabeth Class Carriers the required complement of maintainers, support personnel and pilots are embarked to meet the directed operational output.

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask His Majesty's Government what calculation they have made, if any, of the minimum number of F35s the UK requires to ensure that in a major war or an emergency the full complement of 36 aircraft can be embarked in the designated carrier. [HL2381]

Baroness Goldie: I refer the noble Lord to the answer I gave him on 8 September 2022, volume 824 during the debate in the House of Lords main chamber.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Royal Navy; F35 [Royal Navy F35.docx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-09-26/HL2381>

Anaerobic Digestion: Drug Resistance

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the risk of anaerobic digestion facilities increasing levels of antimicrobial resistance. [HL2325]

Lord Benyon: HM Government has not conducted specific research into the risks of anaerobic digestion facilities increasing levels of antimicrobial resistance, but it does consider that anaerobic digestion is an effective method for the disposal of animal by-products as the process destroys bacteria and is considered to be the best approach for reducing spread of bacteria to the environment. Guidance on the handling of manure and slurry to reduce antibiotic resistance can be found at [Handling of manure and slurry to reduce antibiotic resistance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/handling-of-manure-and-slurry-to-reduce-antibiotic-resistance).

Armed Conflict: Sexual Offences

Asked by Baroness Goudie

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made in securing an international convention prohibiting the use of rape or sexual violence as a weapon of war, including enforceable and effective sanctions in response to any breaches. [HL2116]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: It is unacceptable that sexual violence and rape continue to take place in conflicts around the world and are, in some cases, used as a method of warfare. Among other things, rape can be a war crime, a crime against humanity and a form of torture. Rape is prohibited under international humanitarian law, international criminal law, international human rights law and UN Security Council resolutions.

The UK is stepping up its ambition to end the culture of impunity that has pervaded acts of Conflict Related Sexual Violence (CRSV). In the first instance, we are focused on addressing the gaps in implementation of existing laws at the national level. We are also seeking further concerted action on the Crimes Against Humanity (CAH) Convention, which is vital to strengthen the international legal architecture and prosecute atrocity crimes including some forms of CRSV. Both of these steps could pave the way for a CRSV Convention in due course.

The UK will host the international Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative (PSVI) conference in November 2022. This will be a key opportunity to show UK leadership and rally international support to agree further action on sexual violence in conflict to eliminate

this crime, including stronger international action to promote accountability.

Armenia and Azerbaijan: Politics and Government

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of Coventry*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the clashes along the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan which began on 12 September; and what representations they have made to the governments of those countries in relation to (1) the exercise of restraint, and (2) the observation of agreements which ended the 2020 Nagorno–Karabakh war. [HL2338]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK Government condemns the recent violence along the international border between Armenia and Azerbaijan. In calls with the Armenian Foreign Minister Mirzoyan and the Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Bayramov on 15 and 17 September respectively, the Minister of State for Europe, Minister Docherty, reinforced the need for a cessation of hostilities and a return to substantive negotiations to settle all outstanding matters between the parties. The UK will continue to work with both parties in the coming months to support efforts to secure regional stability and security.

Armoured Fighting Vehicles

Asked by *Lord Goddard of Stockport*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they have taken to increase the (1) availability, and (2) use of, the British Army's Armoured Fighting Vehicles fleet. [HL2113]

Baroness Goldie: To meet the current and future threats, the Army is aiming to be "More Ready", which includes increasing the availability and readiness of our Armoured Fighting Vehicle fleet (AFVs).

In addition to increased activity across Europe in support of NATO, there has also been a significant increase in the Armoured Fighting Vehicles (AFVs) placed within units. This means the vehicles are maintained and utilised more by personnel, rather than being held in storage. Similarly, an enlarged training fleet of AFVs has allowed for increased AFV driver and commander training to be carried out.

Asylum

Asked by *Baroness Hoey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many asylum seekers have reached the UK having first registered in a Council of Europe country in each of the last five years; of those asylum seekers, how many first registered in Ireland; and from where did the asylum seekers who first registered in Ireland originally travel. [HL1899]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: The Home Office does not hold data on asylum seekers who have previously registered in a Council of Europe Country. However, data is available through the Eurodac system for asylum seekers who have previously made an asylum claim in EU+ (EU, Norway, Iceland, Lichtenstein and Switzerland) countries and then made a further claim in UK. This data is only available for the period prior to the UK leaving the EU and the Eurodac system. The relevant available data has been extracted and presented in the table below. It is subject to the same caveats as the Eurodac system from which it is derived. As such, it is a count of Eurodac 'hits', not individuals or claims. For example, an individual applying once in the UK, who has previously applied once each in Germany, France and Italy, would produce 3 hits, one for each prior application. Data on where journeys began is unfortunately unavailable.

Year	Eurodac hits linked to EU+	Eurodac hits linked to Ireland	Source (linked)
2020	19,599	948	Eurodac Annual Report 2020
2019	13,089	703	Eurodac Annual Report 2019
2018	10,057	355	Eurodac Annual Report 2018
2017	7,079	253	Eurodac Annual Report 2017

Note: Category 1 data against category 1 data only

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.

The Government has previously raised with Ireland concerns about individuals exploiting the Common Travel Area generally to reach the United Kingdom to seek asylum, most recently in May of this year.

Asylum: Detainees

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of Durham*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many asylum applicants have been detained this year as a result of arriving in the UK via a third country. [HL2343]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: Individuals are detained only for the purpose of establishing identity or where there is a realistic prospect of removal within a reasonable timescale. Individuals are not detained simply because they have arrived via a third country. All decisions to detain are taken on the basis of a careful consideration of

the known facts of the individual case, including all factors arguing both for and against detention.

As the method or route of arrival is not a reason to detain an individual, 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 Home Office does publish statistics on people in detention in the 'Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release', which can be found on Gov.uk. The number of people in detention at the end of each year is broken down by asylum and non-asylum in table Det_01.

Asylum-related cases refer to those where there has been an asylum claim at some stage prior to or during, detention. This will include asylum seekers whose asylum claims have been refused, and who have exhausted any rights of appeal, those returned under third country provisions, as well as those granted asylum/protection, but detained for other reasons (such as criminality).

Information on how to use the dataset can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook.

*Asked by **The Lord Bishop of Durham***

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether asylum seeker detention centres will be able to provide a medical report within the seven-day appeals period that starts as soon as a notice of intent for removal is given to an asylum seeker. [HL2346]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: All immigration removal centres (IRCs) have dedicated health facilities run by doctors and nurses which are managed by the NHS or appropriate providers. All detained individuals entering an IRC receive a healthcare screening within 2 hours of their arrival and are offered an appointment with a doctor within 24 hours. In addition, residents have full access to the 24-hour on-site healthcare team during their stay in the IRC.

Rule 35 of the Detention Centre Rules 2001 requires General Practitioners (GP) working in IRCs to report to the Home Office where they (i) have concerns that an individual is likely to be to be injuriously affected by continued detention or any conditions of detention, (ii) suspect that an individual has suicidal intentions or (iii) have concerns that an individual may have been a victim of torture.

All reports raised under Detention Centre Rule 35 are now considered by a single Home Office team, independent from detained casework commands. The team considers the individual circumstances of the case in line with the Adults at Risk in Detention Policy. Following due consideration, a decision will be made and relayed to the individual, the relevant IRC, and the detained casework team as to whether or not continuing detention remains appropriate. Contingency plans are in

place to manage any increase in Rule 35 requests from residents, which includes scheduling extra GP appointments where necessary and proactively striving to reduce waiting times. Work is underway in collaboration with healthcare providers across the immigration removal estate to develop and refine training for on-site healthcare teams on the importance and correct use of Rule 35 of the Detention Centre Rules 2001.

Asylum: Rwanda

*Asked by **The Lord Bishop of Durham***

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to publish the annual plan due to be agreed jointly by the Monitoring Committee and Joint Committee for the Migration and Economic Development Partnership with Rwanda. [HL2344]

*Asked by **The Lord Bishop of Durham***

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to publish the quarterly written reports produced for the Joint Committee by the Monitoring Committee for the Migration and Economic Development Partnership with Rwanda. [HL2345]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: The Monitoring Committee will agree an annual, resourced monitoring plan with the Joint Committee. The terms of reference and membership of the Monitoring Committee for the Migration and Economic Development Partnership have been published on Gov.uk.

As set out in its terms of reference, the Monitoring Committee will produce a summary report for publication once a year. More details on this will be set out in due course.

AUKUS

*Asked by **Lord West of Spithead***

To ask Her Majesty's Government who, if anyone, in the UK plays the equivalent role to that played by Mr Abraham Denmark, who was appointed by the Secretary of State for Defence in the United States of America to "coordinate efforts across the Department delivering the AUKUS partnership to help Australia establish a conventionally armed, nuclear powered submarine capability and to accelerate development of advanced capabilities to serve security and stability in the Indo-Pacific". [HL2195]

Baroness Goldie: The UK welcomes the appointment of Mr Denmark to the Department of Defense. The National Security Adviser is the Senior Responsible Officer for AUKUS in the UK and the Cabinet Office is responsible for coordinating cross-departmental efforts.

The Ministry of Defence's Permanent Secretary, as the Defence accounting officer, is responsible for AUKUS capability development objectives.

Autonomous Weapons

Asked by Lord Clement-Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the statement in the policy document *Ambitious, Safe and Responsible - Our approach to the delivery of AI-enabled capability in Defence*, published on 15 June, that there must be "context appropriate human involvement in weapons which identify, select and attack targets", what plans they have to elaborate on the concept of "context appropriate human involvement" to ensure that relevant officers in (1) the Ministry of Defence, and (2) HM Armed Forces, have operational guidance on the acceptability of particular weapons, practices and uses. [[HL2086](#)]

Baroness Goldie: MOD officials and Military colleagues are currently exploring processes for the delivery of the approaches set out in the *Ambitious, Safe, Responsible* policy. This will include a consideration of AI across the system lifecycle, including further elaboration of the concept of 'context appropriate human involvement'.

With respect to the acceptability of particular weapons, the Additional Protocol 1 (AP 1), Article 36 of the Geneva Convention 1977, requires States to determine whether new weapons, means or methods of warfare may be employed lawfully under International Law. The United Kingdom takes this obligation very seriously, and UK weapon reviews are undertaken by serving military lawyers on the staff of the Development Concepts and Doctrine Centre (DCDC). This assessment will then be fed into usage instructions and authorities on particular systems to ensure that the parameters of lawful and responsible use are fully understood in any particular case.

Asked by Lord Clement-Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the statement in policy document *Ambitious, Safe and Responsible: Our approach to the delivery of AI enabled capability in Defence*, published on 15 June, that global governance for autonomous weapons systems is "a difficult task", how they plan to respond strategically to identified challenges of global governance in this area; and, in any such strategic response, how they intend to fulfil the aims set out in the *Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy*, published on 16 March 2021, in relation to international legal, ethical and regulatory standards on responsible development and use of artificial intelligence. [[HL2087](#)]

Baroness Goldie: The Department is developing its plans to implement its Defence AI Strategy, to address broader strategic issues arising from the *Integrated Review*. We will work with partners to mitigate the potential impacts of AI, including its proliferation, misuse and potential for misunderstanding and miscalculation.

Particularly relevant fora include the UN-brokered discussions under the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), AI Partnership for Defence and NATO, as well as broader discussions on the development of AI within the Global Partnership on AI, UNESCO and the Council of Europe. Compliance with International Humanitarian Law will remain at the core of our current and future standards, which will be rigorously applied to all AI use in Defence.

Asked by Lord Clement-Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by the Minister of State at the Ministry of Defence on 18 July (HC Deb col 688) that "autonomy is increasingly the key to the successful generation of overwhelming force in the battle space" and that "a more lethal force—even a bigger force—does not necessarily acquire more workforce in the future", what assessment they have made of (1) the compatibility of these remarks with the answer by Baroness Goldie on 1 November 2021 (HL Deb, col 995) that "UK Armed Forces do not use systems that employ lethal force without context-appropriate human involvement", and (2) the implications of these remarks for risks of strategic instability. [[HL2089](#)]

Baroness Goldie: AI may not inherently reduce workforce requirements, but it is likely to change the activities we need people to undertake. Across the workforce, AI and autonomous systems offer opportunities to remove people from 'dull, dirty and dangerous' tasks. This will enable us to focus our people on those areas where they can add particular value, in the context of Human Machine Teams. Machines are good at doing things right; people are good at doing the right things, and context-appropriate human involvement will be essential for the ethical and legal use of AI-enabled weapon systems. We strongly believe that such systems can and must be used lawfully and ethically, and we will promote security and stability by working closely with allies and partners to build consensus, promote a common vision for the safe, responsible and ethical use of these technologies globally, and push for compliance with International Humanitarian Law.

Avian Influenza

Asked by Lord Selkirk of Douglas

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of how many seals have died around the UK or its territorial waters as a result of avian flu spread through seabird colonies. [[HL2179](#)]

Asked by Lord Selkirk of Douglas

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the scale of the impact of avian flu on UK colonies of seabirds. [[HL2180](#)]

Asked by Lord Selkirk of Douglas

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of avian flu on the colony of gannets on Bass Rock near North Berwick, and the resulting loss of population. [HL2181]

Lord Benyon: We recognise the significant threat posed by highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) to the UK's seabird populations and it is deeply concerning to see the impact this is having on these important species.

Details of findings of HPAI in wild birds in Great Britain are updated weekly and published via GOV.UK/Bird-Flu, together with outbreak and risk assessments. These reports include the recent mortalities of gannets on Bass Rock. Defra is working with Devolved Administrations, Arm's Length Bodies and NGOs to monitor and respond to the effect of HPAI on wild birds. The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) operate a robust programme of wild bird surveillance and carry out year-round HPAI surveillance of dead wild birds from across Great Britain.

While HPAI viruses are predominantly considered a pathogen of birds, the virus can infect mammals. While there is no routine surveillance for HPAI in seals, 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. While the scale of HPAI findings in seabirds during the 2021/2022 avian influenza outbreak have been unprecedented, to date there is no evidence of increased mortality in UK seal populations or an increase in clinical cases brought into wildlife rehabilitation centres.

Aviation: Standards*Asked by Lord Dodds of Duncairn*

To ask His Majesty's Government when they will respond to the consultation on Reforming aviation consumer policy: protecting air passenger rights, which closed on 27 March. [HL2297]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Air passenger rights remains a priority for Government, and the Aviation Consumer Policy Reform Consultation aimed to collect views on ways to bolster air passenger rights and support the industry to provide the best service possible for consumers.

We are currently conducting a comprehensive review and analysis of responses and will set out next steps shortly.

Azerbaijan: Armed Conflict*Asked by The Lord Bishop of Coventry*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the assertion made, and (2) the

evidence in support presented, by the government of Azerbaijan that the Armenian military has (a) laid landmines in Azerbaijan's sovereign territory, and (b) made incursions into Azerbaijan's sovereign territory, since the end of 2020. [HL2341]

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Coventry

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the assertion made, and (2) the evidence in support presented, by the government of Azerbaijan that the Armenian military fired into Azerbaijan's sovereign territory during September 2020. [HL2342]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK Government is aware of these assertions. In calls with Armenian Foreign Minister Mirzoyan and Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Bayramov on 15 and 17 September respectively, the Minister of State for Europe, Minister Docherty, reinforced the need for a cessation of hostilities and a return to substantive negotiations to settle all outstanding matters between the parties.

Babies: Health Services*Asked by Baroness Eaton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what advice they have received on foetal viability from the British Association of Perinatal Medicine, the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, the Neonatal Nurses Association and the British Maternal and Foetal Medicine Society, who published joint guidelines in 2019 on caring for premature babies born from the 22nd week of gestation. [HL2095]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: While the Department monitors new evidence on viability, we have not received any such advice from the British Association of Perinatal Medicine, the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, the Neonatal Nurses Association and the British Maternal and Foetal Medicine Society.

Bank Services: British Nationals Abroad*Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to help British expatriates whose banking facilities in the UK are being closed as a result of Brexit. [HL2067]

Baroness Penn: The provision of banking services, including whether UK firms can service EEA-based customers, is a commercial decision for firms based on a variety of factors, including the local law and regulation of individual countries, an assessment of profitability or other commercial drivers. The Government does not intervene in these commercial decisions.

Nonetheless, the Government expects banks to act lawfully and in accordance with local regulators' expectations. We also expect that banks work to ensure good outcomes for their customers and provide timely

communications to enable them to make appropriate decisions.

UK providers are expected to contact impacted customers if they need to make any changes to their product or the way it is provided. We encourage customers with questions or concerns to speak to their banking service provider.

Bats: Churches and Historic Buildings

*Asked by **The Lord Bishop of St Albans***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made, if any, of the value of damage caused by bats to the contents and fabric of (1) church buildings, and (2) other historical buildings. [HL2250]

Lord Benyon: No specific assessments of the value of damage caused by bats to the contents and fabric of church buildings and other historical buildings have been made.

Natural England's Bats in Churches project has been working closely with the Church of England to find workable solutions that both protect bats and enable churches to manage impacts without prohibitive costs. The project has worked with volunteers to carry out surveys at over 650 churches to understand the impact of bats and has provided support and funding to 108 churches to create practical, tailored solutions.

Beijing Treaty on Audiovisual Performances

*Asked by **Lord Clement-Jones***

To ask His Majesty's Government what progress they have made on the implementation of the Beijing Treaty on Audiovisual Performances. [HL2337]

Lord Callanan: The UK was unable to implement the Beijing Treaty in its own right while it was a member of the EU. Since leaving, it has committed to doing so as a sovereign nation. The Government has analysed responses to the recent Call for Views and expects to consult on specific options for implementation shortly.

Biofuels

*Asked by **Lord Carrington***

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will publish their Biomass Strategy. [HL2085]

Lord Callanan: The Government is actively progressing work on the biomass strategy, including work on the assessment of the priority use of biomass across the economy, which will be explained in the forthcoming strategy. The Government plans to publish the Biomass Strategy in due course.

Birds: Conservation

*Asked by **Lord Selkirk of Douglas***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what further steps they intend to take to ensure that seabird colonies, such as colonies of gannets, are adequately protected, including in respect of (1) invasive species, (2) marine pollution, and (3) overfishing. [HL2178]

Lord Benyon: The UK's seabirds are an important part of our natural heritage, and we continue to support actions to address the range of threats they are facing. Defra have commissioned Natural England to assess the vulnerability of seabird species in light of the pressures they are facing and propose actions to address them. We will work closely with stakeholders to understand the best way to implement and prioritise these actions in early 2023.

To protect the UK's 42 seabird island Special Protection Areas, Defra is funding work through the RSPB's Biosecurity programme which seeks to address the need for biosecurity measures through the removal of introduced predatory mammals.

The UK is a global leader in tackling plastic pollution that enters our waterways, rivers, and ocean. As set out in the UK Marine Strategy Part Three, the UK government is taking action to reduce pollution in the marine environment to help protect marine species, including seabirds. We aim to publish an updated UK Marine Strategy Part Three later this year, outlining the programmes of measures that will continue to move us towards Good Environmental Status in our seas.

We are also assessing the impact that fishing for forage fish species has on the marine ecosystem, including on vulnerable seabirds. Following the recent call for evidence, Defra, working with others, will be developing a policy on a future management strategy for industrial fishing in UK waters. This includes reviewing our policy for the sand eel fishery in the North Sea.

Birds: Gun Sports

*Asked by **Lord Randall of Uxbridge***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Benyon on 26 July (HL1705), what plans they have to review the close season for woodcock; and what representations they have received from (1) conservation organisations, (2) game shooting organisations, in relation to any such review. [HL2157]

Lord Benyon: The Secretary of State has received representations from Wild Justice and the Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust regarding reviewing the close season for woodcock.

In their representation, dated 21 March 2022, Wild Justice requested that the Secretary of State use their power under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to

vary the close season for woodcock, as they believe this would be beneficial to the recovery of the native woodcock population. In response to the letter from Wild Justice, the Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust wrote to the Secretary of State on 4 April 2022, setting out their view that restrictions to the close season could be counterproductive and that more research is needed to understand the reasons for the decline of native woodcock and the effects of shooting on their populations.

Defra intends to review Schedule 2 to the Wildlife and Countryside Act, which lists species of birds which may be killed or taken outside a close season. In particular, consideration will be given to the evidence underpinning the listing of species such as woodcock so that we can ensure that recreational shooting is sustainable and does not undermine species recovery. This may include a review of the evidence for the timing and duration of the close season.

Asked by Lord Randall of Uxbridge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made, if any, of the number of woodcock shot annually in each of the last 10 years; and what discussions they have held, if any, with Natural England in relation to the effect of shooting woodcock on the status of woodcock. [HL2158]

Lord Benyon: Data for the number of woodcock shot in each of the last ten years has not been collated. However, there are publicly available game bag returns for the period 1961-2005 through the Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust website (<https://www.gwct.org.uk/research/long-term-monitoring/national-gamebag-census/bird-bags-summary-trends/woodcock/>). Where shooting occurs on protected sites, some bag return reports may be requirements of consent by Natural England.

In response to a request from Defra, Natural England has submitted a briefing to Defra which considered woodcock ecology, population status and possible drivers of woodcock decline (including hunting).

Defra intends to review Schedule 2 to the Wildlife and Countryside Act, which lists species of birds which may be killed or taken outside a close season. In particular, consideration will be given to the evidence underpinning the listing of species such as woodcock so that we can ensure that recreational shooting is sustainable and does not undermine species recovery. This may include a review of the evidence for the timing and duration of the close season.

Boilers: Heat Pumps

Asked by Lord Carrington

To ask Her Majesty's Government what research they have (1) undertaken, or (2) used, to assess the role hybrid heating systems combining boilers with heat pumps can play in decarbonising heat in homes. [HL2080]

Lord Callanan: The Government is collecting data on the in-situ performance, carbon reduction and use of hybrid heat pumps on the gas grid through the Electrification of Heat Demonstration Project, which has installed 153 hybrid (including five "compact hybrid") systems. 75 homes were installed with hybrid heating systems under the Freedom Project over 2017-2018. Hybrids were also installed under the Optimised Retrofit Programme by the Welsh Government. In addition, seven compact hybrid heat pumps have been installed under the Hycompact project.

Asked by Lord Carrington

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the potential deployment rates of heat pumps into heating systems with a gas boiler, and (2) the consequent impact on carbon reduction in the (a) short, (b) medium, and (c) long term. [HL2081]

Lord Callanan: Hybrid heating systems currently make up only a small proportion of the UK's domestic heating market, with less than 2000 being sold in 2021. The Government plans to use an upcoming consultation to explore the potential future role of hybrid heat pumps.

Where a hybrid system is installed with a fossil fuel boiler the emissions savings depend on a number of factors including their usage, design and the thermal efficiency of buildings.

Asked by Lord Carrington

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of which types of home in terms of (1) energy efficiency, and (2) construction, would be the most appropriate to install a hybrid heating system combining boilers with heat pumps. [HL2082]

Lord Callanan: Hybrid installations could potentially play a transitional role in decarbonising heating, especially in homes where building fabric efficiency cannot be sufficiently upgraded making them less suitable for a standalone low temperature heat pump. The Government will consider research and methods for targeting hybrid deployment in buildings in future consultations.

Boilers: Heat Pumps

Asked by Lord Carrington

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made as to whether hybrid heating systems combining boilers with heat pumps are a long-term option for the future of heating in homes, rather than an interim solution in lieu of installing either a hydrogen boiler or heat pump system. [HL2083]

Asked by Lord Carrington

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the role gas and electric hybrid heating systems will play in the longer-term decarbonisation of heat on the gas grid. [HL2084]

Lord Callanan: The Heat and Buildings Strategy acknowledged that hybrid heat pumps could play a transitional role in decarbonising heat in homes. The Government plans to use an upcoming consultation to explore the potential future role of hybrid heat pumps.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: Elections

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to support the use of Bonn Powers by the Office of the High Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina in relation to (1) election law, and (2) the Constitution of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina; and in any such plans, what consideration they are giving to the risk of denial of rights of representation in the House of Peoples for ethnic minorities in the cantons in that country. [HL2074]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The delicate balance of power sharing in Bosnia and Herzegovina is set out in the Dayton Peace Agreement and other documents. These afford certain protections to the three Constituent Peoples and 'Others'. However, misuse of these mechanisms is preventing functional government and blocking progress. There has been no domestic agreement on electoral and constitutional reform despite US and EU facilitated talks. With this in mind and aware of the need for a functional Federation, the UK strongly supports the High Representative and the use of his executive powers should the situation require it.

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had within the Peace Implementation Council of the Dayton Peace Agreement regarding (1) election law reform, and (2) forthcoming elections, in Bosnia and Herzegovina; and to what extent any such discussions have noted the importance of maintaining the ability for full electoral participation by ethnic minorities within the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. [HL2075]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK strongly supports the High Representative and the use of his executive powers should the situation require it. Officials have made this clear in meetings of the Steering Board of Ambassadors of the Peace Implementation Council. The measures he imposed on 27 July are a valuable step towards increasing the integrity and transparency of the 2 October elections. He has also called on Bosnia and Herzegovina's political party leaders to develop domestic solutions to the significant functionality problems. We encourage leaders to engage constructively to find solutions.

British Nationality: Assessments

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on

26 July (HL2043), how many test centres were administering Life in the UK tests each month in (1) 2019, (2) 2020, (3) 2021, and (4) to date in 2022. [HL2171]

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 26 July (HL2043), how many Life in the UK tests were sat each month in (1) 2019, (2) 2020, (3) 2021, and (4) to date in 2022. [HL2172]

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 25 July 2022 (HL 1710), how many Life in the UK test centres have been checking that individuals had waited at least seven days since their last test; and what methods they have been using to monitor this. [HL2173]

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 25 July 2022 (HL 1710), how many individuals have sat the Life in the UK test without waiting at least seven days since their last test. [HL2174]

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 25 July 2022 (HL 1710), what assessment they have made of the requirement that a Life in the UK test be sat no more than once every seven days; and when this requirement was introduced. [HL2175]

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 25 July (HL1710), what assessment they have made of the discrepancy between the use of the words "must" and "should" in the Home Office Guide AN: Naturalisation Booklet: The Requirements and the Process, published on 28 June, which states that individuals must wait seven days after failing a citizenship test, and the GOV.UK website which states that individuals should wait seven days. [HL2176]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: Life in the UK testing is provided and hosted by PSI Services (UK) Limited who operate a self-booking process. 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 and there has never been a formal requirement for customers to wait seven days before taking a test again. The seven day wait before re-taking a test is a suggestion in order to aid candidates' personal preparation. Given there is no requirement, no checks are conducted by test centres, or the online booking system, on the length of time a candidate has waited for their test.

Guidance on gov.uk is being updated to reflect that there is no requirement to wait seven days.

Information on the number of test centres administering Life in the UK tests each month and the number of Life in the UK tests sat each month in 2019 – 2022 is not available in a reportable format. However the number of tests taken each quarter in relation to citizenship and settlement applications can be found on gov.uk.

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 26 July (HL2043), how many unannounced inspections of Life in the UK test centres have taken place in each year since 2010. [HL2242]

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 26 July (HL2043), how many individuals make up an unannounced inspection team of Life in the UK test centres; and how many unannounced inspections have led to the closure of test centres or dismissals of staff. [HL2243]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: Information is not publicly available in a reportable format. Unannounced inspections have recently restarted following a suspension as a result of Covid restrictions. The last inspection before the suspension took place in February 2020.

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government, with regard to the Life in the UK test, whether the test still asks applicants about information in the official test handbook third edition on (1) the UK's membership of the EU, (2) the number of EU Member States, and (3) the names of all EU Member States; and if not, when the material was removed. [HL2244]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: All questions on the EU in the Life in the UK test were removed on our departure from the EU on the 31 January 2020 at 23.00.

An errata slip was added to existing stock of the official test handbook third edition to confirm that customers would not be asked any questions on the EU, or the UK's relationship with the EU as part of the Home Office approved test. The relevant sections were then removed from subsequent prints of the handbook.

British Nationality: Children

Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 6 July (HL Deb cols 1067–1071), how many applications for the discretionary fee waiver on grounds of non-affordability have been received; how many of those applications (1) were successful, and (2) were rejected; and what other options were considered with reference

to the fee itself in advance of the final stage impact assessment. [HL2139]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: Following introduction of the discretionary fee waiver for child citizenship registration applications on 16 June 2022, the Home Office will be carrying out regular review of the number of applications received, as well as the proportion of applications that have been successful or rejected. Information to support this review is currently in the process of being collated, reviewed and assured, and we are therefore not in a position to share figures at this time. We are however considering the best mechanism for updating Parliament with this information and will do so at the earliest appropriate opportunity.

A range of options were considered in relation to the child citizenship registration fee prior to the final stage impact assessment, including a fee reduction. As the then Minister for Safe and Legal Migration outlined in his Written Ministerial Statement of 26 May, the department's view, having considered the different options, is that the introduction of a fee waiver based on affordability represents the most effective means of better facilitating children's access to citizenship, while protecting the sustainable funding of the borders and migration system. This funding supports delivery of the department's key functions, while reducing reliance on the UK taxpayer.

Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 6 July (HL Deb cols 1067–71), what discussions they have had with the Project for the Registration of Children regarding the criticisms made of the (1) guidance, and (2) application process, for the discretionary waiver; and what further consideration they have given to (a) the deletion from the guidance of reference to the impact on the funding of the immigration system, and (b) how to report to Parliament on the ongoing monitoring of the application of the waiver. [HL2227]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: Whilst no discussions have taken place with the Project for the Registration of Children as British Citizens on the guidance and application process for the discretionary fee waiver for child registration applications to date, the department is open to feedback on where improvements could be made. It is actively undertaking its own evaluation of this new service to identify opportunities for continuous improvement.

Regarding the reference in the guidance to the impact on the funding of the immigration system, as noted in Baroness Williams' remarks of 6 July, nationality fees are part of a system of fees and funding that was established through the Immigration Act 2014 and the Immigration and Nationality (Fees) Order 2016, that underpins the overall policy of minimising the reliance on the UK taxpayer. The department maintains the view that the reference in the guidance is a relevant consideration in the

overall affordability assessment undertaken by caseworkers.

The Home Office is monitoring the numbers of applications received, approved or rejected. It is considering the best mechanism for updating Parliament with this information at the earliest appropriate opportunity.

British Virgin Islands: Politics and Government

Asked by Lord Foulkes of Cumnock

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the governance of the British Virgin Islands. [HL2109]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK Government agreed earlier this year with the conclusions of the Commission of Inquiry that identified poor governance in the British Virgin Islands (BVI). The new BVI Government and Premier Wheatley also agreed change was needed and committed to a substantial reform plan. Legislative changes have been made, policy reviews begun and several criminal investigations and audits are under way, with the UK Government providing some funding and expertise. The Governor and UK Government will assess progress quarterly with the first assessment at the end of September.

Broadband: Rural Areas

Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure access to full fibre broadband for all properties and businesses in rural communities. [HL2272]

Lord Kamall: In March 2021 we launched Project Gigabit, our £5 billion mission to deliver lightning-fast, reliable broadband across the UK. Project Gigabit's objective is to level up the UK by giving hard-to-reach areas access to gigabit-capable internet speeds and, coupled with commercial gigabit delivery, ensuring almost all of the UK has access to gigabit-capable internet as soon as possible.

Our Project Gigabit procurements are prioritising delivery to rural, hard-to-reach premises and to those with the lowest broadband speeds. We have recently signed our first local Project Gigabit contract in North Dorset and expect to award further contracts over the coming months.

Furthermore, up to £210 million is available for Gigabit Broadband Vouchers to support rural communities with the cost of installing new gigabit-capable connections.

Building Digital UK's legacy and current programmes have already upgraded over 740,000 premises to gigabit speeds, and we are continuing to move at pace.

Buses and Large Goods Vehicles: Fuels

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they plan to take, if any, to introduce a fuel duty rebate of 15 pence per litre for road haulage vehicles and coaches. [HL2162]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: At Spring Statement 2022, in response to high fuel prices, the Government introduced a temporary 12-month cut to duty on petrol and diesel of 5p per litre.

This represents a tax cut worth around £2.4 billion in 2022-23, benefiting anyone who consumes fuel across the UK – including the road haulage and coach sector.

All taxes remain under review.

Business: Energy

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to increase regulation of the energy market for businesses. [HL2188]

Lord Callanan: The business supply market benefits from greater diversity because it is less regulated than the domestic market. It is important to strike the right balance to assist businesses.

On 8th September the Prime Minister announced a new six-month scheme – the Energy Price Guarantee for Businesses (EPGB) – to protect all businesses and other non-domestic energy users from soaring energy costs. It will offer comparable support to that being provided for consumers and we expect the scheme to be available in the autumn.

Cancer: Children

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the study in PLOS Medicine, Cancer in children born after frozen-thawed embryo transfer: A cohort study, published on 1 September, which reported an increase in the cancer incidence in children born as a result of frozen-thawed embryo transfer; and what steps they are taking to facilitate a follow up to that study by means of controlled comparisons with larger samples. [HL2056]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) has advised that the findings in the PLOS Medicine study should be interpreted with caution, as the number of children born after frozen-thawed embryo transfer in the study who later developed cancer, was very low; 30.1 in 100,000 births.

The HFEA's expert Scientific and Clinical Advances Advisory Committee monitors new studies relating to assisted reproductive technologies, including any impact on children born from treatments. This can lead the HFEA

to recommend new information for patients regarding the risks of any treatment.

Cannabis: Prescriptions

Asked by Lord Field of Birkenhead

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Kamall on 22 July (HL1593), how many (1) NHS, and (2) private, (a) licensed, and (b) unlicensed, prescriptions for cannabis medicines were made for severe treatment-resistant epilepsy in 2022. [HL2101]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: This information is not held in the format requested. The NHS Business Services Authority collects data relating to drugs prescribed in the National Health Service in England and dispensed within a community setting and private prescriptions concerning controlled drugs dispensed in the community. However, information on the condition for which a prescription has been issued is not held centrally.

We are unable to provide the information requested on NHS prescriptions for unlicensed cannabis-based medicines as the number of items is attributed to fewer than five patients and the data could potentially identify individuals.

Carbon Monoxide: Alarms

Asked by Baroness Finlay of Llandaff

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to revise their regulations on carbon monoxide alarms in accommodation to reflect the safety warning issued by the Office for Product Safety and Standards on 15 August on the use of gas grills. [HL2103]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: The Government takes the risks of carbon monoxide poisoning in rented accommodation very seriously. For this reason, we have introduced legislation which comes into force on 1 October 2022 significantly to extend requirements for carbon monoxide alarms, so that they are required in all private and socially rented homes in rooms with fixed combustion appliances and where new fixed combustion appliances are installed in any home.

Consideration was given during the consultation process to including gas cookers (which would include the use of gas grills) in this legislation. The evidence available at the time of consultation showed that gas cookers are responsible for fewer incidents of carbon monoxide poisoning than gas boilers and that, as such, the inclusion of gas cookers within the regulations would be disproportionate. This view was broadly reflected in the responses to the consultation.

Given the imminent commencement of the regulations, there are no current plans to revise the 1 October 2022 regulations. The regulations are, however, subject to review in the future, and we may re-consider the case for inclusion of gas cookers, or other appliances, if required.

Asked by Baroness Finlay of Llandaff

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer from Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist on 20 September (HL2103), what is the timetable for the review of the regulations introduced on 1 October to extend requirements for carbon monoxide alarms. [HL2348]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: The regulations set out that it is the intention of the Government to publish a report on the conclusions of the first review of The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022 by 1st October 2027, five years after the regulations have commenced. In the meantime, we continue to monitor to feedback from the social housing sector on how these regulations are being received and embedded into the sector. In light of the feedback already received, we plan to update the current guidance for tenants, landlords and local authorities.

Carers: Employment

Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, and if so when, they will publish the research on barriers to carers' employment mentioned in the letter from the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to the Chair of the House of Commons Work and Pensions Committee, dated 15 July; and if not, why not. [HL2137]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: We are currently considering the results from the research, and should we decide to publish any findings, we will of course ensure that they are made available to both Houses.

Carers: Migrant Workers

Asked by Baroness Masham of Ilton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to make it easier to employ personal carers from abroad. [HL2233]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: In February 2022, the Government amended immigration rules which allows domiciliary and care home workers to be recruited from overseas. Under current visa rules, overseas recruits are required to work for a registered sponsor. The sponsorship system ensures employers fulfil specific duties to confirm those who apply for permission to enter or stay in the United Kingdom to work are eligible and will comply with the conditions of their visa. Businesses are able to comply with these duties and demonstrate a verifiable track record of operating lawfully in the UK in a way private individuals and households cannot, both within the immigration system and the employer regulatory regime.

This ensures the integrity of the immigration system and provides important welfare safeguards for workers

who migrate to the UK and individuals requiring care. There are no current plans to change this approach.

Cars: Tyres

Asked by Lord Robathan

To ask His Majesty's Government what consideration they have given, if any, to making the provision of a spare wheel in all new cars obligatory. [HL2377]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: There are various solutions to flat tyres including full-sized spare wheels, a temporary use space-saver spare, or a sealant and inflation kit. Many manufacturers choose to provide a sealant and inflation kit which has benefits in reducing the weight of the vehicle and reducing CO₂ emissions.

Incidences of tyre deflation are relatively rare and the Government currently has no plans to introduce a legal requirement for the inclusion of spare wheels on all new cars.

Chemicals: Regulation

Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their current estimate of the cost of leaving the EU REACH programme and creating an alternative UK Register for chemicals. [HL2141]

Lord Benyon: UK REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and restriction of Chemicals) aims to ensure that companies putting chemicals on the market understand and manage the risks they might pose. Under UK REACH, manufacturers and importers have a duty to register chemicals to access the GB market.

The transition to UK REACH has presented some challenges for the chemicals industry, particularly the cost of having to negotiate and potentially pay for access to data needed to support a UK REACH registration. In response to this, in December 2021, we committed to exploring alternative arrangements for UK REACH transitional registrations, aiming to significantly reduce industry costs whilst ensuring high standards to safeguard public health and the environment. This work is still in progress.

Our estimated cost to industry of registering under the original UK REACH model is £2 billion over six years; however, this estimate is uncertain and actual costs would be a matter of commercial negotiation. We have recently consulted on extending the existing deadlines for the transition to UK REACH so companies do not incur these costs while we complete the work to develop an alternative transition model.

Children in Care: Scotland

Asked by Lord Laming

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to reduce the number of children in the care of

English local authorities being placed in Scotland. [HL2130]

Baroness Barran: In England, the responsibility for ensuring a looked-after child or young person is in the appropriate placement rests with local authorities as they are best placed to understand the specific needs of individual children in their care. Local authorities have a duty to ensure sufficient appropriate provision for all of the children they look after.

The department recognises, however, that some local authorities sometimes find it difficult accessing the most appropriate accommodation, particularly for children with the most complex needs, and that children are sometimes placed in locations away from home, when they may be better served by a placement in their local area, were one available.

The lack of available and suitable placements for the most vulnerable children is something this government takes seriously. With that in mind, the government is taking significant steps to support local authorities to fulfil their statutory duties. Between now and 2025, £259 million will be made available to develop and expand the provision of both secure and open homes, to reduce out of area placements, to provide for children with complex needs, and to promote innovative practice to maintain placement stability or prevent children from entering the care system.

Recognising the urgency of action in placement sufficiency, and following the Independent Review of Children's Social Care, the department will also work with local authorities on recruiting more foster carers.

Churches and Historic Buildings: Bats

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government what grants are available to repair medieval artwork damaged by bats in (1) church buildings, and (2) other historical buildings. [HL2251]

Lord Kamall: The £42 million per annum government funded Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme refunds the VAT incurred on the costs of repair and maintenance of Listed Places of Worship of all faiths and denominations. Under the scheme, repairs to wall paintings and murals are eligible as well as works to repair damage to the fabric of the building and mitigation measures to reduce or prevent damage caused by bats.

A Church of England congregation seeking advice on how to assess and address any damage is advised to contact the Head of Conservation at the Cathedral and Church Buildings Division, who may also signpost funders who have supported conservation projects in the past.

Those concerned about other historic buildings will find advice on historic wall paintings, their conservation and how to find an appropriate conservator on the Historic England website:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/buildings/decorative-features/wall-paintings/>.

The Heritage Fund is currently funding a five year long Bats in Churches project that provides practical help and advice on the mitigation and management of bats. The project gives congregations the confidence to cope with their bats positively while giving regard to their protected status under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended). The project runs until October 2023 and will continue to support and enable churches until it closes.

*Asked by **The Lord Bishop of St Albans***

To ask His Majesty's Government how many (1) church buildings, and (2) other historical buildings, in the UK are adversely affected by the presence of bat roosts. [HL2305]

Lord Kamall: Whilst His Majesty's Government does not directly hold this information, we are aware of data through the Bats in Churches project, which is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and is a partnership between Natural England, Historic England, Church of England, Bat Conservation Trust, and Churches Conservation Trust. The project aims to bring together the parties to create solutions to allow bats to be managed in churches either by their exclusion or by restricting access within the church itself to concealed roof spaces. The project has accumulated some data about the prevalence of bats in ecclesiastical buildings.

This data highlighted that around 60% of pre-16th century churches contain bat roosts, many home to nationally important breeding colonies. Churches are known to house larger roosts than other, natural sites.

Of 120 churches with bats consulted by the project partnership, for the 2015 project questionnaire, 90 churches reported damage caused by bats to the fabric of the church building, 81 churches reported damage to more than one monument, and 97 churches reported damage to fixtures and fittings.

Classics: State Education

*Asked by **Lord Black of Brentwood***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to encourage the studying of Classics in state schools in England and Wales. [HL2205]

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

To encourage the study of classics in state schools in England, the department has launched the new £3.9 million Latin Excellence Programme (LEP), beginning in September 2022. The LEP will be delivered by the National Centre of Excellence and run by Future Academies, a multi-academy trust based in London.

The aim of the LEP is to improve pupils' attainment through increased access to, and uptake of, GCSE in

Latin, whilst also contributing to pupils' broader classics education. The National Centre of Excellence will work with up to 40 schools across the country to support high-quality key stage 3 and 4 teaching, using a common curriculum which teachers will be trained to deliver by the Centre.

Clinical Commissioning Groups: Integrated Care Boards

*Asked by **Baroness Redfern***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the challenges of the transition from Clinical Care Commissioning Groups to Integrated Care Boards, and (2) the risk of established ways of working being recreated within the new structures. [HL2279]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: NHS England led a transition programme to design integrated care boards (ICBs) and support the transfer of staff, property and liabilities from clinical commissioning groups (CCGs). Through joint planning and progress monitoring between NHS England and the Department, all 42 ICBs were legally established and no significant transition issues reported.

Whilst CCG functions have been conferred to ICBs and some continuity will remain where appropriate, ICBs are designed to work differently from CCGs. ICBs have new duties under the Health and Care Act 2022. This includes wider and more integrated care pathways, accelerated work on prevention and the determinants of health, new leadership in the National Health Service and new governance arrangements. The new ICB geographies will adopt new ways of working to ensure that the needs of local populations are responded to.

Community Diagnostic Centres: Finance

*Asked by **Lord Scriven***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much funding was allocated at the start of this financial year for NHS diagnostic centres; and how much of this funding has since been diverted to other NHS services. [HL2283]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: The Spending Review in 2021 provided £2.3 billion in capital funding for diagnostic services over the next three years. The majority of this funding will be allocated increase the number of community diagnostic centres (CDCs) to 160 by March 2025 and to expand planned elective diagnostic services. In 2022/23, £900 million has been allocated to the CDC programme and to increase capacity for imaging, endoscopy, lung and mammography screening and improving digital diagnostics. The capital allocation has not been diverted to other services. Revenue funding may be lower than originally envisaged in order to meet the cost of the 2022/23 National Health Service pay settlement.

Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide

Asked by *Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask His Majesty's Government when they last reviewed their compliance with their obligations under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide; and what were the findings of any such review. [HL2320]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is committed to, and fully complies with, its obligations under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, ensuring that both its actions and domestic law are in compliance with those obligations.

Copyright

Asked by *Lord Clement-Jones*

To ask His Majesty's Government what impact assessment they have carried out regarding the implications of the proposed expansion of the text and data mining copyright exception on rights holders outside of copyright, such as performers working across the entertainment industry. [HL2334]

Lord Callanan: The Government asked questions about impact in the consultation on AI and IP but received 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, including performers, on how to best achieve this.

Asked by *Lord Clement-Jones*

To ask His Majesty's Government what are their proposed safeguards for rights holders to protect their content in respect of the proposed expansion of the text and data mining copyright exception. [HL2335]

Lord Callanan: The proposal will provide safeguards which include the requirement for lawful access to works, allowing measures to ensure stability of systems, and a restriction over the further use of copies.

The proposed exception will be targeted to limit negative impacts, and the Government welcomes further views from rights holders on additional safeguards to achieve this.

Asked by *Lord Clement-Jones*

To ask His Majesty's Government what provisions in the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 protect performers from the unauthorised reproduction of their performance using artificial intelligence systems. [HL2336]

Lord Callanan: Performers such as actors and musicians have their performances protected under Part II of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, as

amended. Sections 182 and 182A of the Act give performers the right to control who is able to record and make reproductions of their performances. These provisions apply regardless of the technology used to make such reproductions, including AI technology.

Coronavirus: Vaccination

Asked by *Baroness Taylor of Bolton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government why they have removed Covid vaccine access for five to 11 year olds given that recent rates of reported cases in children have exceeded those in adults. [HL2255]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: There has been no change to the offer of COVID-19 vaccinations for children aged five to 11 years old. In February 2022, the Government accepted advice from the independent Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) for a one-off, non-urgent vaccine offer for children aged five to 11 years old not in clinical risk groups. This offer has been applicable to children aged five years old by 31 August 2022 and eligible children may still receive this vaccination.

On 15 July 2022, the Government accepted the advice of the JCVI to offer a booster vaccination in autumn 2022 for those at higher risk of severe COVID-19. All children aged five years old and over in a clinical risk group are eligible for a booster dose in the autumn campaign.

Asked by *Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, for further COVID-19 vaccination programmes during the autumn of 2022. [HL2264]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: The Government continues to be guided by the independent Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) on COVID-19 vaccinations. On 15 July 2022, the Government accepted the JCVI's advice to offer a booster dose in the autumn to those at higher risk from severe COVID-19 in winter 2022/23. The booster dose will be offered to residents and staff in care homes for older adults; frontline health and social care workers; carers aged 16 years old and over; all adults aged 50 years old and over; and those aged five to 49 years old in a clinical risk group or who are household contacts of someone with immunosuppression.

Coroners: Isle of Wight

Asked by *Baroness Hodgson of Abinger*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Lord Bellamy on 2 August (HL2019 and HL2022), what assessment they have made of reports that some inquests on the Isle of Wight have been unresolved for over 120 weeks; what support is being provided to any affected relatives; what steps they will take, if any, to clear this backlog; and whether such delays are consistent with their policy that the

“bereaved remain at the heart of the coroner system”. [HL2121]

Lord Bellamy: The [Coroner Statistics 2021: England and Wales](#) indicate that the Isle of Wight coroner area reported 95 cases of more than 12 months’ duration at the end of 2021. However, I understand that a number of these have now concluded but a proportion of the remaining cases were opened over 120 weeks ago.

Coroners are independent judicial office holders and the way in which they conduct their investigations and inquests, including the judicial management of any backlogs, is entirely a matter for them. It would therefore be inappropriate for the Government to comment on the management of inquests in a specific coronial area. However, my officials are considering with the Chief Coroner’s Office what actions can appropriately be taken to support the Senior Coroner in this context.

For these cases, as for all other inquests, I would expect coroners and coroner’s officers to adopt best practice in its ongoing liaison with the bereaved families. This would include providing them with the Guide to Coroner Services for Bereaved People, which I mentioned in my answer to PQs HL2019 - HL2022, and which includes details of other organisations which can provide support.

In addition, the bereaved family has Interested Person status in the context of the inquest. As such, they have certain statutory rights. This includes the right to be told about the dates of hearings and to receive documents from the coroner that may be used in the inquest. They are also able to participate in the inquest by having the right to ask relevant questions of witnesses and to receive disclosure of documents and other evidence. The coroner can ask questions on their behalf to help ensure they get the answers they need.

My previous answer to PQs HL2019 - HL2022 summarised the measures being taken by coroner services across the country to ensure that the bereaved remain at the heart of the coroner system. To this end, the Chief Coroner continues to carefully monitor the national position on inquest backlogs whilst utilising feedback, including from key stakeholders, to develop training and guidance for coroners and their teams.

As I explained in my previous response, the Chief Coroner is undertaking a tour of all coroner areas in England and Wales in order to engage with them on post-pandemic recovery plans. I understand he expects to prioritise a visit the Isle of Wight coroner area by the end of this year.

Cosmetics

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask His Majesty’s Government what assessment they have made of the environmental impact of production and release of (1) petrochemical, and (2) mineral UV-filters, currently approved as active ingredients in cosmetics. [HL2326]

Lord Benyon: (1) The Environment Agency (EA) cannot assess the impact on the environment from petrochemical ingredients in cosmetics. Petrochemicals are used in a large range of manufacturing processes and the EA cannot, with confidence, trace petrochemicals in the environment specifically back to the widespread use of cosmetics.

(2) The EA Chemical Assessment Unit published a review of organic UV filters in cosmetics prior to the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and restriction of Chemicals (REACH) regulations coming into force ([here](#) and copy attached). They have a project this year to update it, which will complete by March 2023.

The EA has developed a Prioritisation and Early Warning System (PEWS) for chemicals of emerging concern to ensure consideration of the potential risks of emerging chemicals including to surface waters (both freshwater and saline waters), groundwater and soils. The system allows the EA to sift and to screen any chemical substance nominated using, where available, hazard data and environmental monitoring data to prioritise whether a substance may be a possible chemical of concern in England.

The EA has considered some mineral UV-filters as part of PEWS: zinc oxide in its nanoform; and titanium dioxide in its nanoform. However, both substances have a much broader range of uses beyond cosmetics, so it is not possible to isolate the impact of release from cosmetic use alone. Both substances flagged as low risk in PEWS, but the EA stresses it has low certainty over this outcome, due to a lack of available data.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

UV filters review - Environment Agency [UV filters review EA.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-09-26/HL2326>

Cost of Living Payments: Universal Credit

Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what is their estimate of the number of Universal Credit claimants who did not qualify for the first cost of living additional payment because of the way their wages were paid during the qualifying month. [HL2136]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: We do not currently hold this information. We have deliberately kept the rules for these payments as simple as possible. This is the only way we can ensure that we can develop the systems and processes required to make these payments.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to distinguish between those that have had a permanent increase to their earnings, and those whose earnings are temporarily fluctuating. If a UC claimant’s income subsequently falls, these claimants will return to having a positive award after the cut-off

date and may be eligible for the second Cost of Living Payment, worth £324.

Cycle to Work Scheme

Asked by Lord Oates

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the merits of reforming the Cycle to Work Scheme to broaden access to (1) those earning at, or near, the National Minimum Wage, and (2) those who are self-employed. [HL2143]

Baroness Penn: The Government has committed over £2 billion of investment in cycling and walking during this Parliament to deliver on the commitments made in the 'Gear Change' walking and cycling strategy. This set out the Government's vision for cycling and walking to be the natural first choice for many journeys, with the ambition that half of all short journeys in towns and cities will be walked or cycled by 2030. In line with this vision, the Department for Transport continues to publicise guidance for businesses, large and small, on the different ways they can promote cycling and walking, including the Cycle to Work Scheme.

It is encouraging that there has been an increased uptake of the Cycle to Work Scheme, particularly amongst key workers, over the last few years. Government officials are currently undertaking a programme of research to better understand the success of the Cycle to Work Scheme, including motivations for employees joining the Scheme. Any changes to the Scheme will be considered following this programme.

Asked by Lord Oates

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to increase take-up of the Cycle to Work Scheme in line with their priorities around boosting active travel. [HL2144]

Asked by Lord Oates

To ask Her Majesty's Government what joint working, if any, is taking place across Government to unlock additional benefits of the Cycle to Work Scheme to (1) support workers with the rising cost of commuting, and (2) drive outcomes in (a) public health, and (b) reducing carbon emissions. [HL2145]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Cycling to work can reduce the costs of commuting whilst improving physical and mental health for employees and can help reduce carbon emissions. The Cycle to Work scheme enables people do this more cost effectively and in 2019 the Department revised the guidance on the scheme to make it simpler for employers to offer it to their employees.

The Department regularly promotes the Cycle to Work Scheme and has previously commissioned Business in the Community and Sustrans to publish best practice guidance for employers and local authorities highlighting how employers can enable more of their staff to cycle to work using the scheme. The Department and HMRC are

in regular contact on these and other issues and the Department regularly meets with the Cycle to Work Alliance to identify opportunities to further increase take up of the scheme.

Darlington Station

Asked by Baroness Harris of Richmond

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the proposed station renewal for Darlington will be completed by the time of the bi-centennial celebrations of the Darlington and Stockton Railway in 2025. [HL2119]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Following close work between the Department, Network Rail and Tees Valley Combined Authority, a Full Business Case for a package of interventions at Darlington Station has recently been submitted for consideration. This is currently being reviewed as part of the process for determining if delivery funding will be awarded for the scheme.

Defence: Artificial Intelligence

Asked by Lord Clement-Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government what mechanisms they are considering for compliance or oversight of the use of artificial intelligence in defence; and, in particular, whether mechanisms they are considering include (1) an internal artificial intelligence regulator, (2) the conversion of the principles included in the Defence Artificial Intelligence Strategy, published on 15 June, to specific standards and procedures, and (3) a means to ensure that weapons systems developed, acquired or deployed by the Ministry of Defence comply with any such standards and procedures. [HL2088]

Baroness Goldie: The internal regulation and governance of standards for AI use in Defence are currently subject to extensive work across the Department. Officials and military colleagues are developing frameworks to assess risk and ensure compliance, across the full spectrum of AI functionality.

Key aspects of this will include requiring Front-Line Commands and equivalent organisations within Defence to appoint 'Accountable Officers' ensuring oversight for AI activity and developing the capacity of the Defence Artificial Intelligence Centre to provide technical oversight and coordinated advice to all units across Defence. We are exploring how the Defence Safety Authority will consider AI within the wider issues across its current remit as the existing independent safety regulator.

Defence: Energy

Asked by Lord Lee of Trafford

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their estimate of the effect of increases in energy costs on the

defence budget; and what effect they anticipate such increases will have on defence procurement programmes. [HL2132]

Baroness Goldie: High energy costs, which drive inflation, will reduce the Ministry of Defence's spending power over the Spending Review period and beyond. However, due to its volatility, a precise estimate of the impact of inflation is challenging. Our existing controls will substantially limit exposure and we keep our programmes under constant financial review, using our contingency to manage risks if they materialise.

Defence: Finance

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by the Secretary of State for Defence in an interview with Sky News on 26 July, whether they estimate that defence spending on present plans will drop below two per cent of GDP by 2026. [HL2196]

Baroness Goldie: The Department does not routinely publish forecast figures. The current Spending Review (SR2021) will last until 2025. Future spending decisions are for the next spending review.

Dementia: Health Services

Asked by Lord Goodlad

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will publish the terms of reference for the National Dementia Mission. [HL2216]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: Since its launch, we have commenced the recruitment process for the Chair of the Mission. Once the Chair has been appointed, governance structures and terms of reference will be developed.

Asked by Lord Goodlad

To ask Her Majesty's Government how civil servants will support the delivery of the National Dementia Mission. [HL2218]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: Civil servants from the Office for Life Sciences, Department for Health and Social Care and Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy have been developing the Mission and will continue to be represented in any new governance structures and in supporting the Chair, once recruited. The Senior Responsible Officer for the mission will also be a civil servant.

Dementia: Research

Asked by Lord Goodlad

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will set out their spending plan to meet the target to increase

dementia research funding to £160 million per year by 2024. [HL2217]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: There is no intention to set out a specific spending plan.

Detention Centres: Construction

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government why they have announced plans for a new immigration detention centre creating an additional capacity for 400 men. [HL2241]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: The immigration removal estate is kept under ongoing review to ensure that the Home Office has sufficient resilience, geographical footprint and capacity for the men and women it proves necessary to detain for the purposes of removal, while providing value for money.

As the previous Prime Minister said in April, the Government is expanding its immigration detention facilities to remove those with no right to remain in the UK. In June 2022, the Home Office announced the first stages of procurement to operate a new immigration removal centre (IRC) on the site of the former Campsfield House, Oxfordshire. Our plans for the site of the former Campsfield House IRC are part of that expansion. The new IRC, which will be a secure facility and will accommodate around 400 men, will not be operational until at least late 2023.

Development Aid: Climate Change

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what investments they are funding which aim, as a stated goal, to limit climate migration. [HL2239]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The links between migration and climate change are complex; evidence shows that decisions to migrate are rarely mono-causal, but that climate extremes and environmental degradation often amplify other economic, social and political drivers of migration. Funding that supports adaptation and resilience to climate change therefore helps to reduce climate-related migration. Since 2011 we have directly supported over 88 million people in some of the world's most vulnerable countries to cope with the effects of climate change.

Djibouti: Development Aid

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much UK overseas aid they provided to Djibouti in (1) 2017, (2) 2018, (3) 2019, (4) 2020, and (5) 2021. [HL2248]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK does not have a bilateral aid programme with Djibouti. The UK does make contributions to multilateral programmes, such as

the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), which has allocated funds to Djibouti.

Dockyards

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the provision of urgent short-term dry docking requirements for the Royal Navy, given the break down of HMS Prince of Wales. [HL2097]

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure there are adequate dry docking facilities available within the UK to guarantee that the Royal Navy has access for urgent repairs. [HL2098]

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the reliance on one dry dock facility in the UK by the Royal Navy given the susceptibility (1) to enemy attack, and (2) to occupation by other vessels. [HL2099]

Baroness Goldie: The Ministry of Defence has adequate plans to deal with urgent dry docking requirements for all class of ships operated by the Royal Navy. Where there is not a sovereign dock capability, there are arrangements to use commercial facilities and there is no reliance on a single facility to undertake dry dock maintenance.

Maintenance and dry docking requirements, outside of an urgent requirement, are carefully planned in order to maintain the availability of Royal Navy ships.

Domestic Abuse: Older People

Asked by Baroness Fookes

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will provide additional financial assistance to the charity Hourglass to ensure it can continue to support older victims of domestic abuse and neglect. [HL2106]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: We know that domestic abuse affects a wide and disparate group and that a "one size fits all" approach is not appropriate to support all victims. Whilst anyone can suffer from domestic abuse, for older victims, abuse may be more hidden and disguised, or compounded by other age-related factors such as ill health.

Specialist and 'by and for' services (specialist services that are designed and delivered by and for the users and communities they aim to serve) are vital in providing the tailored support that victims and survivors of domestic abuse need. We work closely with and fund organisations providing this support, including Hourglass. In 2021/22, the Home Office provided Hourglass funding to support their work in enhancing their helpline, providing casework support, and training specialist Independent Domestic Violence Advisers. This financial year we have

continued to provide Hourglass with funding to continue their activity supporting older victims of domestic abuse. In 2021/22 Hourglass supported over 3,000 cases.

Our Tackling VAWG Strategy commits £1.5 million to increase provision for 'by and for' services and to increase funding for specialist services. Alongside this, our Domestic Abuse Plan commits to, where possible, offering multi-year awards to funding to organisations supporting victims and survivors of domestic abuse. This means that smaller organisations, including 'by and for' services, can offer a stable service to victims and survivors.

To deliver against these strategic commitments, later this year, we plan to run an open commercial competition for 'by and for' and specialist VAWG services, including those providing domestic abuse services for older victims.

Domestic Service: Migrant Workers

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many confirmed victims of modern day slavery have been issued with an overseas domestic worker visa; and what percentage this represents of the total number of confirmed victims of modern day slavery. [HL1651]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: Modern slavery data and visa data are held on separate databases and the information requested is not currently available.

Downview Prison: Gender Recognition

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many separate transfers of trans women prisoners with Gender Recognition Certificates to E Wing at HMP Downview have taken place each year since the unit reopened in 2019. [HL2124]

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the (1) maximum, (2) minimum, and (3) median, length of stay for trans women prisoners with Gender Recognition Certificates on E Wing at HMP Downview. [HL2125]

Lord Bellamy: The number of separate transfers of transgender women with Gender Recognition Certificates to E wing since 2019 has been as follows:

2019: 5 or fewer.

2020: 5 or fewer.

2021: 5 or fewer.

2022: 5 or fewer (to date).

(Please note: when disclosing data there is a disclosure control rule that if the number is below 6 it is stated as '5 or fewer', which can include 0).

The maximum length of stay on E wing was 35 months, the minimum length was one month, and the median length is 8.5 months.

Droughts

Asked by **Lord Roberts of Llandudno**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what national preparations, if any, they have made for an increase in frequency and intensity of drought conditions. [HL2238]

Lord Benyon: Despite the dry summer, water companies in England have assured us that essential water supplies remain resilient across the country. It is their duty to maintain those supplies. Defra ministers expect water company action in accordance with their pre-agreed drought plans.

The National Framework for Water Resources, published in March 2020, sets out the strategic water needs for England to 2050 and beyond. The Government is requiring water companies to plan to deliver resilience to a one in 500-year drought, that is not needing to resort to emergency measures, such as stand pipes and rota cuts.

The Government recognises the need to improve the resilience of our water supplies and is committed to a twin track approach to improving water resilience, which is set out in our Strategic Policy Statement to Ofwat, Written Ministerial Statement on Water Demand and in the 25 Year Environment Plan. This involves investing in new supply infrastructure and action to reduce water company leaks and improve water efficiency.

Water companies are using the £469 million made available by Ofwat in the current Price Review period (2019-2024) to progress the infrastructure required. In Autumn 2022, water companies will publish their statutory draft Water Resources Management Plans for consultation, that will set out how they will improve drought resilience and secure water supplies in the long term.

Drugs: Organised Crime

Asked by **Lord McColl of Dulwich**

To ask His Majesty's Government how many people in England and Wales were recorded as victims of 'cuckooing', the exploitation through the occupation and control of their home by others (1) in 2021, and (2) from January to June 2022. [HL2363]

Asked by **Lord McColl of Dulwich**

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the laws available to prosecute those who exploit their victims through occupation, use and control of the victim's home, known as 'cuckooing'; and how many (1) prosecutions, and (2) convictions, there were for cuckooing behaviour in 2021. [HL2364]

Asked by **Lord McColl of Dulwich**

To ask His Majesty's Government how many victims of 'cuckooing' were prosecuted for criminal offences related to the criminal activity resulting from this

exploitation (1) in 2021, and (2) from January to June 2022. [HL2365]

Asked by **Lord McColl of Dulwich**

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the particular circumstances which make people vulnerable to exploitation through 'cuckooing', and of the needs of those victims for protection and support. [HL2366]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: This Government is aware of the abhorrent practice of cuckooing which often occurs in the context of the county lines drugs supply model.

We are determined to crack down on county lines gangs and that is why, through the ten-year Drugs Strategy, we are investing up to £145m over three years in our successful County Lines Programme.

Since November 2019 the County Lines Programme has closed over 2,400 lines, made over 8,000 arrests, and engaged over 9,500 individuals through safeguarding interventions.

Whilst data on cuckooing is not held centrally, the latest week of intensification against county lines (conducted by the Home Office-funded National County Lines Co-ordination Centre (NCLCC) in March 2022), saw 799 cuckooed properties visited.

The Home Office is working with NCLCC to raise awareness of cuckooing through training and peer reviews as well as promoting best practice of how to tackle it through the use of civil orders and multi-agency partnership working and intelligence sharing.

East Midlands Railway: WiFi

Asked by **Lord Scriven**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the availability and reliability of Wi-Fi connectivity on East Midlands Railway Services. [HL2284]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: East Midlands Railway monitor the level of wi-fi connectivity on their Intercity services.

East West Rail Line

Asked by **Baroness Randerson**

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they intend to review plans for the completion of East West Rail; and when they intend to complete any such review. [HL2373]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The case for East West Rail between Bletchley and Cambridge is currently under review.

The Government will be providing an update on both the cost and business case in due course.

Asked by **Baroness Randerson**

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Infrastructure and Projects Authority awarding the Connection Stages 2 and 3 project of East West Rail an "appears to be unachievable" rating in its Annual Report on Major Projects 2021–22, published in July. [[HL2374](#)]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The DfT notes the red assessment provided by the IPA. The project is in the concept and design phase. Work continues to refine delivery strategies and the scope, which is normal for a large and complex project.

Economic Systems: Research

Asked by **Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to support or initiate research and study into the moral principles that should guide and limit free-market globalisation. [[HL2223](#)]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: No research has been commissioned specifically on the moral principles that should guide and limit free-market globalisation. The UK Government continues to be mindful of the ethical dimensions of globalisation in policy formation.

Educational Institutions: Food

Asked by **Baroness Goudie**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take to mitigate the impact of increased costs on the quality of the menus provided by education providers. [[HL2114](#)]

Asked by **Baroness Goudie**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take to ensure that vulnerable school children receive a healthy, nutritious, and free hot meal every day, without affecting the sustainability of school budgets. [[HL2115](#)]

Baroness Barran: The department recognises the cost pressures that some schools and suppliers may be facing, and are holding regular meetings with other government departments and food industry representatives, covering a variety of issues including public sector food supplies.

Under the benefits-related criteria, the department provides a free, healthy meal to around 1.9 million children. This ensures they are well-nourished and can concentrate, learn and achieve in the classroom. Schools fund benefit-related free school meals (FSM) from their core funding, which they receive through the schools block of the dedicated schools grant (DSG). This is derived from the national funding formula (NFF). For the 2022/23 financial year, the funding schools attract through the FSM factor in the NFF is increasing to £470 per eligible pupil.

Cost pressures should be seen in the wider context of funding for schools. In recognition of cost pressures, after the NFF rates were set, the department received additional funding from HM Treasury for core schools funding in the 2022/23 financial year, which we distributed through a schools supplementary grant. As a result of this additional funding, core schools funding for mainstream schools is increasing by £2.5 billion in the 2022/23 financial year, compared to last year.

The department also spends around £600 million on Universal Infant Free School Meals each year. The per meal rate has been increased to £2.41, and backdated to 1 April 2022, in recognition of increased costs.

Schools have the autonomy to agree individual contracts with school food suppliers and caterers. Schools and trusts can also utilise the department's Get Help Buying for Schools Service, which provides specialist support, advice and guidance for schools around their procurement activity, including support for complex procurements such as catering and signposting to DfE recommended frameworks for schools and trusts.

The standards for school food are set out in the requirements for school food regulations 2014 and are to ensure that schools provide children with healthy food and drink options, and to make sure that children get the energy and nutrition they need across the school day.

Schools also have flexibility under the School Food Standards to substitute food and regularly update and change menus. They may make changes if ingredients or meals are not readily available.

Electric Scooters

Asked by **Lord Young of Cookham**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Vere of Norbiton on 28 July (HL1954), whether they will publish the estimated figures of privately owned e-scooters in the UK from (1) 2020, and (2) 2021. [[HL2260](#)]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: 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 currently do not have data for the whole of the UK, or data for 2022.

Electric Scooters: Imports

Asked by **Lord Young of Cookham**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of e-scooters imported into the UK in (1) 2020, (2) 2021, and (3) 2022. [[HL2262](#)]

Baroness Penn: HMRC is responsible for the collection and publication of data on imports and exports of goods to and from the UK. HMRC releases this information monthly, as a National Statistic called the Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics (OTS), which is available via their dedicated website. From this website, it

is possible to build your own data tables based upon bespoke search criteria.

Classification codes (according to the Harmonised System) are available to assist you in accessing published trade statistics data in the UK Global Tariff. Goods moving to and from the UK are identified by an eight-digit commodity code. These are publicly available from the UK Trade Tariff on the gov.uk website.

HMRC are unable to provide the requested information due to the way E-scooters are classified. E-scooters do not have their own specific commodity code. Instead, they are classified within more general codes, dependent on a few factors. For example, commodity code 8711601000 covers bicycles, tricycles, and quadricycles, with pedal assistance, with an auxiliary electric motor, and with a continuous rated power not exceeding 250 watts. However, there are other commodity codes that could also be applicable to E-scooters.

More information about any specific commodity code within the UK Trade Tariff can be accessed via UK import and export statistics on the UK trade information website.

Electric Scooters: Regulation

Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to review the regulations surrounding the riding of e-scooters. [HL2206]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Department is currently considering options, including robust technical requirements, for a new regulatory framework for e-scooters. These regulations will ensure that we increase the safety of e-scooters users and manage the impacts of e-scooters in the UK.

Electric Scooters: Sales

Asked by Lord Young of Cookham

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 26 July (HL1955), what discussions they have had with local Trading Standards regarding retailers selling private e-scooters in the last 12 months. [HL2261]

Lord Callanan: None. Local Trading Standards offices operate independently of central Government and their enforcement priorities are a matter for local authorities.

Electric Vehicles: Sales

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to estimates that new electric vehicle registrations for 2022 could reach 16 per cent, what plans they have, if any, to raise their target proposed in the Technical consultation on zero emission vehicle mandate policy design, published in April, that new electric vehicle

sales should account for 22 per cent of total vehicle sales by 2024. [HL2375]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The technical consultation on the design of the ZEV mandate, setting out initial ZEV target trajectories of 22% for cars, and 8% for vans, closed on 10 June. We are now analysing consultation responses, and will bring forward the Government's response, and a full regulatory proposal, in due course

Electricity Interconnectors

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are making maximum use of electricity inter-connectors with (1) France, (2) Norway, (3) Iceland, and (4) other countries; and to what extent such use helps limit price increases. [HL2220]

Lord Callanan: Great Britain has electricity interconnectors with France (4 GW), Norway (1.4 GW), Belgium (1 GW), the Netherlands (1 GW) and the island of Ireland (1 GW). There are currently no electricity interconnectors to Iceland.

The Government works closely with National Grid Electricity System Operator (ESO) and the transmission system operators of all connected countries to ensure that the maximum interconnector capacity is available for use.

Increased interconnection promotes competition, leading to reduced consumer bills. Ofgem estimated the net total quantifiable impact on GB consumer welfare to be greater than £20 billion for projects under their regulatory regime, to date.

Energy: Business

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to remove the VAT on business energy bills. [HL2190]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: Most businesses that are VAT registered can normally reclaim any VAT incurred on energy, so a VAT cut would not benefit them. If a business is under the VAT registration threshold – the level at which they must register for VAT - they can choose to register for VAT voluntarily which would allow them to reclaim VAT on their supplies of energy, subject to the usual rules.

Any businesses that use fuels for energy below a de minimis level are deemed to be in receipt of 'domestic supplies' and can therefore already benefit from the reduced rate of VAT for domestic fuel and power at 5%.

Energy: Housing

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to remove the VAT on household energy bills. [HL2189]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The Government has announced a new ‘Energy Price Guarantee’ to limit the price suppliers can charge customers for units of gas and electricity. This will save the average household £1,000 a year based on current energy prices from October.

In recognition of the fact that families should not have to bear all of the VAT costs they incur to meet their needs, domestic fuels such as gas, electricity and heating oil are already subject to the reduced rate of VAT at 5 per cent.

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to promote energy efficiency in (1) private housing, (2) private rented accommodation, and (3) social housing. [HL2265]

Lord Callanan: In the Net Zero Strategy, we committed to consulting on phasing in higher minimum performance standards to ensure all homes meet EPC Band C by 2035, where cost-effective, practical and affordable.

The Government is investing over £6.6 billion over this parliament to improve energy efficiency and decarbonise heating. We will deliver upgrades to over half a million homes in the coming years through our Social Housing Decarbonisation, Home Upgrade Grant Schemes and Energy Company Obligation Scheme, delivering average bill savings of £500, based on recent price cap estimates.

We have also launched a digital service providing impartial, tailored advice on energy efficiency. This will be supported by the launch of additional support for homeowners through telephone advice and specific local area advice for energy consumers.

Eritrea: Politics and Government

Asked by Baroness Goudie

To ask His Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of Eritrea about the People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ) organising concerts and festivals in (1) London, and (2) other European capitals; and what assessment, if any, they have made of those events. [HL2355]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: We are aware of the events organised by the Eritrean Government and ruling party in countries across Europe, including the UK. After one such event organised by the Eritrean Embassy in London in September, clashes between attendees and protestors resulted in several arrests. Following this event, the FCDO has encouraged the Eritrean Embassy to communicate with their dedicated police liaison officer to ensure that any future events pass off peacefully.

Ethiopia: Violence

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask His Majesty's Government what was the result of the Joint Analysis of Conflict and Stability (JACS)

assessment for Ethiopia; and within that assessment, what was the risk of (1) identity-based violence, and (2) mass atrocities. [HL2294]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: A Joint Analysis of Conflict and Stability (JACS) was completed earlier this year. The JACS was commissioned to develop a cross-HMG understanding of the drivers, dynamics, triggers and resilience for conflict, insecurity and instability in Ethiopia and the implications for UK interests and priorities. It is being used to guide HMG's approach to supporting peace and stability in Ethiopia and prevent human rights abuses and violations as a result of conflict.

Eurostar: Ashford International Station

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effect of the decision by Eurostar not to have any of its trains calling at Ashford International station on the economy of east Kent. [HL2066]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Eurostar's decision to temporarily not stop at Ashford and Ebbsfleet International stations was a commercial decision taken by Eurostar in response to the severe decline in passenger numbers.

The Government engages very regularly with Eurostar and continues to monitor very closely the continued impact of COVID-19 on the international rail sector, as well as the decisions taken by companies in response. The Government is keen to see the reinstatement of services to Ashford and Ebbsfleet once it is reasonably possible and commercially viable to do so.

Exchange Rates: Dollar

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the main reasons for the long-term decline of the value of the pound against the US dollar. [HL2327]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: Financial market movements are determined by a wide range of domestic and international factors. It is not appropriate for the government to comment on specific currency market movements. The UK does not have an exchange rate target and the Government does not have a desired level for sterling – the price is determined by the market. The UK's macroeconomic framework is based on an inflation target, and it is for the independent Monetary Policy Committee to set monetary policy to meet this target.

F-35 Aircraft

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government for how many days in the first six months of 2022 were UK F35s embarked

on (1) HMS Queen Elizabeth, and (2) HMS Prince of Wales, at sea; what numbers were embarked on each ship each day; how many flying hours were conducted each day; and how many pilots were of the (a) Royal Navy, and (b) Royal Air Force, for each day. [HL2197]

Baroness Goldie: Assuming the question relates to embarked flying hours, in the first six months of 2022, zero F-35s have been embarked on Queen Elizabeth Carriers (QEC) at sea. Therefore, zero flying hours have been conducted and pilots from the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force have not been required.

The composition and size of an embarked air group in a deploying carrier will be tailored to meet operational requirement - the operational tasking of the QEC in the first six months of 2022 has not required F-35s to be embarked.

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask His Majesty's Government when 809 Squadron will be formed. [HL2315]

Baroness Goldie: 809 Naval Air Squadron is due to stand up on 1 April 2023.

F-35 Aircraft: Crew

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many fully trained F35B pilots are in (1) the Royal Navy, and (2) the Royal Air Force; and how many are night-qualified for carrier operations. [HL2198]

Baroness Goldie: The UK Lightning Force is fully capable of meeting its currently mandated operational outputs including commitments to support the Very High Readiness Carrier Strike Group. However, I am withholding the number of personnel, as disclosure would be likely to prejudice the capability, effectiveness, or security of the Armed Forces.

F-35B Lightning aircraft are operated jointly within the UK Lightning Force, with all units manned by both Royal Air Force and Royal Navy personnel. There is no delineation between Services.

F-35 Aircraft: Software

Asked by Lord Goddard of Stockport

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the UK's fleet of F35B jet fighters has been supplied with the software necessary to allow fully autonomous mission planning. [HL2112]

Baroness Goldie: The UK Lightning Force is designed, operated and supported in a manner which provides full Sovereign freedom of action in all operational contexts, from mission planning through to execution.

Family Hubs

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide additional Family Hubs over and above the funding already announced. [HL2263]

Baroness Barran: The government has announced 75 local authorities that are eligible to receive funding for family hubs. These were selected based on levels of disadvantage, targeting the areas with the highest levels of deprivation and disproportionately poor health and educational outcomes. Although we would like to see family hubs across the country, it is crucial that we now focus on delivering well in the local authorities already selected.

The investment in family hubs is significant and will have a wide reach across the country to improve outcomes for thousands of babies, children, and families, helping to deliver this government's levelling up ambitions. We are not starting from zero, many local authorities already provide excellent early years and family support services. The evidence and learning from this investment will help to improve services across England, where they are most needed.

The department has set up the National Centre for Family Hubs (NCFH), to provide expert advice and guidance to all local authorities, local commissioners, academies, schools and third sector bodies with regards to transforming to family hubs. The NCFH hosts a comprehensive resource library and implementation toolkit to support family hubs providers. This work is supported by disseminating a regular newsletter, a series of learning events, and a community of practice. More information on the NCFH can be found here: <https://www.nationalcentreforfamilyhubs.org.uk/>.

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of Family Hubs and their efficacy. [HL2266]

Baroness Barran: The government announced a £301.75 million package to transform services for parents, carers, babies and children in half of the local authorities across England in the autumn 2021 Budget. This package will create a network of family hubs in those areas and builds on the £39.5 million already committed, which includes funding to support a further 12 local authorities to transform services to a family hub model.

Family hubs are a place-based way of joining up locally in the planning and delivery of family services. They are a local innovation, developed to meet local needs and better support families.

Through the family hubs programmes, the department will continue to learn and gather insights on family hub provision and their effectiveness. We will be building the evidence base through the evaluation of family hubs, both

existing and new models, which will support local authorities with good practice on evaluation, implementation and outcomes of their family hubs services. Additionally, the department will be running behavioural insight projects to ensure take-up of family hub services by underrepresented families and we will also collect data, such as family hubs maturity and outcomes. This will help with developing effective family hubs.

Further information on the evaluation of family hubs can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evaluation-of-family-hubs>.

Fire Prevention

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to prevent further wildfires. [HL1983]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: The Home Office works across Government with a wide range of stakeholders including the National Fire Chiefs Council, England and Wales Wildfire Forum and other Departments and Agencies including Defra and the Met Office to promote planning and prevention for wildfire incidents in England.

At a local level, each Fire and Rescue Authority is required to plan for the foreseeable risks in their area (including wildfires) through their Integrated Risk Management Plan. This will include plans to prevent and respond to incidents and Fire and Rescue Services will have regard in their planning to other key local responders including landowners and other emergency services.

Fleet Solid Support Ships: Procurement

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask His Majesty's Government what is the current status of their proposed order of three Fleet Solid Support ships; whether they still intend that these ships will be built in the UK; and when they intend to launch the Home Shipbuilding Credit Guarantee Scheme. [HL2378]

Baroness Goldie: With reference to the first element of the Noble Lord's question relating to the Fleet Solid Support ships, I refer the noble Lord to the answers provided by my hon. Friend, the then Minister for Defence Procurement (Jeremy Quin), in the House of Commons on 4 July 2022 to the right hon. Member for Wentworth and Dearne (John Healey), in response to Question HC27511; and on 29 June 2022 to the right hon. Member for North Durham (Kevan Jones) to HC24549.

I can also confirm that the Government intends to launch the Home Shipbuilding Credit Guarantee Scheme later this year, subject to final Ministerial and HM Treasury approvals. This scheme will provide transactional cover for UK companies to underwrite the finance of new commercial vessel contracts. This will

stimulate the industry by increasing the competitiveness of UK commercial shipbuilding.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Fleet Solid Support Ships; Procurement [24549 - Fleet Solid Support Ships Procurement.docx]

Fleet Solid Support Ships; Procurement [27511 - Fleet Solid Support Ships Procurement.docx]

The material can be viewed online at: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-09-26/HL2378>

Forests: West Midlands

Asked by Baroness Benjamin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking, if any, to ensure the Urban Forest is preserved in its entirety as stipulated in the Deed of Dedication between the Millennium Commission and Sandwell Metropolitan Council. [HL2063]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: The responsibility for enforcing Deeds entered into by the Millennium Commission is now the responsibility of the Big Lottery Fund (operating as The National Lottery Community Fund) which carries out those functions in accordance with their regulations and directions from DCMS and in line with current policies relating to the administration of legacy funders such as the Millennium Commission.

The National Lottery Community Fund is a non-departmental public body which means that it operates at arm's-length from Government and, as a distributor of Lottery money, rather than of taxpayers' funds, it makes its funding decisions independently. The Government cannot, therefore, intervene in or influence the Fund's decision-making process.

Fracking

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to lift the ban on fracking. [HL2285]

Lord Callanan: Putin's illegal invasion of Ukraine and restrictions on gas supply to Europe, have emphasised the need for 'home grown' sources of energy to reduce our reliance on imports.

My rt. hon. Friend the Prime Minister announced on Thursday 7th September that the Government will end the pause on extracting shale gas.

Freeports

Asked by Lord Kilclooney

To ask Her Majesty's Government where are the freeports in (1) England, (2) Wales, and (3) Scotland; and whether they intend to establish a freeport in Northern Ireland. [HL2129]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: In March 2021, the Chancellor announced 8 locations as winners of the English Freeports competition: East Midlands Airport, Felixstowe & Harwich (Freeport East), Humber, Liverpool City Region, Plymouth & South Devon, Solent, Teesside, and Thames. Subsequently, Freeports have been working with government to develop business cases and secure the necessary designations in law. Tax sites have now been designated in all English Freeports and customs sites have been designated in Teesside, Thames and, more recently, Solent Freeports.

The UK government is investing £52 million to bring two Green Freeports to Scotland. Bidding has now closed, and we are working jointly with the Scottish Government to jointly assess bids to ensure they meet our shared goals, ahead of announcing winners later in the autumn.

A Welsh Freeport will be backed by £26 million in UK Government funding. The prospectus was published 01 September and it expected that the successful Freeport location will be announced later this year.

We are committed to extending the Freeports programme to Northern Ireland as soon as possible.

Freeports: National Parks

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to amend (1) planning rules, and (2) other regulations, in national parks included within the boundaries of freeport zones. [HL2322]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: By delivering investment on specific priority sites, Freeports will create thousands of high-quality jobs in some of our most disadvantaged communities. These sites have been carefully selected for their suitability for development by the local Freeport coalition, which comprises key private partners and Local Authorities who, importantly, provide democratic accountability for the actions of the Freeport. The development sites sit within an 'outer boundary' which sets the limit for how far apart they can be and broadly indicates the area they expect to benefit most directly from the Freeport's economic impacts. This in no way means that the area has been earmarked for development nor does this confer any special planning status. Local Authorities retain all their statutory powers and responsibilities, including responsibility for providing planning permission. Freeport status in no way undercuts the local planning process and there is no change to the current planning and environment status of national parks.

Fuel Oil: Price Caps

Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take to cap the price of (1) oil, (2) liquefied petroleum gas, and (3) other heating fuels, not currently covered by the energy price cap. [HL2230]

Lord Callanan: The Government has carefully considered the introduction of a price cap to help domestic fuel customers with high fuel prices, however analysis indicates that a cap would not be in the long-term interests of consumers.

The existing gas and electricity price cap was designed to protect consumers on default tariffs from the loyalty penalty, which the Competitions and Markets Authority warned was causing customers to be overcharged. The structure of the heating oil and LPG markets is different and imposing a price cap below wholesale costs would drive companies out of the market, reducing competition and possibly result in supply shortages.

Gambling Act 2005 Review

Asked by Lord Foster of Bath

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will publish their response to their review of the Gambling Act 2005, which ran from 8 December 2020 to 31 March 2021. [HL2267]

Lord Kamall: The Gambling Act Review was launched with the publication of a wide-ranging Call for Evidence, which closed in March 2021 and received over 16,000 responses. We will publish a white paper setting out our conclusions and next steps in the coming weeks.

Health Professions: Training

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their policy intention in capping the number of trainee medical professionals in the UK. [HL2167]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: Decisions on the number of trainee medical professionals in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland is a devolved matter. While the Government currently has no plans to increase the cap on medical school places in England, we continue to keep this under review.

High Speed 2 Line: Water Abstraction

Asked by Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will publish regular water quality data from the public water abstraction points being affected by HS2. [HL2270]

Lord Benyon: In England, water companies have a duty to carry out assessments to identify any risks to the water supply from source to tap, which includes any large-scale construction work in the area. They will monitor the quality of water at abstraction points and, where necessary, put mitigations in place to ensure that drinking water supplies are protected and comply with drinking water standards at all times. The raw water quality results are reported to the Drinking Water Inspectorate, the independent regulator of drinking water in England and Wales, and shared with the Environment Agency.

The Chief Inspector of Drinking Water publishes quarterly and annual reports covering drinking water quality testing and results, public confidence in drinking water and technical audit activity.

<https://www.dwi.gov.uk/en/what-we-do/annual-report/>

The Environment Agency publishes raw water quality results. Due to National Security considerations, not all data on specific abstraction points is published.

<https://environment.data.gov.uk/water-quality/view/landing>

High Speed Two

Asked by **Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will publish the Mitigation Strategy for the impact of HS2 on the natural water resources. [HL2269]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: HS2 Ltd's approach to managing the impact of HS2 on the water environment is set out in a number of published documents, including Information Paper E4: Water Resources and Flood risk.

The mitigation approach is driven by existing environmental law, Protective Provisions in the Acts which authorise the railway and additional commitments made to Parliament, including the project's "Environmental Minimum Requirements". As a result, HS2 Ltd's contractors are required to fully assess risks to the water environment from all their activities and to mitigate risks through design or other interventions.

As the regulator for the water environment in England, the Environment Agency reviews those risk assessments and mitigation strategies, and grants approvals to proceed when it is satisfied the risks are suitably managed and adverse impacts are unlikely to occur.

High Speed Two: Colne Valley

Asked by **Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb**

To ask Her Majesty's Government when HS2 Ltd will cease to be financially liable for public water sources in the Colne Valley and for the replacement of public water supplies. [HL2268]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: As it builds the new railway in the Colne Valley, HS2 Ltd has been working closely with Affinity Water to ensure that there continues to be no interruption to the provision of high-quality drinking water. Working alongside Affinity Water and the Environment Agency (EA), HS2 Ltd has funded a range of protective measures to ensure resilience of public water supply.

Historic Buildings

Asked by **Lord Clement-Jones**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans, if any, they have (1) to list, (2) to preserve, and (3) to restore, buildings of significance in the fight for women's

suffrage so that these places are not lost for future generations; and what assessment they made of the challenges faced by those seeking to save Dorset Hall, the former home of suffragette Rose Lamartine Yates. [HL2090]

Lord Kamall: The Department is working through its Arm's-Length Bodies, Historic England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund, to list, preserve, and restore historic buildings of significance to the suffrage movement.

As 2018 marked the centenary of the 1918 Representation of the People Act, Historic England sought, with help from researchers and the public, to commemorate the centenary by highlighting and listing places that played a part in the struggle for suffrage and subsequent gender equality through its 'HerStories' campaign. These can be found on Historic England's [website](#).

Historic England have been engaging with the Local Authority, to help secure the necessary repairs to the historic building of Dorset Hall. Historic England established what essential works were required and provided specialist support and advice to ensure that these identified works were satisfactorily completed by Spring 2022.

The National Lottery Heritage Fund has also supported a range of projects related to the suffragette movement. These include a partnership project led by the East End Women's Museum to tell the story of the suffragettes in London's East End; the Rebellious Sounds Archive's creation of the first oral archive of women's activism stories in the South West and Rooms of Our Own, an ongoing project being delivered to uncover the history of the Pankhurst Centre, the former home of Emmeline Pankhurst and the place from where the suffragette movement was born.

HIV Infection: Prisoners

Asked by **Lord Black of Brentwood**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many prisoners in England and Wales have tested positive for HIV while in prison in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [HL2070]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: The information requested is not held centrally.

Home Office: Teleperformance

Asked by **Lord Rosser**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the termination date for Teleperformance's contract to provide overseas helpline services on behalf of the Home Office; and what assessment they have made of complaints against Teleperformance in relation to Home Office services including (1) the number of complaints made in relation to passports, and (2) the

total compensation awarded to customers in relation to complaints. [HL2246]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: The contract relating to the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) international Contact Centre service, delivered by Teleperformance, runs from March 2021 until October 2024.

Any complaints made against the UKVI Contact Centre services, which Teleperformance deliver, are managed and monitored by UKVI to ensure that any emerging issues and trends are picked up and remedial action is put in place to ensure no future complaints occur.

The UKVI Contact Centre service has not received any complaints relating to passports. Where customers are complaining about the return of their passports this would fall to the appropriate UKVI business area to handle.

We do not hold the data relating to how much compensation has been issued in relation to contact made to the UKVI Contact Centre, as this is held by Teleperformance.

Teleperformance also provide contact centre services for His Majesty's Passport Office (HMPO), the Passport Adviceline and Validation service. The contract for this service runs from 1 November 2019 to 31 October 2024.

The total number of complaints regarding Teleperformance made to HMPO relating to passports this year is 658. The data regarding compensation for these specific cases is not held in a reportable format and therefore it could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost.

Homelessness: Death

Asked by Lord Field of Birkenhead

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many homeless people have died on the street in each of the last five years. [HL2102]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: The Office for National Statistics began to produce estimates of deaths of homeless people in England and Wales in 2017 and the most recent publication covered deaths in 2020. There were an estimated 688 deaths of homeless people registered in England and Wales in 2020, 778 estimated deaths in 2019, 726 deaths in 2018 and 597 in 2017.

These statistics are published online at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/bulletins/deathsofhomelesspeopleinenglandandwales/previousReleases>

These statistics do not indicate whether deaths occurred on the street or within accommodation. The definition of homelessness used in these statistics follows from what is available in death registrations data to identify affected individuals, which mainly includes people sleeping rough or using emergency accommodation such as homeless shelters and direct access hostels, at or around the time of death.

The Government is committed to ending rough sleeping and has published a strategy backed by £2 billion setting out how we will achieve that.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Deaths of homeless people England and Wales 2017 [PQ HL2102 Deaths of homeless people in England and Wales local authority estimates 2013 to 2017.docx]

Deaths of homeless people England and Wales 2018 [PQ HL2102 Deaths of homeless people in England and Wales 2018.docx]

Deaths of homeless people England and Wales 2019 [PQ HL2102 Deaths of homeless people in England and Wales 2019 registration.docx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-09-05/HL2102>

Homes for Ukraine Scheme

Asked by Lord Turnberg

To ask Her Majesty's Government what support they plan to offer Ukrainian refugees housed with British families when the initial six month period of the Homes for Ukraine scheme ends. [HL2191]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: As we move towards the next phase of the programme, we have set out options and support available to sponsors and guests that are coming to the end of their initial six-month sponsorship. Updated guidance is published on gov.uk for sponsors, guests, and local councils. This includes information on rematching, and helping guests to live independently by providing guidance on the UK housing market, support in developing necessary language skills and finding jobs.

The guidance for the Homes for Ukraine guests, hosts and councils setting out all the support options available to them can be accessed (attached) here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homes-for-ukraine-guidance-for-councils#four-to-6-months-after-guests-have-moved-to-your-area>.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Four to 6 months after guests have moved area [PQ HL2191 Four to 6 months after guests have moved to your area.docx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-09-05/HL2191>

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Chelmsford

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the longer-term sustainability of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. [HL2328]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: We are working closely with local councils and voluntary and community sector partners to monitor the housing landscape for Ukrainian households, develop our strategy and actively explore options to find suitable long-term accommodation for

those who are likely to stay in the UK beyond the initial six months. We are also supporting Ukrainians that want to stay in sponsorships for a longer period, but with a different host by enabling a process of rematching and will continue to develop our bank of potential sponsors.

Hospitality Sector: Finance

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to introduce an emergency financial support package for the hospitality sector. [HL2287]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The Government appreciates that many businesses are exposed to increased energy costs, driven by global factors.

The new Energy Bill Relief Scheme (EBSS), unveiled on 21 September, will provide a discount on wholesale gas and electricity prices for businesses, including those in the hospitality sectors. This will apply to fixed term contracts – agreed on or after 1 April 2022 – as well as deemed, variable and flexible tariffs and contracts. The guarantee will apply to energy usage from 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023, and this support will be automatically applied to bills.

The Growth Plan (2022) fulfilled the Government's commitments to cut taxes and set the direction for regulatory reform. The planned rise in the rate of Corporation Tax will not go ahead and the Annual Investment Allowance will be permanently set at £1 million, freeing businesses to invest and grow. The reduction in the rate of National Insurance will make it cheaper for businesses to employ staff and pay higher wages; and reforms to Universal Credit will ensure claimants are supported to seek more and better paid work. In the coming weeks, the Government will set out further supply side reforms which will promote growth and ease the burden on businesses.

This is in addition to the 50% business rates relief for eligible hospitality businesses, and the increased Employment Allowance worth up to £5,000.

The Government has taken action to protect businesses from soaring energy costs and provided them with the certainty they need to plan, invest, and grow.

House of Lords: Location

Asked by Lord Norton of Louth

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Harrington of Watford on 28 July (HL952), what research they have undertaken on the availability and cost of alternative sites to the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre for hosting the House of Lords during any potential decant of Parliament; and what was the cost of this research. [HL2298]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: DLUHC has not undertaken any work on the availability and cost of alternative locations for the potential House of Lords decant during the Restoration and Renewal Programme.

Nor has it led on developing the proposed costings work for the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre. In the context of the Places for Growth programme, the Government has previously explored whether space outside London would allow for parliamentary activity. The location of Parliament is a matter for Parliament.

Housing: Construction

Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to increase (1) energy, and (2) water, efficiency in new housing. [HL2142]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: From 2025, the Future Homes Standard will ensure that new homes produce at least 75% fewer CO2 emissions compared to those built to the 2013 standards. In December 2021 the Government introduced an uplift in energy efficiency standards, which came into force in June 2022. The uplift delivers a meaningful reduction in carbon emissions and provides a stepping-stone to the Future Homes Standard. New homes are now expected to produce around 30% fewer CO2 emissions compared to the previous 2013 standards.

With regard to water, the Government continues to review options regarding improving efficiency and will come forward with further information in due course.

Housing: Water

Asked by Lord Goddard of Stockport

To ask His Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to introducing a mandatory requirement to include water capture capabilities in all new build residential properties. [HL2349]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: In July 2021 the Government issued a Written Ministerial Statement, which can be found (attached) here: <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2021-07-01/hcws140>, on reducing demand for water in response to the Defra consultation on 'measures to reduce personal water consumption'. Within this statement, we committed to developing a roadmap towards greater water efficiency in new developments and retrofits, including 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. We plan to publish this roadmap by the end of 2022.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Written Statement [Written statements - reducing water demand.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-09-26/HL2349>

Human Trafficking: EU Law

Asked by Lord Coaker

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of section 68 of the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 on the rights of victims of modern slavery. [HL2211]

Asked by Lord Coaker

To ask Her Majesty's Government which articles and sections of Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking they have identified as being incompatible with the Nationality and Borders Act 2022. [HL2212]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: The Government remains committed to tackling the scourge of modern slavery.

Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combatting trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims (the "EU Trafficking Directive") was adopted on 5 April 2011.

The Nationality and Borders Act provides legislative clarity to victims and decision makers on victims' rights, including the entitlement to a recovery period and the circumstances in which confirmed victims may be granted permission to stay.

Section 68 of the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 disapplied the EU Trafficking Directive insofar as it was incompatible with provisions made by that Act.

The provisions in Section 68 aim to ensure that if there is any provision within the EU Directive that operates on the same subject as the Nationality and Borders Act 2022, whether support for victims or otherwise, there is no confusion as to which applies.

The Government believes that that if there is any provision within the Directive that operates on the same subject as the 2022 Act, whether support for victims or otherwise, it is right that people are not confused as to which applies. More broadly, the Government does not believe that any of the Directive's provisions have been given direct effect by a domestic court and so does not have effect as retained EU law.

This provision does not result in a diminution below the standards laid down in the EU Trafficking Directive, nor does section 68 remove any entitlements from victims. This legal clarification will not have an impact on victim identification, protection and support provided through the National Referral Mechanism.

Human Trafficking and Refugees: Children

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans, if any, they have to end the practice of placing unaccompanied refugee, migrant, or trafficked children in hotels without supervision. [HL2128]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: The UK is experiencing an unprecedented increase in the number of people making

life-threatening journeys to cross the Channel. These boats are often carrying unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC), which have placed unprecedented pressure on the National Transfer Scheme. Out of necessity with the children's best interests in mind, we have arranged for UASC to be accommodated on an emergency and temporary basis in hotels whilst placements with local authorities are being vigorously pursued.

The rise in dangerous small boats crossings means there are significant challenges on local authority care places. The Government has had no alternative but to urgently use hotels to give UASC arriving in the UK a roof over their heads. The Government wants to stop using these hotels but the Home Office cannot do this alone. We are working round the clock with councils to boost the number of long-term care spaces available, through the New Plan for Immigration, and are offering them additional funding in addition to existing monthly funding.

The National Transfer Scheme (NTS) enables a more equitable distribution of responsibility for UASC between local authorities across the UK. However, the high number of UASC arrivals, particularly as a result of small boat crossings, continues to place unprecedented pressure on the NTS.

In November 2021, we took the decision to move to a directed NTS, in addition to the package of NTS improvements implemented in July 2021. Since 15 February all local authorities with children's services in the UK have been directed to participate in the NTS. However, intake remains very high, and the situation remains challenging.

We continue to take action to ensure the NTS works effectively so that children are transferred promptly and to end the use of hotels.

On 24 August 2022, we wrote to all UK local authorities and devolved equivalents with children's services, announcing changes to the NTS. We have increased the threshold up to which councils have to accept UASC into their care from the previous level of 0.07% to 0.1% of their general child population, halved the transfer deadline to five working-days for all UASC not currently in the care of a local authority, and for UASC awaiting transfer into local authority care, we will provide councils with an additional £2000 per child per month for 3 months.

It is not the case that these children are unsupervised. UASC temporarily accommodated in hotels are supported with wrap-around care, including from professional care workers, social workers, and nurses.

Income Tax: Tax Rates and Bands

Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their estimate of the number of adults (1) in paid work, and

(2) not in paid work, who have incomes below the income tax threshold. [HL2134]

Baroness Penn: Estimates of the number of adults in paid work and not in paid work who have incomes below the Income Tax Personal Allowance during the 2019-20 tax year, the latest year for which these figures are available, are set out below.

	<i>Estimated number of adults in 2019-20 (millions)</i>
Paid work	10.2
Not in paid work	6.7
Total	16.9

Source: Survey of Personal Incomes, tax year 2019 to 2020

The Income Tax Personal Allowance for the 2019-20 tax year is £12,500. The adult population (individuals aged 18 and over) in paid work is based on individuals with employment and/or self-employment income. Other income amounts such as occupational or State pension is not included as paid work but individuals with incomes such as pensions could be in either category. The data underlying the Survey of Personal Incomes is based on a large sample of over 820,000 individuals with incomes reported to HMRC. As is the case with the published Personal Incomes Statistics, these figures are statistical estimates and will be subject to sampling variation.

Inland Waterways: Bridges

Asked by Lord Palmer of Childs Hill

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the job creation and recreational opportunities of repairing broken swing bridges to allow access to inland waterways; and whether they will direct Peel Ports to repair the swing bridge in Faversham. [HL2149]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Department has not made any specific assessment of job creation and recreational opportunities related to the repair of Faversham swing bridge. The Department has, however, been instrumental in encouraging all parties to work together and find a mutually acceptable resolution and will continue to do so.

International Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief

Asked by Lord Singh of Wimbledon

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the International Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief in July resulted in any consensus of action to address the root causes of discrimination against and persecution of those holding different faiths and beliefs. [HL2183]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Conference explored the many facets of freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) through seventeen themed panel sessions and gave a platform to those persecuted for their religion or belief. Forty-seven governments, international organisations and other entities made pledges to take action in support of FoRB. Thirty-four countries joined the UK in signing up to one or more of a set of non-legally binding statements protecting and promoting FoRB for all. The statements and co-signatories are available [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/international-ministerial-conference-on-freedom-of-religion-or-belief-2022-conference-statements): <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/international-ministerial-conference-on-freedom-of-religion-or-belief-2022-conference-statements>.

Asked by Lord Singh of Wimbledon

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether any working group was set up at the International Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief in July to address cultural practices that stigmatise other faiths and beliefs. [HL2184]

Asked by Lord Singh of Wimbledon

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether any working group comprising members of different faiths was established at the International Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief in July to highlight important commonalities between different faiths and eradicate the myth of irreconcilable differences. [HL2185]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK Government is committed to defending freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) for all and promoting respect between different religious and non-religious communities. As part of our ongoing commitment to promoting FoRB, we hosted an International Ministerial Conference on FoRB on 5-6 July 2022.

No specific working groups were set up during the Conference, however, we worked closely with our international and domestic partners in the run up to the Conference and set up a Conference Advisory Committee with representatives from a range of religion or belief communities, academia and human rights groups. We successfully brought together over 800 faith and belief leaders, human rights actors, civil society and 100 government delegations to agree and work towards joint action on promoting FoRB for all. As outlined in our Written Ministerial Statement following the Conference (<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2022-07-15/hlws204>), we will continue to build coalitions of government and civil society actors focussed on key themes from the Conference, drawing on the convening power of the International Religious Freedom or Belief Alliance to promote FoRB for all.

Asked by Lord Singh of Wimbledon

To ask Her Majesty's Government why they invited Pakistani clerics Hassan Haseeb-ur-Rehman and Muhammad Naqib-ur-Rahman to the International

Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief in July; and what assessment they made of the effect those invitations would have on religious harmony and social cohesion in the UK and beyond. [HL2186]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK Government consulted with international and domestic partners and set up a Conference Advisory Committee (CAC) with representatives from a range of religion or belief communities, academia and human rights groups to consider invitees to the UK-hosted Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB).

In the spirit of fostering a healthy dialogue and promoting open societies, we invited a wide and diverse range of participants from over 120 countries. We successfully brought together over 800 faith and belief leaders, human rights actors, civil society and 100 government delegations to agree and work towards joint action on promoting FoRB for all.

Iran: Baha'i Faith

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports of the persecution of followers of the Baha'i faith in Iran; and what steps they are taking in response. [HL2057]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Promoting the right to freedom of religion or belief for all is one of the UK's longstanding human rights priorities. We have previously expressed our deep concern at reports of expropriation and repossession of land owned by Baha'i communities in Ivel. The Baha'i community in Iran continue to be systematically discriminated against, harassed, and targeted.

On 5 August 2022 I said: "The persecution of religious minorities cannot be tolerated in 2022." We strongly condemn the increasing detention of members of the Baha'i community in Iran, as well as reports of forced closures of their businesses and land seizures. The persecution of religious minorities is a serious violation of international human rights law. We are working closely with our international partners to hold Iran to account and continue to raise human rights concerns regularly with the Iranian government.

Israel: Embassies

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to move the British Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. [HL2252]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The British Embassy to Israel is based in Tel Aviv. The UK's position on the status of Jerusalem is that it should be determined through a negotiated settlement between the Israelis and the Palestinians and that Jerusalem should ultimately be the shared capital of the Israeli and Palestinian states.

Job Sikhala and Godfrey Sithole

Asked by Lord Oates

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the governments of countries in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) regarding the continued detention of Zimbabwe opposition Members of Parliament (1) Job Sikhala, and (2) Godfrey Sithole. [HL2234]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The UK is monitoring the ongoing detention of opposition Members of Parliament Job Sikhala and Godfrey Sithole in Zimbabwe. The former Minister for Africa met with the Foreign Minister of Zimbabwe on 30 June and reiterated the importance of all political parties respecting the rule of law, refraining from violence and respecting the right of others to campaign freely ahead of upcoming elections in 2023.

Asked by Lord Oates

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Zimbabwe regarding the continued detention of opposition Members of Parliament (1) Job Sikhala, and (2) Godfrey Sithole. [HL2235]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The UK is monitoring the ongoing detention of opposition Members of Parliament Job Sikhala and Godfrey Sithole in Zimbabwe. The former Minister for Africa met with the Foreign Minister of Zimbabwe on 30 June and reiterated the importance of all political parties respecting the rule of law, refraining from violence and respecting the right of others to campaign freely ahead of upcoming elections in 2023.

Kenya: Development Aid

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask His Majesty's Government how much UK overseas aid they provided to Kenya in (1) 2017, (2) 2018, (3) 2019, (4) 2020, and (5) 2021. [HL2301]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The UK provided the following amounts of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Kenya:

- 1) 2017 - £153 million.
- 2) 2018 - £116 million.
- 3) 2019 - £134 million.
- 4) 2020 - £92 million.
- 5) 2021 - final figures have not yet been released by the FCDO.

Kielder Water

Asked by Lord Goddard of Stockport

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by the Parliamentary Under Secretary

of State for water, forestry, rural affairs and resource management on 30 June 2014 (202032), what recent assessment they have made of using Kielder Water as a water source linked to a national water grid; and what directives, if any, have been issued to water companies to ensure the subject is included in their Water Resources Management Plans. [[HL2111](#)]

Lord Benyon: In its 2019 Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP), Northumbrian Water identified a water surplus available for trading from the Kielder Water Resources Zone. However, no other water company took this forward, due to the costs of the project compared with alternate solutions to secure water supplies.

In line with the aims of the National Framework for Water Resources, the Water Resources North regional planning group is assessing how Kielder might be able to support national water resources resilience in the future. In the autumn of this year, we will see draft regional plans and 2024 WRMPs consulted on publicly, and we expect to see water transfers, bulk supplies and connections considered against all other options.

Knives: Crime

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to reduce knife crime in London. [[HL2256](#)]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: Whilst the Mayor of London has operational responsibility for policing in the capital, this Government is committed to providing additional resources to the police and their partners to tackle violent crime and make our streets safer.

To support the prevention of violence in London, we have allocated the London Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) c.£33.7m since 2019, including a c.£12.6m allocation for this financial year (2022/23). The VRU also received an additional investment of £5.5m in 2021/22 to deliver specific, highly targeted interventions to vulnerable young people. The London VRU delivers multiple initiatives that are projected to support over 5,300 young people in the capital next year.

We are also providing additional funding to enable the Metropolitan Police to increase enforcement activity where most violence occurs, through our Grip programme (previously known as Surge). The Metropolitan Police have been allocated approximately £50.9m over the last three years, including £7.9m for this financial year (2022/23) for Grip. Through this programme, the Metropolitan Police are delivering data-driven, targeted visible patrols to suppress violence where it is most concentrated.

Whilst the Mayor of London has operational responsibility for policing in the capital, the Government continues to encourage police forces to undertake a series of coordinated national weeks of action to tackle knife crime under Operation Sceptre. The latest phase of the operation took place between 16 to 22 May 2022. In the

Metropolitan and City Police areas 126 knives were seized during enforcement action with a further 90 being surrendered or seized during sweeps.

The Home Office has invested £200m over 10 years in early intervention and prevention initiatives to help children and young people at risk of exploitation and involvement in serious violence, through the Youth Endowment Fund (YEF). This will support how the Government responds to serious violence by identifying what works in diverting children and young people away from involvement in serious violence. Currently the YEF has invested around £50m on interventions and evaluations around London.

Grip, VRU & YEF funding are provided in addition to the commitment to increase the number of police officers in England and Wales by 20,000 by March 2023. As of 30 June 2022, the MPS has recruited an additional 2,952 uplift officers against a total three-year allocation of 4,557 officers.

Levelling Up Fund: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Rogan

To ask His Majesty's Government who is responsible for the final decision on successful bids from Northern Ireland to the Levelling Up Fund. [[HL2300](#)]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: As set out in the published Levelling Up Fund technical note, decisions on the selection of successful bids will be made by UK Government ministers. In round 1, final decisions were confirmed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Levelling Up Secretary and the Transport Secretary.

Libya: Undocumented Migrants

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of refugees and migrants being held in detention centres in Libya; what assessment they have made of the risk of those people being exposed to (1) murder, (2) torture, and (3) extortion; and what steps they are taking, if any, to close such centres. [[HL2221](#)]

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations, if any, they have made to the European Border and Coast Guard Agency to cease cooperation with the Libyan Coast Guard in preventing refugees and migrants from leaving Libya. [[HL2222](#)]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The UK notes the abuse of migrants and refugees in Libya and the inhumane conditions in detention centres. The Independent Fact-Finding Mission on Libya is assessing human rights abuses and violations in detention centres. The UK co-sponsored the renewal of the Fact Finding Mission's mandate in July. We continue to urge the interim Government of National Unity to take steps to end

the exploitation and abuse of migrants and to implement a better functioning system that respects human rights. We support the UN's call for detention centres across Libya to be closed, and call on all parties to engage with the UN and the humanitarian community so that all migrants and refugees can be evacuated safely in accordance with international human rights law.

Life Peers: Public Appointments

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the restrictions contained within the Honours (Prevention of Abuses) Act 1925 are a factor in their consideration of recommendations for the appointment of new peers. [HL2165]

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to the application of the restrictions imposed by the Honours (Prevention of Abuses) Act 1925 in relation to recommendations for the appointment of new peers. [HL2166]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: It is against the law to 'sell' honours or peerages - offering cash for awards - under the Honours (Prevention of Abuses) Act 1925. Life peerages are vetted by the House of Lords Appointments Commission for matters of propriety, who seek advice from Government Departments and Agencies where appropriate.

M1: Closures

Asked by Lord Blunkett

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many closures, on what dates, and for what duration, occurred on the M1 motorway from 1 to 21 August; and what was the reason for reducing the M1 to one lane between junctions 24 and 25 (northbound) on the evening of 12 August and the morning of 13 August; and what work was undertaken during that closure in the coned off area of the motorway. [HL2071]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The information requested can only be provided at a disproportionate cost.

M20: Speed Limits

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask His Majesty's Government whether the M20 three lane carriageway speed limit will be raised from 50 miles per hour given the suspension of Operation Brock and the removal of motorway barriers; and if not, why not. [HL2317]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The moveable barrier remains in place on the London-bound carriageway to allow contractors to resume improvement works that were in place prior to Operation Brock being needed. Both the London-bound and coast-bound carriageways of the M20

continue to operate with two lanes at a 50mph speed limit. Lane three of the coast-bound carriageway is closed until November 2022 to protect the workforce carrying out the works in the central reservation.

Madeleine McCann

Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 6 December 2021 (HL4255), whether funding for Operation Grange has now ceased; and if not, (1) for what reason it has been extended, and (2) how much longer funding will continue. [HL2204]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: The Home Office continues to provide funding for Operation Grange; in 2022/23 we will provide up to £303k funding to the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) to cover continuing costs. The Home Office maintains an ongoing dialogue with the MPS regarding funding for Operation Grange and all applications are made and considered in line with Special Grant processes.

Marine Environment: North of England

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer from Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park on 22 February (HL6071), what further information they have gathered in relation to ecological problems off the coasts of Yorkshire and North-East England; and what plans they have for further studies and actions relating to any such problems. [HL2323]

Lord Benyon: We are aware there have been some localised reductions in catch rates and we are continuing to monitor shellfish populations in the area. This is a complex scientific issue, which is why we took a thorough, evidence-based approach. We will continue to work with academic researchers.

Marriage: Humanism

Asked by Lord Pickles

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will give humanist marriages legal recognition by laying an Order under the Marriage Act 2013; and if so, whether they will consider doing so on an interim basis pending further reform of marriage law. [HL2156]

Lord Bellamy: In July 2019, the Government invited the Law Commission to undertake a review of weddings law in England and Wales. The Law Commission report was published on 19 July 2022 and contains 57 recommendations for legislative reform.

To lay an order on an interim basis does not allow the necessary time to consider the Law Commission's recommendations in full. As has been set out in Parliament, marriage will always be one of our most important institutions, and we have a duty to consider the

implications of any changes to the law in this area very carefully, including balancing the needs and interests of all groups. We will publish a response to the report in due course.

*Asked by **Baroness Whitaker***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Law Commission report *Celebrating Marriage: A New Weddings Law*, published 19 July, what plans, if any, they have to grant legal recognition to humanist marriages; and on what timescale they plan to grant such recognition. [HL2200]

Lord Bellamy: The Law Commission report contains 57 recommendations for legislative reform.

We must now take the time to consider the Law Commission's recommendations fully. As has been set out in Parliament, marriage will always be one of our most important institutions, and we have a duty to consider the implications of any changes to the law in this area very carefully, including balancing the needs and interests of all groups. We will publish a response to the report in due course.

*Asked by **Lord Low of Dalston***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Law Commission review *Celebrating Marriage: A New Weddings Law*, published on 19 July, which has called for legal recognition for humanist marriages. [HL2228]

Lord Bellamy: The Law Commission report published on 19 July 2022 did not consider the question of whether non-religious belief organisations, including Humanists, should be able to conduct legally binding weddings. The report contains 57 recommendations for legislative reform.

We must now take the time to consider the Law Commission's recommendations fully. As has been set out in Parliament, marriage will always be one of our most important institutions, and we have a duty to consider the implications of any changes to the law in this area very carefully, including balancing the needs and interests of all groups. We will publish a response to the report in due course

*Asked by **Lord Low of Dalston***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether the announcement on marriage reform by the Northern Ireland Department of Finance on 1 July affects legal recognition for humanist marriages in England and Wales. [HL2229]

Lord Bellamy: Since marriage is a devolved matter, any decisions regarding humanist marriages in Northern Ireland will not impact marriage laws in England and Wales.

Meat

*Asked by **Lord Lucas***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many farmed animals have been slaughtered for human consumption for each of the last 10 years, broken down by broad species group. [HL2140]

Lord Benyon: Statistics for the total amount of species slaughtered for human consumption in the last 10 years are as follows:

- Cattle – 20.7 million
- Sheep – 127.2 million
- Pigs – 105.8 million
- Chickens – 10 billion
- Turkeys – 159.2 million

Year by Year Breakdown:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Cattle</i>	<i>Sheep</i>	<i>Pigs</i>	<i>Chickens</i>	<i>Turkeys</i>
2012	2,038,900	11,899,100	10,034,500	873,788,600	18,420,300
2013	2,018,200	12,447,800	10,049,700	902,247,700	17,518,500
2014	2,071,800	12,814,500	10,227,200	900,382,000	15,411,800
2015	2,030,300	13,188,400	10,627,000	953,111,200	16,952,100
2016	2,099,100	12,844,500	10,733,100	992,639,100	15,568,400
2017	2,092,200	13,297,600	10,420,200	1,036,679,600	14,923,500
2018	2,115,200	12,817,100	10,667,100	1,083,094,200	16,154,000
2019	2,140,900	13,154,700	10,862,100	1,049,761,000	16,093,900
2020	2,137,000	13,059,400	10,923,400	1,096,698,900	16,224,100
2021	2,019,000	11,774,300	11,264,200	1,123,196,600	11,982,600

Meat Products: Nitrates

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

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the use of nitrates in the preservation of processed meats. [HL2160]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: The Food Standards Agency (FSA) considers that nitrates and nitrites are important preservatives which protect consumers by hindering the growth of harmful organisms, such as *Clostridium botulinum*, which is responsible for botulism.

This is supported by the independent scientific committees which advise the FSA and other organisations such as the European Food Safety Authority, which have previously reviewed the effectiveness of nitrates or nitrites in processed meat and its safety.

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

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they plan to take, if any, to ban the use of nitrates in the preservation of processed foods and meats. [HL2161]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: The Food Standards Agency (FSA) works with the food industry to ensure that nitrites and nitrates are used at the lowest possible levels to achieve the intended technological function, without jeopardising the safety of food. Maximum legal limits for nitrates have been determined based on scientific evaluation and are monitored through risk-based compliance checks. There are no plans to ban the use of nitrates in the preservation of processed foods and meats. The FSA will seek independent scientific advice whenever new credible scientific studies on this issue emerges. It will consider this information with the existing body of evidence and consider if any further action on authorised food additives is necessary.

Migrant Workers: Health Professions

Asked by **Lord Roberts of Llandudno**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many medical professionals from other countries are currently waiting for their applications for immigration status in the UK to be considered. [HL2168]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: The Home Office does not publish data on the number of visas dealt with by profession.

Mike Veale

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. [HL2133]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: 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.

Millennium Commission

Asked by **Baroness Benjamin**

To ask Her Majesty's Government which (1) body, or (2) bodies, took over the responsibilities of the Millennium Commission when it disbanded in 2006. [HL2062]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: Big Lottery Fund (operating as The National Lottery Community Fund) took on the property, rights and liabilities of the Millennium Commission when it ceased to exist by virtue of the National Lottery Act 2006.

The National Lottery Community Fund is a non-departmental public body which means that it operates at arm's-length from Government and that, as a distributor of Lottery money, rather than of taxpayers' funds, it makes its funding decisions independently.

Monetary Policy

Asked by **Lord Field of Birkenhead**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the extent of quantitative easing for each quarter since the beginning of 2021. [HL2100]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: In 2021, the total gilt purchases of the Asset Purchase Facility (APF), including purchases to redeem maturing assets, was £57.7bn in Q1, £49.7bn in Q2, £44.7bn in Q3 and £37.8bn in Q4 following a decision by the Monetary Policy Committee to increase its Quantitative Easing target stock to £875bn. As of Q1 2022, The Bank of England begun the process of unwinding QE by ceasing to reinvest in maturing assets or purchasing new assets. In March 2022, total size of the APF gilt holdings was £847bn by purchase value, a decrease of £27.9bn from the start of the quarter.

Money Laundering: Criminal Proceedings

Asked by **Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many (1) prosecutions, and (2) convictions, there have been for money laundering offences in the domestic and corporate property sector in each year from 1 April 2015 to 31 April 2022. [HL2164]

Lord Bellamy: The Ministry of Justice publishes information on the number of defendants who received prosecutions and convictions for the offence of money laundering, for the years 2017-2021 in the [Outcomes by Offence data tool 2021](#) (file too large to be attached), and for the years 2010-2016 in the [Outcomes by Offence tool 2020](#) (attached).

However, the number of defendants who received a prosecution or conviction for money laundering offences specific to the domestic and corporate property sector is not held centrally in the Court Proceedings database. This information may be held on court records but to examine individual court records would be of disproportionate cost.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Outcomes_by_Offence_2020 [outcomes-by-offence-2020-revised.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-09-05/HL2164>

Musical Instruments: Customs

Asked by **Baroness Randerson**

To ask His Majesty's Government what negotiations are taking place with the governments of (1) France, (2) Belgium and (3) the Netherlands, to designate Eurostar terminals as entry and exit points for items including musical instruments affected by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES); what progress they have

made in any such negotiations; and, in the absence of any agreement, what steps they are taking to broaden and increase the number of ports of entry to the EU that can be used by UK musicians who are required to obtain a carnet to work in the EU. [[HL2372](#)]

Lord Benyon: Any specimen covered by CITES controls must be imported or exported through one of the 36 designated and operational land, sea and air Points of Entry (PoE). The full list is available at GOV.UK and kept under review.

We are working closely with Border Force, industry and our European counterparts to look at the feasibility of designating further PoE to provide additional routes for the movement of CITES items (e.g. musical instruments), including the Eurostar.

Approximately 80 countries around the world (including all EU member states) accept ATA Carnets. ATA Carnets are not a mandatory requirement for anyone temporarily moving goods between the United Kingdom and the EU, including musicians transporting their instruments. They are an optional facilitation that allows goods to be imported temporarily without the normal customs formalities (i.e. customs declarations) and import duty being paid. They allow a single document to be used for multiple countries' customs controls. The management of EU import and export procedures is the responsibility of the customs authority of the relevant EU member state.

Nationality and Borders Act 2022

Asked by Lord Coaker

To ask Her Majesty's Government which sections of the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 that allow the Secretary of State to make regulations (1) have, and (2) have not, been used to make such regulations. [[HL2214](#)]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: The Nationality and Borders Act 2022 ("the Act") achieved Royal Assent on 28th April 2022.

The provisions set out in section 87(3) and (4) of the Act came into force immediately upon Royal Assent. The provisions set out in section 87(5) of the Act came into force on 28th June 2022. The provisions listed in Schedule 1 of the Act (Commencement No. 1, Transitional and Saving Provisions) came into force on 28th June 2022 and the provisions listed in the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 (Commencement No. 2) Regulations 2022 came into force on 24th August 2022.

Implementation of the Act to date has been through the following pieces of secondary legislation:

- The Nationality and Borders Act 2022 (Commencement, Transitional and Saving Provisions) Regulations 2022
- The Nationality and Borders Act 2022 (Commencement No. 2) Regulations 2022
- The Nationality and Borders Act 2022 (Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2022

- The Slavery and Human Trafficking (Definition of Victim) Regulations 2022
- The British Nationality (General, British Overseas Territories and Fees) (Amendment) Regulations 2022
- The Terrorism Act 2000 (Code of Practice for Examining Officers and Review Officers) Order 2022

There have also been changes to the Immigration Rules made during 2022 in relation to the implementation of the Act.

The remaining measures will be implemented over the coming months and into next year.

Natural Disasters

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government which recommendations from the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction have so far been implemented; and which they plan to implement in the future. [[HL2240](#)]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: The UN Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (the Framework) was agreed and adopted in March 2015. Many of the principles underpinning the Framework are integral to ongoing UK work on resilience as part of integrated emergency management and the UK has a range of robust mechanisms in place for planning, responding and recovering from emergencies. The UK continues to play a leading role in the international risk reduction agenda through FCDO and the UK is committed to helping the most vulnerable anticipate and prepare for shocks and access support in disasters.

Natural Gas: Storage

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the current storage capacity for gas in the UK in terawatt-hours; and what assessment they have made of how this compares to capacity in (1) Germany, (2) Italy, and (3) France. [[HL2203](#)]

Lord Callanan: Great Britain has seven gas storage facilities (16.5 terawatt-hours of estimated working gas volume). Britain's diverse source of gas supply greatly reduces reliance on natural gas storage, distinguishing it from some European countries who lack indigenous gas supply. AGSI European storage data indicates Germany has a capacity of 245TWh, Italy 193TWh and France 132TWh.

In addition, according to Rystad Energy data, Britain has the second largest import Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) infrastructure in Europe, providing 401TWh regasification capacity annually compared to 273TWh/year in France, 123TWh/year in Italy and none in Germany.

Asked by **Baroness Redfern**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what capacity of gas storage is likely to be achieved at the Rough gas site off the coast of Yorkshire for this coming winter. [HL2278]

Lord Callanan: The Government welcomes Centrica taking the necessary steps to seek approvals to re-open the Rough storage facility this winter. Information on the available capacity of the site is a matter for Centrica.

Navy

Asked by **Lord West of Spithead**

To ask His Majesty's Government how much the Royal Navy will increase in tonnage between 2020 and 2030. [HL2312]

Baroness Goldie: It is anticipated that the Royal Navy will increase in tonnage by 59,000 between 2020 and 2030, rising from 799,000 in 2020 to 858,000 by 2030.

Navy: Training

Asked by **Lord West of Spithead**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Royal Navy pilots are currently in advanced flying training to fly F35Bs. [HL2199]

Baroness Goldie: The Royal Navy currently has less than five pilots on the advanced flying course at Royal Air Force Valley. This course is the prerequisite to progressing to the F-35 Operational Conversion Unit.

The Lightning Force qualified F-35 pilot strength is sufficient for its Very High Readiness status and all current operational requirements.

Newquay Cornwall Airport

Asked by **Lord Berkeley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will review the terms of the public service obligation arrangements to support flights to and from Cornwall Airport Newquay when operators are prepared to operate flights on a commercial basis on the same routes. [HL2065]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: We recognise and value the importance of regional connectivity. Flybe's planned flights from Newquay adds a new route into Heathrow and capacity to Manchester.

UK policy on public service obligations (PSOs) protects existing routes into London, with no viable alternative, that are in danger of being lost, under which DfT and Cornwall Council fund the Gatwick route. We work closely with funding partners and local stakeholders to review on-going performance and future operations of PSOs.

NHS: Negligence

Asked by **Lord Hunt of Kings Heath**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, with reference to figure 8 in the NHS Resolution annual report and accounts 2021/22, whether they will specify the number of clinical negligence claims settled in the year 2021/22. [HL2123]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: The following table shows the number of clinical negligence claims settled in 2021/22, whether damages were paid and the status of the proceedings of these claims.

	No proceedings	Proceedings with no trial	Trial
Damages paid	4,555 claims	2,207 claims	11 claims
Nil damages	5,539 claims	739 Claims	19 claims

Source: NHS Resolution

Notes:

- i) The percentage figures in the table may not add to exactly 100% due to rounding.
- ii) NHS Resolution has identified that the text accompanying figure 8 of the Annual Reports and Accounts refers to the percentage of clinical negligence claims that have resolved without damages in 2021/22 as 48.5%. The correct figure is 48.2%. NHS Resolution is arranging for an update to the amendments section of its annual report and accounts.

Office for Environmental Protection

Asked by **Lord Anderson of Ipswich**

To ask His Majesty's Government when they plan to publish the Common Framework document that the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs will agree with the Office for Environmental Protection. [HL2295]

Lord Benyon: We are committed to working collaboratively with the Office for Environmental Protection (OEP) to finalise the Defra-OEP framework agreement. We are currently in the final stages of negotiations. The purpose of the Framework Document is to set out the broad governance framework within which the OEP and Defra operate. It will reflect the parties' core responsibilities and will describe the governance and accountability framework that applies between the parties, including how the day-to-day relationship works in practice. This will include detail on governance and financial matters, whilst also respecting the provisions in the Environment Act for OEP independence.

Asked by **Lord Anderson of Ipswich**

To ask His Majesty's Government what progress they have made with the implementation of the duty of the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to have regard to the need to protect the independence of the Office for Environmental

Protection as set out in Schedule 1 of the Environment Act 2022. [HL2296]

Lord Benyon: The Office for Environmental Protection (OEP) has been provided with safeguards to ensure its operational independence from the Government, including a specific duty on the Secretary of State to have regard to the need to protect the OEP's independence.

The indicative five-year budget for the OEP has been protected by Defra within this spending review period. This ensures the OEP has sufficient funds to carry out its statutory functions and gives the OEP greater certainty of its finances with which to plan its future activities.

The OEP board has set out its strategy and continue to operate independently of Government.

Offshore Structures: Protection

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask His Majesty's Government who is responsible for coordinating protection of (1) oil and gas installations, (2) pipelines, (3) offshore windfarms, (4) undersea electrical cables and interconnectors, and (5) fibreoptic cables, in (a) UK territorial seas, and (b) UK exclusive economic zones; and where this coordination takes place. [HL2382]

Lord Callanan: The Government takes the protection and resilience of subsea and offshore infrastructure seriously and departments work together to protect it from malicious and other hazards such as accidental damage. The Cabinet Office is responsible for coordinating interdepartmental efforts. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is the lead department for the energy sector, including subsea energy CrNI. The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport is the lead department for telecommunications policy, including telecommunications subsea cables. The Ministry of Defence is responsible for defending UK interests within the UK Marine Area (UK Territorial Waters and Exclusive Economic Zones) and forms part of HMG's efforts to counter state threats.

Overseas Trade: Developing Countries

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government when their plans to grant enhanced trading status to eight developing countries including Syria will come into effect; and whether this will help the reconstruction of war damage in Syria, in particular to (1) schools, (2) hospitals, and (3) homes. [HL2219]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The Developing Countries Trading Scheme is expected to come into force in early 2023 and will include enhanced preferential tariffs for eight countries including Syria. Robust sanctions will ensure that where this changes trade with Syria, the regime will not benefit.

The UK has committed over £3.8 billion to the Syria crisis. We will not provide long-term reconstruction assistance without a commitment to a political process from the regime.

We will continue to offer significant humanitarian and early recovery support so ordinary Syrians have the means to build a better future, including through programmes such as the Syria Education Project.

Pakistan: Floods

Asked by Baroness Manzoor

To ask Her Majesty's Government what (1) humanitarian, and (2) financial, assistance they are providing to Pakistan in relation to the floods in the Sindh province and related areas. [HL2232]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK stands shoulder to shoulder with Pakistan as it faces the consequences of the recent devastating flooding. The UK was one of the first countries to announce funding (£1.5 million) to respond to the humanitarian need. We have now increased this to £16.5 million to support flood relief efforts. UK aid will be targeted towards the hardest hit areas of Sindh and other provinces. The UK contribution is also now over 10 per cent of the joint UN and Government of Pakistan emergency appeal (\$160 million). This flooding demonstrates how climate change is making extreme weather events both more intense and more frequent.

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to provide support to Pakistan during the recent floods. [HL2257]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK stands shoulder to shoulder with Pakistan as it faces the consequences of the recent devastating flooding. The UK was one of the first countries to announce funding (£1.5 million) to respond to the humanitarian need. We have now increased this to £16.5 million to support flood relief efforts. UK aid will be targeted towards the hardest hit areas of Sindh and other provinces. The UK contribution is also now over 10 per cent of the joint UN and Government of Pakistan emergency appeal (\$160 million). This flooding demonstrates how climate change is making extreme weather events both more intense and more frequent.

Asked by The Earl of Sandwich

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they will (1) carry out, and (2) publish, an assessment of the causes of the floods in (a) Pakistan, and (b) elsewhere on the India sub-continent, to assist them in their longer term response. [HL2306]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Undertaking an assessment of the causes of the flooding in Pakistan and elsewhere on the Indian sub-continent would be at the discretion of the respective national governments. However, the UK Government works closely with the Met Office to monitor hazards around the world, and

shares key climate information with our partners. The UK has committed to double the amount of climate finance to support adaptation to the impacts of climate change. Between 2011 and 2021 UK International Climate Finance supported 88 million people to cope with the impacts of climate change, installed 2,400MW of clean energy, providing 41 million people with improved access, and helped mobilise £8 billion of public and private finance for climate change purposes in developing countries.

Parish and Town Councils: Carer's Allowance

Asked by Baroness Scott of Needham Market

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Greenhalgh on 9 November (HL3455), when they now expect to respond to the proposal under the Sustainable Communities Act 2007 made by Weymouth Town Council in December 2019 for the dependent carer's allowance to be extended to parish and town councils. [HL2177]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: The Government is keen to ensure that local communities are well represented in local authorities, and that all levels of local government are supported to create thriving local democracies.

We are considering this matter and will respond to Weymouth Town Council's proposal in due course.

Pay

Asked by Lord Balfe

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the information regarding Harrods in the article "Amazon gets tough with workers over 35p pay rise", published in The Sunday Times on 14 August; whether Harrods is classified as a "crucial public service"; whether supermarkets are classified as such; and what other services are included in that designation. [HL2061]

Lord Callanan: The legislation repealing regulation 7 applies to all employers in all sectors. It came into force on 21st July after debates in both houses of Parliament. It gives employers the choice to work with employment businesses to find suitably qualified staff when they are facing industrial action and offers agency workers the freedom to accept roles replacing staff on strike if they wish. It does not affect the ability of workers to go on strike and existing protections for striking workers are maintained. It does, however, balance the right to strike against the right of employers and third parties not to suffer disproportionate disruption. This is particularly important as we continue to recover from the pandemic and are faced with what are global economic challenges.

Pay: Inflation

Asked by Lord Henty

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps, if any, they are taking to ensure that wage levels keep pace with inflation. [HL2120]

Baroness Penn: The government understands that people across the UK are worried about the rising cost of living.

On 8 September, the government announced that the Energy Price Guarantee will supersede the energy price cap, which means that a typical UK household will pay no more than £2500 a year on their energy bill over the next 2 years from 1 October.

To address cost of living in the longer term, it is important that we help people into work, support them to increase their incomes and ensure they keep more of what they earn.

In April, the National Living Wage (NLW) increased by 6.6% to £9.50 an hour for workers aged 23 and over, which is expected to benefit more than 2 million workers. This means an increase of over £1,000 to the annual earnings of a full-time worker on the NLW.

We are also supporting people to improve their earnings prospects and support their success in the labour market. At Spending Review 2021, the government confirmed that it is investing a total of £3.8 billion in skills in England by 2024-25.

More broadly, our economic plan will be pro-growth. As a matter of priority, the Chancellor will set out a package of measures to deliver on the Prime Minister's commitment to cut taxes and boost growth, laying the groundwork for the change we need in the long term to make our economy stronger.

Poultry: Animal Welfare

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask His Majesty's Government what progress the Animal and Plant Health Agency has made in its investigation into the deaths of millions of factory farm chickens during heatwaves in summer 2022; when the results of the investigation are expected to be published; and what plans they have to prevent future such events. [HL2321]

Lord Benyon: The Animal and Plant Health Agency is supporting local authorities in investigating what took place on individual poultry units. Ongoing investigations are confidential as any information released may prejudice any potential legal action in the future.

HM Government takes breaches of animal welfare legislation very seriously. Prior to and during this summer's heatwaves, we reiterated advice to livestock keepers to ensure their contingency plans took full account of the need to protect health and welfare during

hot weather. We are very concerned about the significant mortalities in broiler chickens that occurred. We are discussing what happened with the poultry sector and looking carefully at what measures could be put in place in future to help prevent a recurrence of mass mortalities and improve broiler chicken welfare.

Power Failures

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to prepare for electricity blackouts this winter. [HL2286]

Lord Callanan: The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) works closely with network operators, the regulator Ofgem and other stakeholders to ensure that the appropriate technical measures are able to be deployed throughout the year, to ensure the integrity of the energy system.

Prison Accommodation

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the average time that (1) adult prisoners, and (2) young offenders, are locked in their cells each day. [HL2153]

Lord Bellamy: (1) The information requested for adult prisoners is not held by the Ministry of Justice, as it would require the detailed daily monitoring of out of cell activity of each individual prisoner in each prison establishment. We undertake regular monitoring of regime levels in prisons and formally account for all time spent out of cell engaged in regime activities.

There is no current central instruction prescribing the amount of time prisoners should spend out of their cells, however, there is a clear commitment to the delivery and performance management of time spent in purposeful activity. Governors have the flexibility to deliver balanced regimes that maintain an appropriate level of time out of cell on a range of activities such as education and employment which meet the needs of the establishment's population with a heavy focus on reducing reoffending. This is alongside basic access to time in the open air and domestic services such showers.

We do see impact on time spent out of cell that can result from staffing availability and from operational incidents.

This government has committed to prison regime reform in the Prison Strategy White Paper and will set clearer stands for time spent in prison. A new Purposeful Activity performance measure has been introduced for the 2022/23 performance period which will drive delivery. Additional measures are in place for attendance at work, education, interventions and services. These will over time give more detailed information than that currently available.

(2) While we do not collect information on time during which young people are locked in their rooms,

information is held regarding time spent out of room. In July 2022, the average time out of room offered in Youth Offender Institutions was 5 hours 50 minutes: of that, an average of 5 hours 15 minutes was taken.

Prison Officers: Labour Turnover

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the turnover of prison officers in each of the last five years, and (2) their ability to recruit prison officers needed to staff any planned new prisons. [HL2151]

Lord Bellamy: The leaving rate for prisons officers can be accessed online through HMPPS workforce quarterly, the most recent of which was for June 2022. The table below contains the leaving rate for Band 3-5 Prison officers in each of past five years:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Leaving Rate (%)</i> [1]
1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018	10.3
1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019	11.5
1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020	12.2
1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021	9.1
1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022	14.5
1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022	15.3

Source: HMPPS Workforce Quarterly, June 2022

[1] Leaving rate denotes the percentage of staff with a permanent contract of employment who left HMPPS, including individuals who have retired early, but excluding staff who left due to voluntary early departure schemes and redundancy (VEDSR).

We are addressing recent increases in leaving rates via dedicated recruitment and retention efforts across the board. We are also working to improve the joining experience of new employees, via increased clarity in marketing materials and increased support for new joiners via Apprenticeship coaches and New Colleague Mentors (since April 2022).

We hope that the significant rises in pay for prison staff will also help to reduce leaving rates, and we are continuing to use localised market supplements to increase prison officer pay in 18 sites.

We are committed to providing the high-quality prison places that are needed over the coming years and ensuring that they are adequately resourced and supported by sufficient prison officer staffing levels, as well as other key members of the workforce such as teachers, instructors, chaplaincy and probation staff.

The staffing requirements for new establishments continue to be assessed and factored into vacancies up to 18 months in advance in order to ensure we recruit on time and build up the experience needed to deliver safe and secure regimes.

Prisoners' Transfers: Gender Recognition

Asked by *Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many transfers of trans women prisoners with Gender Recognition Certificates housed in the female estate to the male estate have taken place in each of the last five years. [HL2126]

Asked by *Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many transfers of trans women prisoners without Gender Recognition Certificates housed in the female estate to the male estate have taken place in each of the last five years. [HL2127]

Lord Bellamy: The number of transfers of transgender women, with or without a GRC, from the female estate to the male estate in the last 5 years has been as follows:

2018: 5 or fewer

2019: 5 or fewer

2020: 5 or fewer

2021: 5 or fewer

2022: 5 or fewer (to date)

(Please note: when disclosing data there is a disclosure control rule that if the number is below 6 it is stated as '5 or fewer', which can include 0).

Prisoners: Rehabilitation

Asked by *Lord Patten*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the quality of the (1) work, (2) education, and (3) training, undertaken by prisoners. [HL2152]

Lord Bellamy: We are committed to ensuring quality education and work opportunities for prisoners. We use Ofsted inspections, Select Committee reports and other feedback, in addition to our own performance monitoring, to ensure a robust assessment of the quality of work, education and training.

As part of our £200m a year investment to reduce reoffending and cut crime we are delivering a Prisoner Education Service. This will ensure prisoners improve skills such as literacy and numeracy, acquire relevant vocational qualifications, and access employment and training opportunities on release.

This includes designing the next generation of education contracts and holding Governors to account to ensure His Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons and Ofsted recommendations are acted upon and performance targets are achieved. We are also introducing Employment Advisory Boards in 92 prisons, bringing in business leaders to chair these Boards and work with prisons to increase the employability of prisoners and introduce new job and work opportunities.

Prisons: Crimes of Violence

Asked by *Lord Patten*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the annual number of reported assaults on (1) prisoners, and (2) prison staff, in each of the last 10 years. [HL2154]

Lord Bellamy: The Department publishes statistics on deaths, self-harm and assaults in prison custody in England and Wales in the quarterly Safety in Custody statistics available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics>. The table below shows the requested data, broken down by financial year, from 2012-13 to 2021-22:

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Total Number of Assaults: Prisoner on Prisoner (1,2,3,4,6)</i>	<i>Total Number of Assaults: Prisoner on Prison Staff (1,2,3,5,6)</i>
2012-13	11,173	2,964
2013-14	11,651	3,372
2014-15	12,953	3,887
2015-16	16,731	5,409
2016-17	19,360	7,159
2017-18	22,374	9,003
2018-19	22,821	9,630
2019-20	20,632	9,020
2020-21	10,977	7,011
2021-22	12,773	7,599

(1) Figures include incidents at HMPPS operated Immigration Removal Centres and during contracted out escorts.

(2) Figures do not include incidents at Medway STC. For more information on Secure Training Centres, please see Youth justice annual statistics at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/youth-justice-annual-statistics>.

(3) Figures from April 2018 onwards exclude incidents occurring within the youth estate. The youth estate includes incidents occurring within Cookham Wood, Werrington and Wetherby, as well as the youth wing at Feltham and Parc. Prior to April 2018 these figures were collected via manual returns, so it is not possible to split out all youth estate incidents up to March 2018. Figures for incidents occurring within the youth estate are published within the 'Safety in the children and young people secure estate' statistics bulletin via the following link - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements/safety-in-the-youth-secure-estate-bulletin>.

(4) Prisoner-on-prisoner assaults are a subset of all assault incidents.

(5) Assaults on staff are a subset of all assault incidents.

(6) The sum of prisoner-on-prisoner assaults and assaults on staff may not equal the total number of assaults because staff may be assaulted in a prisoner-on-

prisoner assault incident and other assault incidents may involve other people, e.g. visitors.

The Prisons Strategy White Paper set out how we will improve safety and security in our prisons. Prison staff carry out a vital role in protecting the public and we will do all we can to protect them and prisoners from violence.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

HL2154_data_table [2022-09-20 HL2154 Data Table - Assaults Last 10 Years v2.docx]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-09-05/HL2154>

Private Rented Housing: Income

Asked by Lord Carrington

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people have declared income from letting property by parliamentary constituency for the most recent period for which figures are available. [HL2207]

Asked by Lord Carrington

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people declaring an income from letting property pay the (1) additional, (2) higher, and (3) standard, rates of income tax for the most recent period for which figures are available. [HL2208]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The number of individuals that have declared property income and that pay each of the marginal rates of income tax specified, rounded to the nearest thousand, are as follows:

<i>Tax rate</i>	<i>Number of individuals</i>
Additional higher rate	91,000
Higher rate	543,000
Basic rate	1,439,000

The numbers of individuals in each parliamentary constituency that declared income from property lettings via their self-assessment tax returns in 2020-21, rounded to the nearest 10 are provided in the attached table.

Please also note that:

- - Taxpayers in Scotland will not pay the tax rates referred to in the question as they are subject to a separate income tax regime, and are therefore excluded from the figures on individuals per marginal income tax rate, above;
- - Not all individuals with property income are required to declare it. For example, those with income below the £1,000 property allowance are not required to tell HMRC; and
- - Some individuals with property income between £1,000 to £2,500 will declare this via PAYE rather than self-assessment. These individuals are not included here.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Supporting table as reference in the answer
 [docforlibrariesParliamentary constituency.docx]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-09-06/HL2207>

Probation: Costs

Asked by Lord Blunkett

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the estimated annual cost of the new dual system which requires Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service to further review the Parole Board's recommendation for release of prisoners, including (1) the 21-day waiting period, and (2) the subsequent delay whilst the further confirmation is provided to the appropriate prison and probation staff for subsequent release. [HL2073]

Lord Bellamy: In July 2019 changes were made to the Parole Board Rules to permit the Secretary of State for Justice or the prisoner to apply to the Parole Board for reconsideration of a decision either to release or not release a parole-eligible prisoner. The changes mean that a decision is not final but only provisional for 21 days after the decision is first issued, to allow for the Secretary of State or the prisoner to apply for reconsideration, where they consider that the decision is irrational or was reached in a procedurally-flawed manner. The availability of the reconsideration mechanism has not introduced significant delays or associated additional costs to the release process. HMPPS does not suspend planning for the release of these prisoners during the reconsideration period.

The Public Protection Group, a part of HMPPS, set up a team to administer the review of Parole Board release decisions following the introduction of the reconsideration mechanism. The team reviews around 1,700 decisions a year, the annual cost of the team is c£580k.

Project Gigabit: East Sussex

Asked by Lord Foster of Bath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the rollout of Project Gigabit in East Sussex. [HL2107]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: In March 2021 we launched Project Gigabit, our £5 billion mission to deliver lightning-fast, reliable broadband across the UK. Project Gigabit's objective is to level up the UK by giving hard-to-reach areas access to gigabit-capable internet speeds and, coupled with commercial gigabit delivery, ensuring almost all of the UK has access to gigabit-capable internet as soon as possible.

Our Project Gigabit procurements are prioritising delivery to rural, hard-to-reach premises and to those with the lowest broadband speeds and we have made excellent progress in preparation for the regional supplier procurement covering East Sussex. Following early

market engagement in the region, BDUK has recently taken the decision to accelerate the delivery of the Project Gigabit procurement covering East Sussex to align with the procurements in West Sussex and Kent.

This decision was taken following early market engagement activity, where suppliers indicated a strong interest in combining a cross-boundary project across the three counties of East Sussex, West Sussex and Kent.

This is good news for constituents in East Sussex and further details on the revised procurement timetable for East Sussex will be announced in due course.

Alongside our Project Gigabit procurements, we are investing up to £210 million in the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme to support rural communities with the cost of installing new gigabit-capable connections. East Sussex has made excellent use of the scheme so far, with more than 500 premises in the region having claimed and received payment for a voucher, with more than 700 additional premises awaiting connection for a combined value of over £2.3 million.

Asked by Lord Foster of Bath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to involve community groups in the delivery of Project Gigabit in East Sussex. [HL2108]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: As part of Project Gigabit, His Majesty's Government is investing up to £210 million in the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme to support rural communities with the cost of installing new gigabit-capable connections.

The Gigabit Broadband Voucher scheme provides a micro-grant of up to £1,500 for residents and up to £3,500 for businesses towards the cost of installing gigabit-capable broadband. It enables households and businesses to club together to increase the total subsidy of a project to cover most or all of the costs for installation to eligible areas.

Vouchers are a key tool in incentivising and encouraging suppliers to connect some of the hardest-to-reach premises in the UK. Community groups across East Sussex have played a vital role in the delivery of voucher projects to date, and will continue to do so.

So far, more than 500 premises in the county have claimed and received payment for a voucher, with more than 700 additional premises awaiting connection for a combined value of over £2.3 million.

We have also sought information from communities as part of our Public Review process in preparation for the Project Gigabit regional supplier procurement for East Sussex. Alongside the Open Market Reviews, these processes enable us to determine where build is likely and where Government subsidy through Project Gigabit is required.

Property Development: Money Laundering

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of anti-money laundering regulations in the domestic and corporate property sector. [HL2163]

Baroness Penn: The Money Laundering Regulations 2017 (MLRs) require regulated businesses, including estate and lettings agents, to have robust controls in place to prevent abuse for the purposes of money laundering or terrorist financing. The MLRs are not prescriptive in setting out how firms should carry out customer due diligence. However they do require these firms, which are key facilitators of property transactions, to take a proportionate and risk based approach to checks on all involved parties.

HMRC is the designated AML supervisor for estate and letting agents. HMRC provides guidance to businesses to support compliance and has powers to enforce penalties in response to breaches of the MLRs, including imposing fines.

HM Treasury published a review of the UK's anti-money laundering/countering-terrorist financing (AML/CTF) regulatory and supervisory regime in June 2022. This review assessed the effectiveness of the MLRs and found that the regulations are comprehensive, robust and allow for firms to take a risk-based approach to target their activity at the areas of highest risk. It also set out plans for future work to strengthen the UK's AML regime, including a consultation on further reform to the supervisory regime.

Prostate Cancer: Screening

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to introduce an NHS national screening programme for prostate cancer. [HL2187]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: There are currently no plans to do so. However, the UK National Screening Committee is due to review the evidence for prostate cancer screening in 2023.

Railways

Asked by Lord Lee of Trafford

To ask Her Majesty's Government to list the restrictive practices they believe exist in the railway industry which hinder its efficiency and modernisation. [HL2131]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail, published May 2021, identified six key problems with our railways:

- The rail sector too often loses sight of its customers, both passengers and freight.
- It is missing opportunities to meet the needs of the communities it serves.
- It is fragmented, and accountabilities are not always clear.
- The sector lacks clear strategic direction.
- It needs to become more productive and tackle long-term costs.
- It struggles to innovate and adapt.

There are outdated working practices preventing passengers getting the service they pay for and deserve and making the railway cost more than it should to run. To provide funding for an affordable pay rise, we need to leave these outdated working practices in the past and create a railway fit for the future.

For instance, under an agreement dating back to 1919, Sunday working is voluntary for most of the railway, leaving operators short staffed and unable to cope with the surge in popularity for weekend travel post-pandemic. Whilst working practices in track maintenance are years behind other sectors and prevents us running the best possible train service.

Railways: Electrification

Asked by Lord Bradshaw

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the contribution the lack of electrified diversionary routes makes to delays on railways; and what investment plans, if any, they have to deal with such situations. [[HL2076](#)]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Since 2010, more than 1,200 miles of electrification has been delivered in Great Britain, including almost 800 miles in England and Wales in the last four years.

This increases the number of routes which can be used by electric trains, with further investment in electrification planned.

Refugees: Afghanistan

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many persons have been accepted to date in the UK under the Afghanistan Citizens Resettlement Scheme. [[HL2169](#)]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) will see up to 20,000 people from Afghanistan and the region resettled to the UK, over the coming years.

Under pathway one of the ACRS, individuals being resettled will be some of those already evacuated and in the UK. They include women's rights activists, journalists, and prosecutors, and Afghan family members of British Nationals.

At 12 Aug 2022, the UK has welcomed 21,450 people to the UK from Afghanistan - or a neighbouring country - since June 2021. However, we are unable, at this time, to provide a breakdown of how many people have been granted resettlement specifically under the ACRS.

Officials are working at pace to assure information relating to the individuals resettling in the UK under the ACRS on case working systems. Once this work concludes, the Home Office will include Afghan resettlement statistics in its quarterly Immigration Statistics publications.

Until then the factsheet will be updated every quarter - with the next iteration scheduled for publication on 24 November 2022.

We have now begun to receive the first referrals for resettlement under pathway 2 of the ACRS - which opened in June - from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). We anticipate receiving referrals from the UNHCR for up to 2,000 refugees, who have already fled Afghanistan, during the first year of this pathway - although this number will be kept under review - and we look forward to welcoming the first new arrivals under this pathway in due course.

Finally, the FCDO also launched a third referral pathway, in June, which will see up to 1,500 eligible British Council and GardaWorld contractors, Chevening alumni - and their dependents - in Afghanistan, considered for resettlement to the UK.

The window for expressions of interest (EOIs) to resettle under the ACRS pathway 3 closed on 15 August 2022. The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office is in the process of reviewing all EOIs in the order in which they were received.

Asked by Lord Goddard of Stockport

To ask His Majesty's Government how much money has been reimbursed for payments to people volunteering accommodation to Afghan refugees to date; and what liabilities have been incurred in this respect. [[HL2352](#)]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: Afghan families are provided with safe and clean accommodation in hotels, which are procured through Crown Commercial and contracting partners, whilst officials work to source appropriate settled accommodation for them. Those temporarily living in a hotel have access to healthcare, education, any essential items they need, as well as employment opportunities or Universal Credit.

Whilst we cannot comment on individual contracts, please be assured that the Home Office works hard to secure contracts that offer the best value for money, whilst providing an appropriate level of support to those under our care.

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Chelmsford

To ask His Majesty's Government what measures they are taking to ensure (1) Afghan, and (2) Ukrainian, refugees are moved from temporary accommodation

into more stable, long-term housing arrangements. [HL2332]

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Chelmsford

To ask His Majesty's Government what measures they are taking to assist Afghan refugees currently housed in poor-quality temporary accommodation. [HL2333]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: The Government is working with councils to find families settled homes as quickly as possible. It is right that we take time to ensure that families are provided with suitable homes that support their integration and access to education and employment.

In addition to the funding local authorities receive for integration support costs, a £25.5million Housing Costs fund is available to local authorities to help meet the costs of housing. Funding provided to support integration can also be used towards costs needed to enable families to secure accommodation, including deposits and upfront rent, enabling families to fund their own accommodation.

We are working with Rightmove to identify potential properties available in the private rented sector. This provides councils with additional information to source appropriate properties. Our improved Housing Portal also allows property owners and organisations to submit offers of housing for people who have arrived from Afghanistan.

We are also working with councils to make it easier for Afghan families who are currently in bridging hotels to find and secure their own accommodation. We have formalised this as the 'Find Your Own Accommodation' pathway, and we have developed a supplementary training package to enable councils to support individuals and families throughout this process. We have also worked with the Ministry of Defence to make use of Service Family Accommodation and we are working directly with developers and educational bodies to consider alternative accommodation options.

We are working closely with local councils and voluntary and community sector partners to monitor the housing landscape for Ukrainian households, develop our strategy and actively explore options to find suitable long-term accommodation for those who are likely to stay in the UK beyond the initial six months. We have provided a tariff of £10,500 per arrival to councils to enable them to provide support to individuals and families. This is unringfenced, which allows councils to use the funding as best suits the local area, including measures to support guests to access the private rental market.

Refugees: Climate Change

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the decisions by the governments of Canada, Finland and Sweden to broaden their definition of refugee to include people affected by climate change;

and what plans they have, if any, to amend their definition similarly. [HL2237]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: The UK has a proud record of providing protection for people who need it, in accordance with our international obligations under the Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Every asylum claim is carefully considered on its individual merits by assessing all the evidence provided by the claimant against a background of country information from a wide range of credible sources.

Refugee status is granted when someone has a well-founded fear of persecution under the Refugee Convention for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion. They must show that they cannot seek protection from the authorities in their country and cannot reasonably move to another part of their country to avoid persecution.

Climate change is not covered in the Refugee Convention as grounds for a well-founded fear of persecution and we do not have any plans to broaden this definition. We recognise however, that climate change will increasingly become a significant factor in driving migration. Evidence shows that climate extremes and environmental degradation are often amplifiers of other principal migration drivers. For those who do not have a well-founded fear of persecution for a convention reason, we consider whether they are at risk of serious harm and are in need of protection on humanitarian grounds. This ensures that we do not remove anyone who faces persecution or serious harm on return to their country of origin. If protection is not required, we consider if there are any family or private life reasons, medical reasons, or other exceptional circumstances that would warrant a grant of leave.

Decisions to migrate can have several causes and we regularly engage with our international partners in other countries on this important issue. We recognise the importance of providing people with options for sustainable livelihoods that do not compel them to migrate. As climate change increases its impact on migration it is imperative that efforts are redoubled to limit warming and to help vulnerable people to adapt to change. Climate change is a reality that requires greater and more coordinated adaptation and mitigation planning.

Refugees: Housing

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they take to ensure that adequate housing is available for all refugees throughout the UK. [HL2170]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: Our resettlement schemes offer a safe and legal route to the UK for vulnerable refugees in need of protection. We work on a daily basis with local government to ensure we meet our international

and statutory obligations to provide accommodation for all refugees.

Before committing to offer resettlement places, a local authority needs to think about whether they have, or are able to put in place, the accommodation and support needed to ensure the appropriate care and resettlement of people in need of our help.

For all Afghan nationals seeking accommodation through the various Afghan refugee pathways, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) have created a Housing Portal to make it easier for councils to assess the suitability of properties prior to contacting landlords. Offers of property are triaged by DLUHC and sent directly to councils. We are also looking at ways to make more suitable homes available in the private rental sector by engaging with landlords, letting agencies and industry bodies to promote the housing portal and encourage participation in the resettlement programme. We are also working with the estate agent, Rightmove, to identify potential properties available in the private rental sector.

DLUHC have also introduced the Find Your Own Accommodation scheme which empowers Afghan families to source their own accommodation, rather than the Home Office. They will need to secure agreement, from their new local authority, that they will continue to receive ongoing integration support from them, once they have moved into their new home.

Migrant Help provide support to service users following a positive decision via the AIRE (Advice, Issue Reporting and Eligibility) contract. Positive move on advice is designed to help service users to integrate into the UK. Migrant Help provide advice and information on the steps service users need to take to secure access to accommodation, mainstream welfare payments and employment, when someone leaves Home Office support and/or accommodation, following a grant of asylum or some other form of leave. Migrant Help offer both telephone and face to face appointments to help service users understand their circumstances and signpost to relevant organisations.

Refugees: Ukraine

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Chelmsford

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to increase support to Ukrainian refugees and their host families, in particular to address increases in the cost of living. [HL2329]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: We recognise the growing pressure on family finances, and the challenges that households are facing with the rising costs of living. We are working with local authorities and sponsors to support them to continue hosting.

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Chelmsford

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide housing solutions to Ukrainian refugees

in the UK to enable them to increase their independence. [HL2330]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: We are working closely with local councils to understand where pressures may be and are actively exploring options to find suitable long-term accommodation for the Ukrainians who are likely to stay in this country beyond the households staying in the country beyond their initial sponsorship period. The updated guidance for the Homes for Ukraine guests, hosts and councils setting out all the support options available to them can be accessed (attached) here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homes-for-ukraine-guidance-for-councils#four-to-6-months-after-guests-have-moved-to-your-area>.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Guidance for Council [HL2330 - Homes for Ukraine_ guidance for councils - GOV.UK.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-09-26/HL2330>

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Chelmsford

To ask His Majesty's Government what measures they are taking to assist Ukrainian refugees in the UK who have been declared homeless. [HL2331]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: Our priority was to get Ukrainians to safety as quickly as possible. As with any scheme of this size we anticipated relationship breakdowns which is why we put plans in place to address these risks.

Local councils have a responsibility to support Ukrainians who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, including providing temporary accommodation where required to ensure no family is without a roof over their head.

Local councils' statutory homelessness duties will apply in instances of sponsorship breakdown if the Ukrainian household does not have alternative suitable accommodation.

Reoffenders: Sentencing

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the comparative effectiveness of (1) short prison sentences, and (2) community sentences, in reducing and preventing re-offending. [HL2155]

Lord Bellamy: The overall proven reoffending rate has broadly decreased over the past ten years from 30.9% in 2009/2010 to 25.6% in 2019/20 (although the latest figures have been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic).

Evidence suggests that community sentences, in certain circumstances, are more effective in reducing reoffending than short custodial sentences. A MoJ 2019 study, attached, found that the one-year reoffending rate(1) following short term custodial sentences of less than 12

months was higher than if a community sentence had instead been given (by 4 percentage points).

Sentencing in individual cases is wholly a matter for our independent courts. Sentencers should continue to have the option of imposing a short custodial sentence where appropriate. However, custody should be a last resort and we recognise that, if we are to break the cycle of re-offending, solutions will often lie in robust and effective community sentences.

1 One-year reoffending rate means the percentage of offenders, in any cohort, who were released from custody, or received a non-custodial conviction or a caution, and then went on to commit a subsequent proven offence within a 12 month follow up period (plus a six-month waiting period).

The Answer includes the following attached material:

HL2155 Annex A [2022-09-20 HL2155 Annex A.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-09-05/HL2155>

Reserve Forces: Reviews

Asked by Lord De Mauley

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they intend to publish their response to the report of the Reserve Forces Review 2030, published in May 2021. [HL2094]

Baroness Goldie: Work is underway across Defence to transform the systems, policies and processes by which we draw on and leverage the critical contributions made by our Reserve Forces, informed by the vision set out in the Reserves Forces 2030 Review. The Government will provide an update on this work, and a response to the Reserves Forces 2030 Review, in due course.

Reserve Forces: Statistics

Asked by Lord De Mauley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the 'Quarterly service personnel statistics 1 April 2022', what are the figures for reserve personnel, divided by service into (1) officers, and (2) other ranks, and by (a) strength, (b) inflow, and (c) outflow. [HL2092]

Asked by Lord De Mauley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the 'Quarterly service personnel statistics 1 April 2022', when the quarterly figures ceased showing reserve officers and other ranks separately; and why they continue to do so for regulars but not reserves. [HL2093]

Baroness Goldie: The requested breakdowns by strength, intake and outflow are provided in the attached spreadsheets.

The Quarterly Service Personnel Statistics (QSPS) 1 April 2022 contain the breakdown for the Future Reserves

2020 (FR20) in Tables 6a (trained strength) and 6b (untrained strength) by Officers and Other Ranks. Combining the totals and sub-totals of these tables provides the total FR20 strength by service, broken down by Officers and Other Ranks. While the figures for FR20 intake and outflow split by Officers and Other Ranks have not been included in current or previous editions of the QSPS publication, FR20 intake and outflow by service (as a whole) are available in tables 7b and 7c.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

HL2092 - Armed Forces Statistics [1 April 2022 FR20 Strength, Intake and Outflow by Service and OfficerRank.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-09-05/HL2092>

Respiratory System: Infectious Diseases

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken, if any, to introduce rapid PCR testing for (1) influenza, and (2) other respiratory conditions, ahead of the winter. [HL2159]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: Diagnostic testing by polymerase chain reaction tests for respiratory viruses is currently used by National Health Service trusts based on clinical and infection prevention and control needs. In addition, some trusts may use rapid near patient tests based on similar technologies.

Roads and Waste Disposal: Repairs and Maintenance

Asked by Lord Mawson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given, if any, to the approach of France to highways maintenance and waste clearance by comparison with the UK; what lessons they have drawn from any such consideration; and what plans they have, if any, to apply any such lessons in future policy on highways maintenance and waste clearance. [HL2276]

Asked by Lord Mawson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made, if any, of the reputational impact on England of poor highways maintenance and waste clearance when experienced by visitors arriving from abroad. [HL2277]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: On highway maintenance, the Department has committed National Highways to a set of performance targets on how it delivers a well maintained and resilient Strategic Road Network, which is made up of motorways and principal A-roads in England.

On the local road network, local highway authorities have a duty under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980, as amended, to maintain the highways network in their area. The Act does not set out specific standards of

maintenance, as it is for each individual local highway authority to assess which parts of its network are in need of repair and what standards should be applied, based upon their local knowledge and circumstances.

On waste clearance, Government's Litter Strategy for England sets out a range of measures to reduce littering within a generation and sits alongside National Highways' Litter Strategy which is informed by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' Code of practise on litter and refuse. It commits the organisation to improve the delivery and responsiveness of waste clearance activity as well as partnership working.

Street cleaning and litter picking on the local road network is covered by revenue funding provided by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to relevant Local Authorities.

The Government is aware of the importance of having high standards of maintenance and clearance of our highways can have on those travelling on our roads.

The Government also gains insight of road users' views via the Strategic Roads User Survey and has set a set of performance metrics that National Highways is committed to, to track its performance in maintaining and clearing the Strategic Road Network.

The Government has not given any specific consideration to France's approach to highways maintenance and waste clearance by comparison with the UK.

Russia: Armed Forces

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of President Putin's Decree No. 512 on the UK's maritime strategy. [HL2194]

Baroness Goldie: The 2021 Integrated Review (IR) of Defence outlined Russia as the most acute threat to our security. We continue to assess the threat posed by Russia, and beyond. Russia's recent maritime activity, as set out in Decree No. 512, presents challenges which impact upon the interests of the UK, our Allies and partners.

Growing our maritime capabilities will enable the projection of power further afield and the conduct of operations from increased range. We continue to remain vigilant that Russia continues to invest in and is developing significant underwater capabilities, including deep-sea capabilities which can threaten undersea cables, as well as a torpedo capable of delivering a nuclear payload to coastal targets.

Schools: Biometrics

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Department for Education issuing advice that "live facial recognition technology is not appropriate in

schools or colleges", what assessment they have made of Smestow Academy in Wolverhampton using live face and body scanning in classrooms; and what discussions they have had with the Academy about it. [HL2310]

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask His Majesty's Government, following the pause on the use of biometric facial recognition systems in schools in North Ayrshire Council to allow the Information Commissioner's Office to investigate their legality, what discussions they have had with the Information Commissioner's Office about when they will publish their findings; and why such technology is being rolled out in schools before the findings are published. [HL2311]

Baroness Barran: Education is a devolved matter, and this response outlines the information for England only.

The decision to use biometric technology rests entirely with individual schools and colleges, who must ensure that the use of biometric data complies with all relevant legislation. The department does provide guidance, which makes it clear that schools must comply with the law when implementing biometric technologies, including the Data Protection Act 2018, UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

In July 2022, the department published a revised version of the guidance, 'Protection of biometric data of children in schools and colleges', to provide support on the use of automated biometric recognition systems.

Whilst the department has not held discussions with the Information Commissioner's Office on the schools in North Ayrshire Council, the department has engaged with the Information Commissioner's Office on the department's updated guidance.

Schools: Uniforms

Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to monitor the impact of the guidance on school uniforms. [HL2135]

Baroness Barran: The department is monitoring the impact of the school uniform guidance through continued engagement with key stakeholders, including via correspondence received by the department from parents, school leaders, and uniform suppliers.

While it is the responsibility of school governing boards to determine their uniform policy, we will continue to engage with the sector to ensure that schools are aware of their obligations to comply with the uniform guidance.

Seasonal Workers: Horticulture

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Exeter

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to increase the number of visas for seasonal

workers given the estimated £60 million losses by the horticultural industry for the first half of this year's growing season. [HL2215]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: The Seasonal Worker route was extended into this year, with 38,000 visas available, to support our farmers growing fruit and vegetables as they adapt to changes in the UK labour market. The new Government will keep the position on seasonal workers under close review.

Senior Civil Servants

Asked by Lord Wallace of Saltaire

To ask Her Majesty's Government why they have ceased publishing the responsibilities and names of all senior civil servants, including those at the SCS1 grade, in all departments of central government. [HL2192]

Asked by Lord Wallace of Saltaire

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made as to whether Freedom of Information principles require the release of the responsibilities and names of all senior civil servants. [HL2193]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: The guidance for departments to publish their SCS transparency data remains in place, and all departments have published at least once since 1st April 2022.

Each department publishes its departmental organograms on data.gov.uk as part of the Government's commitment to transparency. In order to do so, departments individually collect and present data including names, grades, job titles, and annual pay ranges from Permanent Secretary through to SCS2. Information for those at SCS1 is anonymised.

The decision to only publish names for SCS2 and above dates back to 2010, and was made on the grounds of proportionality and reasonable expectations of privacy. The guidance for publication of SCS transparency data was reconfirmed in 2017, and has been reviewed regularly to ensure that it is still appropriate and provides the information that the public might reasonably need.

Sewage: Waste Disposal

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take, if any, to ensure that no further raw sewage is discharged into the UK's rivers and coastal waters. [HL2202]

Lord Benyon: On his first day in office, the Secretary of State met with water companies and requested that all water companies provide details of how they will be making significant improvements to their environmental performance in writing by 21 September.

On 26 August, the Government also published a Storm Overflows Discharge Reduction Plan. This outlines strict targets which will see the toughest ever crack down on

sewage spills and will require water companies to deliver the largest infrastructure programme in water company history - £56 billion capital investment over 25 years. By 2035, water companies will have to improve all storm overflows discharging into or near every designated bathing water, and improve 75% of overflows discharging to high priority nature sites. By 2050, this will apply to all remaining storm overflows covered by our targets, regardless of location.

Our Plan will protect biodiversity, the ecology of our rivers and seas, and the public health of our water users for generations to come. There should be no doubt about the Government's ambition and determination to tackle storm overflows and sewage discharges.

Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch

To ask Her Majesty's Government what obligations, if any, water companies have to inform anglers of real time sewerage outflows into the sea which may affect the quality of the catch. [HL2224]

Lord Benyon: This Government has increased the number of storm overflows monitored across the network from approximately 5% in 2016, to nearly 90% in 2021. By 2023 we will have 100% coverage.

Under our landmark Environment Act, we have significantly improved transparency around storm sewer overflow discharges by making it a legal requirement for companies to provide discharge data to the Environment Agency and by 2023 water companies must make it available in near real time to the public. Our Environment Act also places new duties on water companies to monitor the water quality impacts up and downstream of all storm overflows and assets. Anglers will be able to use this data to inform their decisions when choosing where to fish.

The use of storm overflows is strictly set out in Environment Agency permits. If storm overflows operate outside of permit conditions, the EA will take the strongest enforcement action possible. Since 2015, the EA has brought 54 prosecutions against water companies, securing fines of almost £140 million.

Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether anglers could be entitled to compensation from water companies as a result of pollution into fishing waters from sewerage outflows. [HL2226]

Lord Benyon: There is no specific compensation scheme for anglers. Enforcement action by Ofwat can lead to settlements where water companies agree to return money to customers as bill rebates. As a result of Ofwat's action against Southern Water in 2019 and Thames Water in 2018, the companies are returning £123 million and £120 million respectively to customers over the next five years.

The use of storm overflows is strictly set out in Environment Agency permits who will not hesitate to use all options for robust enforcement action against illegal breaches of these permits. This can include unlimited

finances via criminal prosecution by the Environment Agency for the most serious offences. Since 2015, the EA has brought 54 prosecutions against water companies, securing fines of almost £140 million.

Victims of environmental offending can apply to the court for compensation as part of proceedings brought by the Environment Agency and this is generally the first matter the court will address upon sentencing. Impacted parties can approach the Environment Agency and ask for their compensation claim to be included in the proceedings. Compensation may then be awarded by the Court on successful conviction.

Sitel and Teleperformance: Fees and Charges

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 26 July (HL1712), why the cost of an email enquiry via SITEL UK changed from £5.48 per email between March 2017 and April 2021, to £2.74 per email since May 2021. [HL2245]

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether (1) SITEL UK, or (2) Teleperformance, provide a call charge service; and if so, whether the fee has changed from £1.37 per minute. [HL2247]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: From 5th October 2020 customers applying for visas from outside the UK who choose to make contact by e-mail will be charged £2.74 per e-mail. 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 on www.gov.uk.

Customers calling UKVI from outside the UK will be charged 69p per minute (plus their local network charge).

These charges were reduced by 50% against the previous charges (£1.37 per minute for calls and £5.48 per email enquiry).

The previous charges were reviewed in 2020. As part of that review, operational commercial improvement opportunities were identified, enabling the charges to be reduced.

The supplier of UKVI's international email and telephony services and in country telephony services changed from Sitel, to Teleperformance during a handover period between 31st March 2021 and 28 April 2021.

Slavery

Asked by Lord Coaker

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they intend to publish the Modern Slavery Bill announced in the 2022 Queen's Speech. [HL2209]

Asked by Lord Coaker

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consultation they (1) have had, and (2) plan to undertake, with respect to the Modern Slavery Bill announced in the 2022 Queen's Speech. [HL2210]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: My Rt Hon friend the Home Secretary will set out the Government's plans for modern slavery legislation in due course.

Asked by Lord Coaker

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of section 65 (Temporary Leave) of the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 on the victims of modern slavery. [HL2213]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: Section 65 of the Nationality and Borders Act confirms in primary legislation the provision of temporary permission to stay for confirmed victims of modern slavery where it is necessary, and unless relevant exemptions apply, to assist in their recovery from physical or psychological harm related to their exploitation, to enable them to claim compensation or to enable their co-operation in bringing their exploiters to justice. This will bring clarity to both victims and decision makers on when victims will and won't be eligible for permission to stay.

We will keep the implementation of reforms in the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 under close review.

The government has completed a full economic and equalities impact assessment and we will review the impact of section 65 going forward where necessary.

Slavery: British Nationality

Asked by Lord McColl of Dulwich

To ask His Majesty's Government what training is given to First Responders in the National Referral Mechanism about the specific (1) indicators, (2) needs, and (3) entitlements, of British nationals who are victims of modern slavery. [HL2367]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: First Responder Organisations (FROs) in the National Referral Mechanism are responsible for providing training for those within their organisation who act as First Responders, taking account of the specific circumstances of their role.

The Home Office published an e-learning package for First Responders. This consists of two modules, one on indicators of modern slavery and how to make a referral into the NRM (published summer 2020) and a second (published in June 2021) which focuses on the vulnerabilities of child victims.

All confirmed victims are entitled to tailored support based on their individual needs, irrespective of nationality.

Asked by Lord McColl of Dulwich

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the reasons for the increasing

number of British nationals referred to the National Referral Mechanism for victims of modern slavery, and (2) the measures needed to prevent this exploitation. [HL2368]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: In 2021 the most common nationality referred to the National Referral Mechanism was UK nationals, which accounted for 31% (3,952) of all potential victims (compared to 34% in 2020). A high number of those UK nationals are children. For those exploited as children, an increase in the identification of ‘county lines’ cases has partially driven the rise in the number of cases.

Preventing vulnerable people being drawn into slavery is one of the most effective ways of tackling this crime.

The UK Government has invested £10 million, via the Arts and Humanities Research Council, to establish the Modern Slavery Policy and Evidence Centre, to transform the evidence base underpinning our policy response to modern slavery, including what works to prevent this exploitation. We have also invested in a modern slavery prevention fund to test new approaches to preventing modern slavery.

Small Businesses: National Insurance Contributions

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to temporarily reverse national insurance contributions for small and medium sized enterprises. [HL2288]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The Government announced on 22 September that it will be reversing the Health and Social Care Levy. This will provide a tax cut for the 60 per cent (920,000) of businesses who pay National Insurance contributions (NICs) bills by an average of £9,600 in 2023-24. 20,000 businesses will be taken out of paying NICs entirely.

The other 40 per cent of businesses already pay no NICs as a result of the Employment Allowance (EA). In April 2022, the Government increased the EA, a relief which allows eligible businesses to reduce their employer NICs bills each year, from £4,000 to £5,000.

This means that businesses and charities who had employer NICs bills of £100,000 or less in the previous tax year are able to claim up to £5,000 off their employer NICs bills. As a result, eligible businesses are able to employ 4 full-time employees on the National Living Wage without paying any employer NICs. 94 per cent of businesses that benefitted from this change were small and micro businesses.

The Government also recognises that many businesses are exposed to increased energy costs driven by global factors. The Government has announced new support for households, businesses and public sector organisations facing rising energy bills in Great Britain and Northern

Ireland – supporting growth, preventing unnecessary insolvencies and protecting jobs.

Through a new Energy Bill Relief Scheme, the Government will provide a discount on wholesale gas and electricity prices for all non-domestic customers (including all UK businesses, the voluntary sector like charities and the public sector such as schools and hospitals) whose current gas and electricity prices have been significantly inflated in light of global energy prices. This support will be equivalent to the Energy Price Guarantee put in place for households.

Social Security Benefits

Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett

To ask Her Majesty's Government what would be the level of the benefit cap, set in 2016, if it had kept pace with (1) inflation, (2) average earnings, and (3) Universal Credit rates. [HL2138]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: There is a statutory duty to review the levels of the cap at least once in every five years and this will happen at the appropriate time. The current unusual economic period with potentially counter intuitive and shifting trends will need to be considered in the context of any decision regarding a review.

The benefit cap provides a strong work incentive and fairness for hard-working taxpaying households and encourages people to move into work, where possible. The Government firmly believes that where possible it is in the best interests of children to be in working households and the benefit cap provides a clear incentive to move into work.

The table below shows the weekly benefit cap level if it had kept pace with (1) inflation and (2) average earnings. To provide the levels of the benefit cap had it kept pace with Universal Credit rates is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate costs.

	<i>Inflation</i>	<i>Average earnings</i>
London couples/alone parents	£496.51	£529.06
London single adult	£332.67	£354.47
Excluding London couples/alone parents	£431.75	£460.05
Excluding London single adult	£289.27	£308.23

The earnings and inflation measure used for uprating DWP benefits have been used.

Inflation and earnings source: House of Commons, Benefit Uprating 2022/23, Table 5 (February 2022).

Social Services: Standards

Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the delays to discharge from

hospitals owing to the lack of availability of social care; and what steps they intend to take to address this. [HL2231]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: We are working with NHS England and local government to monitor and address discharge delays. NHS England's data shows that on 31 August there were 13,195 patients in hospital in England who no longer meet the criteria to reside. However, this data does not record whether those patients are awaiting a care home placement or care at home.

In December 2021, the Department established the National Hospital Discharge Taskforce with membership from local and central government, the National Health Service to identify long-term, sustainable measures to reduce delayed discharges. The Taskforce launched a '100-day discharge challenge' in July 2022, focusing on 10 best practices for use in hospitals. Integrated care systems and local areas have been invited to submit expressions of interest to become 'discharge frontrunners' to facilitate the sharing of good practice and ideas to ease discharge pressures. In addition, we are simplifying the recruitment of eligible workers from overseas to allow social care employers to fill vacancies.

Somalia: Development Aid

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much UK overseas aid they provided to Somalia in (1) 2017, (2) 2018, (3) 2019, (4) 2020, and (5) 2021. [HL2282]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The UK's total bilateral Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) to Somalia in the years between 2017 and 2020 from the published accounts at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/statistics-on-international-development> is shown below. The Final 2021 UK Aid spend is yet to be published.

	2017	2018	2019	2020
Somalia (£m)	282	194	176	232

South Sudan: Development Aid

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much UK overseas aid they provided to South Sudan in (1) 2017, (2) 2018, (3) 2019, (4) 2020, and (5) 2021. [HL2281]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Statistics on the UK Government's international development work can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/statistics-on-international-development>. The UK has provided the following amounts of bilateral and multilateral Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) to South Sudan between 2017 and 2020: £221,802,000 (2017), £178,127,000 (2018), £259,752,000 (2019) and £118,217,000 (2020).

Final UK Aid spend for 2021 will be published in Autumn 2022.

The UK remains a leading donor to South Sudan. We use our aid budget to work with the UN and partners to respond to South Sudan's humanitarian crisis, fund crucial health and education services, and support peacebuilding efforts. Our aid budget is complemented by our diplomatic work, which presses for the implementation of the peace agreement, constitutional reforms and good public financial management. These are essential for the wider progress towards stability and prosperity of South Sudan.

Strokes: Mechanical Thrombectomy

Asked by Lord Bradshaw

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effect of the speed of Category 2 ambulance response times on (1) outcomes for stroke survivors and (2) access to thrombectomy treatment. [HL2079]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: Category 2 calls are 'emergency' calls which include serious time-sensitive incidents such as strokes and heart attacks. NHS England has allocated an additional £150 million for ambulance service pressures in 2022/23, supporting improvements to response times through additional call handler recruitment, retention and other funding requirements.

NHS England is providing targeted support to some hospitals which face the greatest delays in the handover of ambulance patients to identify short and longer-term interventions. NHS England is also implementing pre-hospital video triage in ambulances for patients with suspected stroke in specific areas in England. These patients will receive a video consultation from their home or in an ambulance with a hospital-based stroke clinician, who will advise the paramedics on the best course of action for the patient, such as whether thrombectomy is required or to which hospital they should be conveyed.

Students: Finance

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure that financial support given to university students is protected from inflation. [HL2258]

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to introduce targeted hardship funding for university students in England and Wales. [HL2259]

Baroness Barran: Higher education (HE) is a devolved matter and financial support for students in Wales is the responsibility of the Welsh Government.

Maximum grants and loans for living costs for students in England have been increased by 2.3% this 2022/23 academic year. The government is reviewing options for

uprating maximum grants and loans for the 2023/24 academic year and an announcement will follow in the Autumn.

Students who have been awarded a loan for living costs for the 2022/23 academic year that is lower than the maximum, and whose household income for the 2022/23 financial year has dropped by at least 15% compared to the income provided for their original assessment, can apply for their entitlement to be reassessed.

In addition, maximum tuition fees, and the subsidised loans available from the government to pay them remain at £9,250 for the 2022/23 academic year, in respect of standard full-time courses.

The department is also freezing maximum tuition fees for the 2023/24 and 2024/25 academic years. By 2024/25, maximum fees will have been frozen for seven years. As well as reducing debt levels for students, the continued fee freeze will help to ensure that the HE system remains sustainable while also promoting greater efficiency at providers.

The government recognises the additional cost of living pressures that have arisen this year and impacted students. Many HE providers have hardship funds that students can apply to for assistance.

To support disadvantaged students and those in need of additional help, the department has confirmed in our guidance to the Office for Students (OfS) on funding for the 2022/23 financial year that universities will continue to be able to support students in hardship through their own hardship funds and the student premium, for which up to £261 million is available for the 2022/23 academic year.

The government has also worked closely with the OfS to clarify that English providers can draw upon this funding now, to provide hardship funds and support disadvantaged students impacted by cost-of-living pressures.

The Energy Price Guarantee announced on 8 September will save the average household at least £1,000 a year based on current energy prices from October. This is in addition to the £400 energy bills discount for all households. Students who buy their energy from a domestic supplier are eligible for the energy bills discount.

As part of the package of support for rising energy bills, the government is also giving a council tax rebate payment of £150 to households that were living in a property in council tax bands A to D as their main home on 1 April 2022. This includes full-time students that do not live in student halls or in property that is not considered a House in Multiple Occupation for council tax purposes.

Sudan: Development Aid

*Asked by **The Lord Bishop of St Albans***

To ask His Majesty's Government how much UK overseas aid they provided to Sudan in (1) 2017, (2) 2018, (3) 2019, (4) 2020, and (5) 2021. [[HL2302](#)]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The UK provided the following amounts of humanitarian aid to Sudan:

- Financial Year (FY) 2017/2018 - £26.2 million
- FY 2018/2019 - £67.5 million
- FY 2019/2020 - £60.2 million
- FY 2020/2021 - £65.9 million
- FY 2021/2022 - £27.7 million

In light of the 25 October coup, the UK has paused all financial assistance to the Sudanese authorities, with the exception of humanitarian aid. We will continue to carefully review our assistance to Sudan as the situation develops.

Taxation: Disclosure of Information

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

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have fully to meet the standards for tax transparency set by the General Assembly of the Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency, including its 14 guiding principles. [[HL2324](#)]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: HMRC, in combination with HM Treasury, the Office of Budget Responsibility, Office for National Statistics, and other Government departments are already meeting, or exceeding, areas identified in the 14 guiding principles set by the General Assembly of the Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency for tax transparency, for example:

- HMRC publish an annual report which includes information on the prevailing tax gap and action taken to reduce it, as well as comprehensive accounts and other information on revenues, expenditure, performance and performance plans. This is in addition to separate publications on the measurement of tax gaps and other research conducted by HMRC on taxpayers' behaviour and tax administration;
- HMRC's published Annual Report and Accounts, as well as other aspects of its performance and expenditure, are regularly audited by the independent National Audit Office (NAO), and subject to Parliamentary scrutiny. NAO reports of its audits are also published. Revenue and other statistics published by HMRC adhere to the Official Statistics Code of Practice and are also subject to independent audit by the UK's Statistics Authority;
- The UK Government and HMRC have increased their own transparency by publishing more data, including information about the exercise of powers. Government departments also publish data as part of a cross-Government transparency data publishing requirement, as directed by several letters from the Prime Minister since 2010;
- The UK Government collaborates with international and regional financial institutions, contributing to their published revenue statistics, to improve the fairness, efficiency, and effectiveness of tax administration,

including through the [Forum on Tax Administration](#); and

- The Tax Assurance Commissioner (TAC) role was created in 2012 to strengthen governance and assurance of tax disputes. The TAC provides assurance to Parliament and the public on the handling of civil tax disputes, and their Report is published as part of HMRC's Annual Report.

Increasing transparency to improve the public's trust in the tax system and Government accountability remains a focus for this administration.

Tigray: Humanitarian Aid

Asked by Lord Oates

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the status of the humanitarian truce between the Federal Government of Ethiopia and the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front. [[HL2146](#)]

Asked by Lord Oates

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have held with international partners over the renewed conflict in Ethiopia. [[HL2147](#)]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The breakdown of the truce and return to conflict between the Tigray People's Liberation Front and the Ethiopian Government is catastrophic for the people of Ethiopia. It risks tens of thousands of deaths, both directly through fighting and indirectly through a further deepening of the already dire humanitarian situation. 22 months since fighting began, it is clear that there is no military solution to the conflict.

The UK is heavily involved in international efforts to de-escalate conflict, stressing the need for a political solution, humanitarian access and accountability for atrocities. We support the African Union's mediation efforts to this end, and encourage a redoubling of these efforts to avert further escalation. The UK urges Tigrayan troops to leave Amhara and Eritrean troops to leave Tigray. We urge the Ethiopian Government to restore services to Tigray and both parties to begin direct talks without preconditions. Our Embassy in Addis Ababa is engaging with all parties to the conflict to deliver these messages.

Asked by Lord Oates

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure humanitarian assistance reaches rural areas in Tigray. [[HL2148](#)]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The conflict in northern Ethiopia has contributed to one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, leaving 13 million people in Tigray, Amhara and Afar requiring humanitarian assistance. The UK has provided more than £80 million to respond to the humanitarian crises Ethiopia since November 2020. Our support has reached civilians across the country including in conflict areas, drought affected areas, and to refugees. UK support has gone towards

water and sanitation, health and nutrition, child protection and gender-based violence prevention and response, livelihoods, logistics, communications, and technical expertise seconded to the UN.

The return to conflict, including the seizure of fuel by the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) from the World Food Programme, makes the work of humanitarian agencies more difficult. The UK, working closely with international partners and the UN, is urging all parties to the conflict to guarantee unfettered humanitarian access by immediately ceasing hostilities and allowing aid in.

Transcaucasus: Arms Trade

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Coventry

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact that arms sales from Turkey to Azerbaijan are having on stability in the South Caucasus. [[HL2339](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK Government has not made a formal assessment of the impact that arms sales from Turkey to Azerbaijan have had on the stability of the South Caucasus. We continue to engage with the Government of Turkey on supporting international negotiation efforts to secure stability and security in the South Caucasus.

Transcaucasus: Peace Negotiations

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Coventry

To ask His Majesty's Government what conversations they have held, if any, with the government of Russia in relation to the prospects for peace and security in the South Caucasus. [[HL2340](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the UK Government has suspended all engagement with the Russian authorities except on a very limited number of issues including the Ukraine crisis. As such, the UK Government currently has no plans to engage directly with the Government of Russia on the situation in the South Caucasus.

Transport: East of England

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their estimated cost of (1) the new 16km dual carriageway linking the A1 Black Cat roundabout in Bedfordshire to the A428 Caxton Gibbet roundabout in Cambridgeshire in respect of which a development consent order has recently been issued, and (2) the proposed East West Rail line between Bedford and Cambridge; what is the latest benefit-to-cost ratio of each; and how decisions about these projects will contribute to their net zero carbon target for transport. [[HL2064](#)]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet scheme is part of National Highways' investment into the country's road network committed in

Road Investment Strategy (RIS2) and will be funded by HMT. It is expected to cost between £810 million to £950 million.

The economic assessment is summarised in terms of the benefit/cost ratio (BCR). National Highways' BCR shows that for every £1 spent on the Scheme there will be £1.90 returned to society in benefits.

National Highways has three strong commitments to lowering carbon emissions; corporate carbon emissions to net zero by 2030, construction and maintenance emissions to net zero by 2040, and all road users to net zero by 2050. Progressing the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet scheme is contributing to National Highways' Net Zero Plan.

The case for East West Rail between Bedford and Cambridge is currently under review. The Government will be providing an update on both the cost and business case in due course.

Tsai, Ing-Wen

Asked by Lord Rogan

To ask His Majesty's Government whether the Prime Minister has spoken to President Tsai Ing-wen of Taiwan following her appointment; and if not, what plans she has to do so. [HL2299]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The Prime Minister has not spoken to President Tsai Ing-wen of Taiwan, and currently has no plans to do so.

Type 26 Frigates: Procurement

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask His Majesty's Government when the order for the five remaining Type 26 frigates will be placed. [HL2314]

Baroness Goldie: As negotiations for Type 26 Batch 2 are still in progress, it would not be appropriate to release any further information. The House will be updated in due course.

UK Border Force: Calais

Asked by Lord Mawson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) shortages of UK Border Force staff in Calais, and (2) the impact of any such shortages on delays to entry to the UK; and what (a) plans they have, and (b) timescale they have established, to address any such shortages. [HL2275]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: We understand it can be frustrating to have to wait to go through the UK border, but the safety and security of the public will always be our number one priority. There are many factors that

influence wait times and we continue to work closely with port operators, industry partners and our French counterparts, to ensure officers are deployed flexibly and when required to meet demand and support passengers.

It is important to note that whilst it may appear that there are shortages of staff when queues form, Border Force resource is deployed not just to carry out essential checks at the border, but also to detect harmful goods and safeguard vulnerable and exploited individuals, which means that at times not all border control points will be open.

Ukraine: Sexual Offences

Asked by Baroness Goudie

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of Ukraine to support female victims of rape or sexual violence in Ukraine in accessing full, prompt, and safe abortion, sexual and reproductive health treatments. [HL2117]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is committed to tackling conflict-related sexual violence and we are working closely with the Ukrainian Government on this issue, including through specialist UK expertise to support investigations. As part of the UK's £220 million of humanitarian assistance to Ukraine, we are helping ensure legal support and crisis accommodation for victims and supporting the effective documentation of gender-based violence cases. UK funding to the UN Populations Fund is also expanding the provision of comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights in Ukraine.

Ukraine: War Crimes

Asked by Baroness Goudie

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to provide practical support for the investigation of alleged war crimes in Ukraine. [HL2118]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is providing assistance to the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) of the International Criminal Court to support its investigations and has already made a £1m voluntary contribution funded through the cross-Government Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF). This contribution will increase the OTP's collection of evidence capacity. We are also supporting the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine (OPG) to investigate war crimes committed in Ukraine through a £2.5 million support package. This is to be delivered through the Atrocity Crimes Advisory group (ACA), which was established in May in conjunction with the EU and US to support the OPG with the gathering of evidence and prosecution of war crimes. The package includes the deployment of Mobile Justice Teams to the scene of potential war crimes, training of up to 90 judges, forensic evidence gathering and support from UK experts in sexual violence in conflict.

Unboxed

Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much money they have invested in Unboxed: The Festival of Brexit; how many people have attended the festival to date; and what analysis they have made of value for money for the taxpayer. [HL2068]

Lord Kamall: UNBOXED: Creativity in the UK is a £120 million UK-wide celebration of creativity and innovation delivered through 10 major commissions. It is not called the 'Festival of Brexit'.

Latest figures show that to date over three million people have engaged with UNBOXED, physically and digitally, and this number will only increase during the last two months of live programming, with two major commissions still to launch.

A departmental [Accounting Officer Assessment](#) for the programme was published on 12 August. It stated that our pre-delivery assessment of the costs and benefits for UNBOXED showed the programme would be value for money, even where some expected benefits are not monetisable. DCMS has kept the programme under review to ensure that it remains value for money.

There is also an independent evaluation of the programme underway. This will consider areas such as job creation; training, development and volunteering opportunities offered; the number of people who experience UNBOXED in person and online; and the number of participants in the learning and engagement programmes delivered by the creative teams across the country. It will be published in early 2023.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Unboxed Accounting Officer Assessment Letter
[Unboxed_Accounting_Officer_Assessment_Letter.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-09-05/HL2068>

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

Asked by Lord Blunkett

To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of the 20,000 individuals who crossed the channel in small boats in order to seek asylum from the beginning of 2022 have been identified as being Albanian citizens. [HL2072]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: The Home Office publishes quarterly statistics on irregular migration, including the nationalities of those arriving by small boat on gov.uk.

12,747 people crossed the Channel by small boat in the first six months of this year, and 17% of those were declared as Albanian nationals.

Figures on irregular migration to the UK up to the end of September 2022 will be published on 24 November 2022. Information on future Home Office statistical

release dates can be found in the 'Research and statistics calendar' on gov.uk.

Visas

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many emergency visas have been issued by the Home Office, in accordance with the discretionary powers of the Secretary of State, in the last five years. [HL1887]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: The UK does not have an emergency visa system. The Home Secretary has discretion to grant Leave Outside The Rules (LOTR) on compelling compassionate grounds; however, we do not maintain a record of those granted LOTR.

Voting Rights: Anniversaries

Asked by Lord Clement-Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans, if any, they have made for national celebrations of the 100th anniversary of full enfranchisement in 2028. [HL2091]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: The Government has no plans at this time for national celebrations to mark the centenary of full enfranchisement in 2028.

War Memorials: Greater London

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord True on 28 April (HL7898), whether the Government Property Agency has received the list of works needed on the Royal Naval Division war memorial from Heritage England; if not, why not; and whether they have been hastened. [HL2313]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: Remedial work has started and is ongoing. As our partners undertake remedial works, they have uncovered further defects and are continuing to carry out a full internal repair of the fountain and its pump system. Due to the location of the fountain, works were halted during the period of mourning, but have now resumed within the secure zone.

Waste Disposal

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the health risks, if any, posed by three-weekly rubbish collections during hot weather. [HL2150]

Lord Benyon: The Government has not made an assessment of the health risks of three-weekly collections. Currently only a small minority of local authorities in England provide a three-weekly residual waste collection. The Government supports frequent and comprehensive rubbish and recycling collections. We want to ensure that

householders are not inconvenienced by being unable to get rid of putrescent or smelly waste weekly or having insufficient capacity to recycle or to remove residual waste.

Through new powers in the Environment Act 2021, local authorities will be required to provide a separate food waste collection to every household in England. Local authorities must implement at least weekly food waste collections and should continue to provide residual waste collections at an appropriate frequency, to ensure they are meeting their legal duty and to prevent any build-up of waste that could be harmful to public health.

Water Companies

Asked by Lord Goddard of Stockport

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with (1) Ofwat, and (2) the Environment Agency, in 2022 about (a) leakages of potable water, (b) sewage discharge into rivers and seas, (c) shareholder dividends, (d) executive bonuses, and (e) gearing of balance sheets, by water companies; and what steps they took, if any, as a result of those discussions. [HL2110]

Lord Benyon: Officials regularly discuss with Ofwat and the Environment Agency a number of issues across the water sectors covering all of the subjects in your questions and more. As a result a number of steps have been taking, for example, launching the Storm Overflow Plan [[Storm overflows discharge reduction plan - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/storm-overflow-discharge-reduction-plan)], the consultation on introducing mandatory water efficiency labels [[UK mandatory water efficiency labelling - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/uk-mandatory-water-efficiency-labelling)] and the Ofwat's consultation on dividends and company performance [[Consultation on proposed modifications to strengthen the ring-fencing licence conditions of the largest undertakers](https://www.ofwat.gov.uk/consultation-on-proposed-modifications-to-strengthen-the-ring-fencing-licence-conditions-of-the-largest-undertakers)]. Copies of these documents are attached to this answer.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Financial resilience consultation
[Financial_Resilience_consultation.pdf]

Storm overflows reduction plan
[Storm_Overflows_Discharge_Reduction_Plan.pdf]

Water efficiency labelling consultation [Consultation on mandatory water efficiency labelling.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-09-05/HL2110>

Water Companies: Fines

Asked by Lord Goddard of Stockport

To ask His Majesty's Government what direction they have given, if any, to OFWAT to increase the penalties imposed on water companies for failing to rectify or prevent water leakages. [HL2350]

Asked by Lord Goddard of Stockport

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of OFWAT in relation to the imposition of obligations on water companies to reduce losses through leakages over the last three years. [HL2351]

Lord Benyon: The Environment Secretary made it clear that water companies must improve their environmental performance and deliver more for customers.

Water companies have targets set by Ofwat that they need to meet (performance commitments), and reducing leakage is one of these. They face automatic financial penalties when these are missed.

Ofwat also has enforcement powers in regard to legal obligations companies have in legislation or their license. If a company significantly misses its leakage performance commitment this could indicate the company might be breaching a legal obligation, which would prompt Ofwat to investigate further.

Ofwat has already put in place clear financial consequences for companies that underperform on leakage. For example, in 2018 Thames Water was found to have breached its general duty under Section 37 of the Water Industry Act 1991 in regard to leakage. Enforcement action resulted in them paying rebates totalling £120 million back to customers, comprising underperformance penalties of £55 million and an additional £65 million to reflect failures of the company.

Ofwat has also set requirements for water companies to cut leaks by 16% and reduce mains bursts by 12% by 2025. In July, Ofwat reported that industry wide leakage has reduced by 11% since 2017-18. Water companies have committed to delivering a 50% reduction in leakage from 2017 to 2018 levels by 2050, and we expect Ofwat to challenge companies to deliver this and monitor progress.

In addition, water companies will need to contribute to delivery of Defra's proposed Water Demand Target under the Environment Act 2021 to reduce the use of public water supply per person in England by 20% by 2037. This includes a 31.3% reduction in leakage by 2037, a pathway for companies to meet their 50% reduction in leakage commitment by 2050.

Water Supply

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps, if any, they intend to take to ensure that water infrastructure has the capacity to withstand periods of drought without requiring hosepipe bans. [HL2201]

Lord Benyon: Despite the dry summer, water companies in England have assured us that essential water supplies remain resilient across the country. It is their duty to maintain those supplies. Defra ministers expect water company action in accordance with their pre-agreed

drought plans. Water companies have taken action to mitigate the effects of this prolonged dry weather using the range of tools available to them, including Temporary Use Bans (aka 'hosepipe bans').

The Government recognises the need to improve the resilience of our water supplies. The National Framework for Water Resources, published in March 2020, sets out the strategic water needs for England to 2050 and beyond. The Framework sets out how we will reduce demand, halve leakage rates, develop new water supply infrastructure, move water to where it is needed, increase drought resilience of water supplies, and reduce the need for drought measures.

The National Framework takes forward the recommendation from the National Infrastructure Commission on improved drought resilience of public water supplies. The Government is requiring water companies to plan to deliver resilience to a one in 500-year drought, that is not needing to resort to emergency measures, such as stand pipes and rota cuts.

Water companies are using the £469 million made available by Ofwat in the current Price Review period (2019-2024) to progress the infrastructure required to improve the resilience of water supplies. In the Autumn 2022, water companies will publish their statutory draft Water Resources Management Plans for consultation, which set out how they will secure water supplies in the long term.

Xinjiang: Ethnic Groups

*Asked by **The Lord Bishop of St Albans***

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports of crimes being committed against (1) Uyghurs, (2) Kazakhs, and (3) other Turkish Muslim minorities, in Xinjiang in China; and what discussions they have had with international partners about taking steps to investigate, and if necessary prosecute, any such crimes. [HL2304]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The report by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights provides new evidence of the extent of China's efforts to silence and repress Uyghurs and other minorities in Xinjiang. It includes a broad range of evidence, including first-hand accounts from victims. The UK has already led international efforts to pressure China to change its behaviour. We have imposed sanctions, led joint statements at the UN, taken action to tackle forced labour in supply chains, funded research to expose China's actions, and consistently raised China's human rights violations at the highest levels in Beijing. Given the seriousness of the report's findings, we are now supporting formal action at the current Human Rights Council (HRC) that will request a Council Debate on the situation in Xinjiang. If successful, this would be the first time we have succeeded in putting China on the Council's agenda. We have also raised the report's findings with the Chinese Embassy in London as well as senior officials in Beijing.

Xinjiang: Human Rights

*Asked by **Lord Alton of Liverpool***

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the findings in the United Nations report OHCHR Assessment of human rights concerns in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, People's Republic of China, published on 31 August; and what discussions they intend to have with the government of China in response. [HL2289]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The report by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights provides new evidence of the extent of China's efforts to silence and repress Uyghurs and other minorities in Xinjiang. It includes a broad range of evidence, including first-hand accounts from victims.

The UK has already led international efforts to pressure China to change its behaviour. We have imposed sanctions, led joint statements at the UN, taken action to tackle forced labour in supply chains, funded research to expose China's actions, and consistently raised China's human rights violations at the highest levels in Beijing.

We have raised the report's findings with the Chinese Embassy in London as well as senior officials in Beijing. We are now considering appropriate next steps with our international partners.

Yemen: Development Aid

*Asked by **The Lord Bishop of St Albans***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much UK overseas aid they provided to Yemen in (1) 2017, (2) 2018, (3) 2019, (4) 2020, and (5) 2021. [HL2249]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK has played a leading role in responding to the humanitarian crisis, committing over £1 billion in aid since the conflict began. Below is a table of UK aid spending on Yemen. We continue to work with donors, the UN and NGOs to lobby the parties to lift access restrictions and ensure humanitarian aid reaches those who most need it in Yemen.

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Amount Pledged</i>	<i>Amount Disbursed</i>
2021/22	£87m	£87m
2020/21	£160m	£221m
2019/20	£200m	£239m
2018/19	£170m	£167m
2017/18	£139m	£203m

Zimbabwe: Maternal Mortality

*Asked by **Lord Oates***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking, together with partners in Zimbabwe, to help

reduce the maternal mortality rate in that country.
[HL2236]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The UK has supported and will continue to support essential sexual, reproductive, maternal, new-born, child and adolescent health and nutrition services in Zimbabwe. Alongside

international partners, our 'Supporting a Resilient Health System' programme (£130 million, 2017-22) has benefitted 5.4 million women and children in Zimbabwe through delivering essential sexual, reproductive, maternal, new-born, child and adolescent health and nutrition services.

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