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**Wednesday**  
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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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|---|---|
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| <b>Baroness Barran</b>                        | Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education                                |
| <b>Lord Bellamy</b>                           | Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Justice                                     |
| <b>Lord Benyon</b>                            | Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs                           |
| <b>Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist</b> | Spokesperson, Wales Office, Whip  |
| <b>Lord Caine</b>                             | Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office                                 |
| <b>Lord Callanan</b>                          | Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy |
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| <b>Lord Murray of Blidworth</b>               | Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office   |
| <b>Baroness Neville-Rolfe</b>                 | Minister of State, Cabinet Office   |
| <b>Lord Offord of Garvel</b>                  | Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scotland Office   |
| <b>Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay</b>          | Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport        |
| <b>Baroness Penn</b>                          | Parliamentary Secretary, HM Treasury  |
| <b>Baroness Scott of Bybrook</b>              | Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities    |
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# Written Statements

Wednesday, 30 November 2022

## Contingencies Fund Advance: Energy Price Guarantee (Domestic)

[HLWS389]

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

I hereby give notice of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's intention to seek an advance from the Contingencies Fund totalling £3,531,500,000 to enable initial expenditure on the Government's Energy Price Guarantee – Domestic Scheme to be spent ahead of the passage of the Supply and Appropriation Act.

The funding is urgently required for HM Government to provide domestic support for household energy bills.

Parliamentary approval for additional resources of £3,531,500,000 for this new expenditure will be sought in a Supplementary Estimate for the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. Pending that approval, urgent expenditure estimated at £3,531,500,000 will be met by repayable cash advances from the Contingencies Fund.

The cash advances will be repaid upon receiving Royal Assent to the related Supply and Appropriation Bill.

The amount requested provides for initial scheme expenditure only, in anticipation of Parliament voting for the resource required for this financial year through an out of turn estimate. Due to urgency, the Contingencies Fund advance provides the immediate cash requirement in the period between scheme start and Parliamentary approval.

Further information can be found in the "Central Government Supply Estimates 2022-23, Out-of-Turn Supplementary Estimates, October 2022" available at [gov.uk](http://gov.uk).

## Criminal Legal Aid Independent Review Consultation: Government's Response

[HLWS392]

**Lord Stewart of Dirleton:** My honourable friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Justice (Mike Freer) has made the following statement:

"Today I am publishing the government's full response to the Criminal Legal Aid Independent Review (CLAIR).

First, I would like to thank Lord Bellamy KC for his Independent Review of Criminal Legal Aid and its recommendations. In March 2022, in response to Lord Bellamy's Independent Review, we consulted on proposals that would mark the most significant reform to criminal legal aid in more than a decade, and would include an additional investment of around £135m per year.

We set out our immediate fee reforms in the Interim Response which was published on 20 July 2022. In this Interim Response, we committed to increase most fees by 15% and this came into force on 30 September 2022. We also extended the scope of payment for Pre-Charge Engagement work to cover work done ahead of an agreement, or where an agreement is not reached, in appropriate cases, in line with the Attorney General's Disclosure Guidelines.

Following further discussions with stakeholders, we were also able to lay a Statutory Instrument in October 2022 to apply the 15% increase to cases that already had a representation order granted on or after 17 September 2020 but had not yet had a main hearing (with further reforms, including to remuneration for Section 28 cases, to come).

In this full consultation response, published today, we set out our plans for longer-term systemic change. The full consultation covers the 203 responses received to 106 consultation questions. We have been working hard to analyse the responses of all stakeholders to ensure our decisions are rooted in evidence. We are committing to an increased investment of £138m per year in total. This means an extra £85m for solicitors and £43m for the Bar in legal aid payments, as well as an additional £11m on expert fees, will eventually be spent every year to ensure long term sustainability. Included in the full consultation response are details of the newly established Criminal Legal Aid Advisory Board (CLAAB), which brings together criminal justice system partners to discuss the operation of the criminal legal aid system and make recommendations to the Lord Chancellor. The Board met for the first time at the end of October 2022 and will continue to meet quarterly.

We have listened to consultation respondents and we propose reallocating money originally set aside to expand the Public Defender Service, to introduce training grants and for further reform of the Litigators' Graduated Fee Scheme (LGFS). Instead, we are proposing structural reforms to police station fees and intend to consult further on a standard police station fee model, allocating £16m to harmonising the fee scheme. This means that, when considered with the funding uplift that came into effect on 30 September, funding for the vital work undertaken by solicitors in the police station will increase by 30%. We are also continuing to look at how we can improve the uptake of legal advice in custody, in particular for children.

We do not consider that structural reform of the Magistrates' Court fee scheme beyond the 15% fee increase already implemented is necessary, and this is supported by consultation responses. However, on top of this uplift, we will allocate an additional £5m towards Youth Court reform from the 2024/25 financial year, which is expected to particularly benefit both solicitors and some junior barristers, as well as children.

My Department will model and consult on a revised LGFS scheme based on current data with a view to rely less heavily on Pages of Prosecution Evidence (PPE) and

instead focus more on fixed basic fees for each offence type.

As we set out in October 2022, over the remainder of this Spending Review period, an additional £3m of funding will be made available for case preparation like written work and special preparation, as well as a further £4m for defence barristers involved in pre-recorded cross-examinations, which are used to reduce the trauma of a trial for vulnerable victims and witnesses by early 2023.

Our full consultation response also covers Very High Cost Cases (VHCCs) and Interim Fixed Fee Offers (IFFOs) as well as fees for prison law and Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC) work. Further proposals will be developed after consultation on how to revise the IFFO fee calculator.

Taken together, the reforms we have announced in the government's interim and full consultation responses will enable us to support a sustainable, diverse and stable criminal justice system in the long term. They will ensure that legal professionals are supported and remunerated fairly, in a way that reflects the development and changes that have occurred in our justice system since the initial conception of the fee schemes. Most importantly, they will ultimately benefit victims and everyone relying on the criminal justice system.

Continuing to engage the criminal defence sector, including the Bar Council and Law Society, remains important as we develop our final policies. I look forward to continuing our constructive work with criminal legal aid practitioners on criminal justice issues.'

### **Improving the UK's Cyber Resilience Public Consultations: Government Response**

[HLWS390]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** I am repeating the following Written Ministerial Statement made today in the other place by my Honourable Friend, the Minister for Media, Data, and Digital Infrastructure, Julia Lopez MP:

Today, the Department publishes the Government response to the consultation for improving the UK's cyber resilience, which sought the public's views on a package of measures.

Cyber resilience and the protection of critical infrastructure and technology are essential for the development of a thriving digital economy. The Network and Information Systems (NIS) Regulations 2018 provide legal measures to boost the overall level of security of network and information systems that are critical for the provision of digital services and essential services.

In recent times, the frequency and scale of cyber incidents against UK targets are increasing the risk of severe damage to critical national infrastructure and the resilience of the economy. High-profile incidents in the last few years, such as the compromise of SolarWinds supply chain and the Colonial Pipeline ransomware attack, as well as incidents this year including the attacks

on the NHS 111 services and South Staffordshire Water, have demonstrated the devastating impact cyber attacks can have, and as such it is essential that legislation in the UK evolves to boost our defence.

In January 2022, the Government launched a public consultation on proposals to improve the UK's cyber resilience, which included seven individual measures relating to the NIS Regulations, as well as further measures focusing on cyber skills (the consultation and Government response for which is available [here](#)). The consultation aimed to gather feedback on the proposals, including favourability, and suggestions on how they could be refined, in order to continue their development further. Understanding the support from the public on these proposals and the nature of the feedback will allow us to ensure the amendments contribute to development of our cyber security legislation and ensure that we can effectively manage future cyber risks.

The Government response, relating to pillars one and two of the consultation, covers the entirety of the United Kingdom. Pillar one seeks to bring managed service providers in scope of NIS, as well as considering a more flexible and risk-based supervisory regime for digital services, ensuring greater resilience of the UK's most critical digital service providers. Pillar two seeks to make amendments to the NIS Regulations to future-proof the legislation, and allow the UK to adapt to emerging, evolving, and critical threats. These changes would allow updating amendments to be made to the Regulations, new sectors and sub-sectors added, and existing sectors expanded via secondary legislation. In addition, the proposals would also amend the existing cost recovery system to implement an improved, fairer scheme; amend the incident reporting thresholds to include incidents that do not actually affect the continuity of the service directly, but nonetheless pose a significant risk to the security and resilience of the entities; and allow regulators to designate critical dependencies in their supply chain for which their services rely on.

Overall the feedback on the proposals has been very positive. This high level of support from industry demonstrates a recognition of the importance of these proposals in enhancing the resilience of the UK's critical national infrastructure, which is critical for the continued growth of our economy.

The full Government response to the proposals is available on the Government website.

### **Online Safety Bill: Government Amendments**

[HLWS391]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** I am repeating the following Written Ministerial Statement made today in the other place by my Honourable Friend, the Minister for Media, Data, and Digital Infrastructure, Paul Scully MP:

The Online Safety Bill is a vital piece of legislation, and this Government is committed to ensuring that it does more to protect children and ensure that any provisions

for adults consider the importance of free speech. On 29 November, the DCMS Secretary of State issued a Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) setting out a number of policy changes to achieve this aim.

The approach we are taking has three main aims. We are strengthening the protections for children in the Bill, ensuring that adults' right to legal free speech is protected, and also creating a genuine system of transparency, accountability and control to give the British public more choice and power over their own accounts and experience. The Secretary of State's WMS yesterday set out these changes in detail, alongside additional changes we're seeking to make.

Given the Bill's stage of passage, it is not possible to make the majority of these changes at Report stage, as the amendments relate to clauses that were debated on the first day of Report. Therefore, as mentioned in the Secretary of State's WMS of 29 November, the Government intends to return a limited number of clauses to a Public Bill Committee. This process would allow the proposed changes to go through robust and thorough scrutiny in the Commons, and would provide for line-by-line scrutiny of the amendments being made. The recommitted clauses would then come back to the whole House for debate at a third day of Report stage. A vote on this recommitment motion will take place immediately after Report stage on 5 December.

As amendments for consideration at Committee cannot be formally tabled before that vote has passed, I am therefore setting out alongside this statement indicative drafting to demonstrate the amendments we will be tabling should a Committee stage take place, so that Parliamentary colleagues can consider them in detail and understand the Government's intentions with the Bill. These amendments are substantively final and the policies that they reflect will not change, the draft amendment paper, attached as annex A, includes explanatory statements of each amendment. However, small tweaks to the drafting may be required before the amendments are formally tabled, to ensure that they are as clear and effective as possible. Amendments in the paper are based on the most recent Bill print, which follows amendments at the Bill's previous Public Bill Committee stage.

I am acutely aware of, and fully agree with, Parliament's desire to see this legislation enacted. I will therefore be seeking to keep the recommitment process as short as possible within the bounds of allowing proper consideration of the changes, and anticipate that should the recommitment process proceed, the Bill will be passed to the House of Lords for consideration in January. I intend to work closely with Parliament to ensure that we are able to get this vital piece of legislation onto the statute book in this Parliamentary session.

The Statement includes the following attached material:

ANNEX A - Draft Amendment Paper [ANNEX A - Draft Amendment Paper.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2022-11-30/HLWS391/>

## UK-Ukraine Digital Trade Agreement in Principle

[HLWS393]

**Lord Johnson of Lainston:** My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade (Kemi Badenoch MP) has today made the following statement:

Earlier this year, the Government launched negotiations on a Digital Trade Agreement as part of our commitment to the people of Ukraine. I am pleased to report that we have now reached agreement in principle on a deal that supports Ukraine's economy, the country's reconstruction and further cements the UK's position as a global leader in digital trade.

The UK is steadfast in our support of the people of Ukraine in their brave struggle against Putin's cruel and brutal war. We will continue to do everything in our power to support Ukraine's fight and help ensure the long-term security and prosperity of Ukraine, as a free and sovereign nation. The UK-Ukraine Digital Trade Agreement is one way we are achieving this.

Greater digitalisation of the economy is a key priority for our Ukrainian partners. They rightly recognise the UK as a global leader in digital trade, which is why they are striking their first ever digital trade agreement with us. This Agreement will boost productivity, jobs, and growth and allow us to help Ukraine deliver on their digital ambitions.

The deal emulates the UK-led agreement on the G7 Digital Trade Principles under our Presidency last year, namely:

- Ensure open digital markets, including through crucial commitments such as a ban on imposing customs duties on electronic transmissions.
- Support cross-border data flows, including financial data, and prohibiting the unfair imposed localisation of data as well as committing to high standards of personal data protection.
- Champion digital trading systems to cut red tape and make trade cheaper, faster, and more secure for businesses.
- Uphold consumer benefits and business safeguards in digital trade. This includes important matters such as cybersecurity, the protection of source code and online consumer protection.

Our Digital Trade Agreement with Ukraine will expand on the current UK-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement by modernising our bilateral trade in the digital era and deepening our economic ties with Ukraine. The UK's services exports to Ukraine are increasingly digitised, with UK exports of digitally-delivered services and goods in trade amounting to £132 million in 2020 – 73% of all

UK services exports to Ukraine. This deal will enable UK and Ukrainian businesses to trade in each other's markets more easily, and help Ukrainian businesses recover from the impact of this cruel war.

Modern global trade is now digital. The UK is a forward-thinking trading partner in the modern global economy. And this agreement sends a strong message to the people of Ukraine: we stand with you – now and throughout your economic reconstruction.

Following the agreement in principle, the legal text will now be finalised and prepared for signature. Signature of the agreement will take place at a future date, after which the agreement will also be presented to Parliament for scrutiny in the usual way.

## **United Kingdom-Brazil Double Taxation Convention**

[[HLWS388](#)]

**Baroness Penn:** My honourable friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Victoria Atkins) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

A Double Taxation Convention with Brazil was signed in Brazil on 29 November. The text of the Convention is available on HM Revenue and Customs' pages of the GOV.UK website and will be deposited in the Libraries of both Houses. The text of the Convention will be scheduled to a draft Order in Council and laid before the House of Commons in due course.

## Written Answers

Wednesday, 30 November 2022

### Advertising and Shops: Electricity

Asked by *Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the level of electricity usage by digital advertising boards and shop signs in England; and what plans they have (1) to promote, or (2) to legislate for, switching off these boards during periods when the electricity system is under pressure. [HL3447]

**Lord Callanan:** The Government does not hold data on electricity usage by digital advertising boards and shop signs in England.

National Grid has launched the electricity Demand Flexibility Service, a voluntary service to reward users who reduce their electricity demand at peak times. This is open to a variety of consumers, primarily through their supplier.

The Government continues to work closely with industry to develop our response options for when the system is under pressure, and National Grid has standard, long-standing procedures in place in the extremely unlikely event of an emergency on the energy network.

### Alternative Fuel Payments

Asked by *Lord Teverson*

To ask His Majesty's Government what evidence they have to show that the £100 Alternative Fuel Payment provides equivalent support to off-grid customers as the Energy Price Guarantee. [HL3393]

**Lord Callanan:** The Government has doubled to £200 the level of support for households that use alternative fuels, such as heating oil, LPG, coal or biomass, to heat their homes. This support will be delivered as soon as possible this winter. This is in recognition of the cost-of-living pressures caused by these rising fuel costs.

### Alternatives to Prison: Parents

Asked by *Lord Hylton*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bellamy on 21 November (HL3356), what plans they have to revise sentencing guidelines to indicate the importance of avoiding custodial sentences for parents of one or more small children, whenever this is practicable. [HL3651]

**Lord Bellamy:** The Sentencing Council is the independent body that has responsibility for the creation and amendment of sentencing guidelines. Accordingly, it decides on its own priorities and workplan. The noble Lord may wish to approach the Sentencing Council directly to share with them any concerns.

## Asylum

Asked by *Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask His Majesty's Government what qualifications are required to be appointed as an Asylum Decision Maker. [HL3515]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** We recruit using standard Civil Service recruitment processes and all our asylum decision makers must meet minimum Civil Service recruitment standards. Once appointed the Home Office offers a comprehensive training programme and mentoring framework for decision makers.

Information about the asylum decision-maker role is available online to potential candidates on Home Office Jobs under Asylum and Protection, Role Overview.

Asked by *Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask His Majesty's Government what training is given to Asylum Decision Makers. [HL3516]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** Asylum Operations remain committed to the training and upskilling of our staff. It can take up to 12 months for a decision maker to become fully proficient in all areas of their work. We have a comprehensive training programme and mentoring framework in place to support this delivered by a dedicated team of senior grade trainers and higher-grade technical experts. This helps with maintaining case-working expertise and improving decision-maker capability as part of our plan for a highly skilled workforce.

During the first 9 weeks of a decision-maker being in post, there is a mixture of classroom based and on the job coaching that is a foundation for ongoing learning and coaching.

Once the decision maker fully moves into the live operational environment and throughout their development period, they work within a mentoring framework and receive the support of Team Leaders, Technical Specialists and consolidators (experienced decision makers who are assigned to support new starters) as they grow their skills and to ensure quality is maintained.

Alongside the foundation training programme, a range of other bespoke and more specialist technical training is available to decision makers.

Recently a comprehensive Training Plan on the provisions introduced by the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 was developed. A one-day training package was rolled out to all Decision Makers from Legacy, Flow, and Children and Secondary Casework units.

### Asylum: Applications

Asked by *Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many Asylum Decision Makers interviewed asylum applicants in each of the last five years. [HL3514]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** We do not hold data about the number of decision makers who conduct asylum interviews at any given time, but this is a core function of an asylum decision maker. Links to the number of asylum decision makers from 2010/11 – 2021/22 can be found at Immigration and protection data: Q2 2022 - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)) in the ASY\_04 tab.

### Asylum: Offshoring

*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask His Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the results of existing initiatives to deter irregular Channel crossings; and in any such assessment, what consideration they have given to alternative approaches whereby potential asylum seekers have their asylum applications considered before arrival in the UK. [HL3552]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** The UK has a proud record of providing protection for people who need it, in accordance with our obligations under the Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights. Our work to deter and stop irregular Channel crossings is dependent on a range of interventions, and the cumulative impact of these. There is no single silver bullet and seeing impact overall will take time. We carefully monitor impact, including through regularly published migration statistics.

Whilst we sympathise with people in many difficult situations around the world, we are not bound to consider asylum claims from the very large numbers of people overseas who might like to come here. The UK provides safe and legal routes through the UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS), Mandate Resettlement Scheme, Community Sponsorship and the Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme. Following the Ukraine crisis, we also introduced the Ukraine Family Scheme (UFS), and the Homes for Ukraine (HFU) Scheme. We also have additional safe and legal routes for people to come to the UK should they wish to join family members here, work or study. This commitment, alongside a fair and firm asylum system, will ensure we continue to offer safe and legal routes to the UK for those in need of protection. Our focus will remain on helping individuals directly from regions of conflict and instability.

### Asylum: Translation Services

*Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask His Majesty's Government what translation facilities are available at asylum interviews. [HL3517]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** The Home Office will provide an interpreter at public expense whenever necessary. Interpreters are required to interpret to a high standard on a range of protection based and human rights topics including, though not limited to, religious conversion, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), sexuality- and gender-based claims, all types and forms of

persecution, medical (physical and mental health) and political activity.

### Avian Influenza

*Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they plan to take to encourage the restocking of domestic birds following the outbreak of avian influenza. [HL3468]

**Lord Benyon:** When avian influenza is confirmed at a premises, in order to limit the risk of the disease spreading, all birds on the premises are humanely culled. Keepers will be paid compensation for clinically healthy birds culled by government for disease control purposes as set out in the Animal Health Act 1981. Following the completion of culling and disposal, the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) will carry out preliminary cleansing and disinfection (C&D) at the premises. The costs for culling, disposal and the preliminary C&D are paid by government. Before a premises can be restocked the keeper will either need to undertake secondary C&D at their own expense or wait 12 months from the date of preliminary C&D.

Whether to undertake secondary C&D and how quickly the process is completed, and therefore when restocking and business activity can resume is a commercial decision by the keeper. APHA will work with the bird keeper to explain the requirements and monitor the effectiveness of C&D.

### Avian Influenza: Disease Control

*Asked by Baroness Redfern*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the imposition of mandatory housing measures for poultry and other captive birds on 7 November, what plans they have, if any, to take further measures to restrict the spread of avian influenza. [HL3478]

**Lord Benyon:** The prevention measures introduced through the Avian Influenza Prevention Zones, including addition of mandatory housing measures and changes to bird gatherings general licence, are introduced in a phased and escalating manner proportionate to the escalating risk to an area and may be introduced on a regional or national basis depending on the epidemiological situation.

We continue to monitor the current situation both in Europe and globally, as well as the effectiveness of any disease control measures taken. Any future decisions on disease control measures will be based upon the latest scientific, ornithological, and veterinary advice.

### Avian Influenza: Vaccination

*Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering*

To ask His Majesty's Government what progress they have made in the development of a vaccine for domestic birds against avian influenza; and what

assessment they have made of the entrance of vaccinated birds into the food chain. [HL3469]

**Lord Benyon:** Defra continues to invest in avian influenza research and monitors the situation in Europe and globally. In conjunction with the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD), Defra will continue to monitor the development and availability of vaccines for use to protect against avian influenza and as a control measure during avian influenza outbreaks, as they are put forward for marketing authorisation by vaccine manufacturers.

Currently, outside of zoos in England, the vaccination of birds as a routine preventative measure is not permitted. Therefore, there are no vaccinated birds entering the food chain. Any future decisions on disease prevention and control measures, including the use of vaccination, will be based upon the latest scientific, ornithological, and veterinary advice. Any proposed changes in the use of vaccination will be subject to risk assessments including in conjunction with the Food Standards Agency, assessments of their safety in the food chain.

*Asked by **Baroness McIntosh of Pickering***

To ask His Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the Director General of Environment in the European Commission about the creation of a common approach to the treatment of migratory birds in order to reduce avian influenza rates in the UK. [HL3470]

**Lord Benyon:** Defra's approach to avian influenza is set out in the [Notifiable Avian Disease Control Strategy for Great Britain](#) supported by the [Mitigation Strategy for Avian Influenza in Wild Birds in England and Wales](#).

The UK Government recognises the significant threat posed by highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), but there are limited effective actions that can be taken to control avian influenza in migratory wild birds as opposed to poultry and other captive bird flocks. We will however continue to take and recommend whatever actions we can, in accordance with international best practice and the latest evidence. International collaboration and knowledge exchange is facilitated through discussions between the UK Chief Veterinary Officer and her counterparts in the EU and globally through the World Organisation for Animal Health.

At the international level, the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) virologists and epidemiologists collaborate with colleagues in Europe and around the world to closely analyse viruses involved in outbreaks in both poultry and other captive birds and those found in wild birds, with the aim of understanding what makes these viruses different and how they might change in the future. The UK National Reference Laboratory remains informally connected to colleagues in EU laboratories, including the EU Reference Laboratory, and continue to share and gather intelligence.

The UK's membership of the OSPAR-HELCOM-ICES Joint Working Group on Birds and the African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement are also key forums for improving collaboration, monitoring and information sharing on avian influenza in migratory birds.

## **Biodiversity: Wind Power**

*Asked by **Baroness Jones of Whitchurch***

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effect of offshore wind farms on marine biodiversity. [HL3466]

**Lord Benyon:** Offshore wind developments have the potential to cause environmental damage. The main impacts are to seabirds (from collisions, displacement, and foraging pressures), to the seabed from cabling, and to certain cetaceans from construction noise.

In the British Energy Security Strategy, the Government committed to an Offshore Wind Environmental Improvement Package (OWEIP). This will deliver several measures to support the accelerated deployment of offshore wind developments while protecting and enhancing the marine environment. These measures include; reforms to Habitats Regulations Assessments for offshore wind, establishing a Marine Recovery Fund to deliver strategic compensation, delivering Offshore Wind Environmental Standards which will include standards for underwater noise, and agreeing a new approach to monitoring in order to increase our understanding of potential impacts of offshore wind on the marine environment.

## **Biofuels: Aviation**

*Asked by **Baroness Scott of Needham Market***

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have (1) to regulate, and (2) to supervise, farmers to ensure that no products from economically viable land, that would otherwise be used for food, are used as feedstocks for sustainable aviation fuels. [HL3480]

**Lord Benyon:** As set out in July, in the Government Response to the consultation "Mandating the use of sustainable aviation fuels in the UK", to count towards and be eligible for reward under any UK mandate for sustainable aviation fuels (SAF), SAF must not be produced from food or feed crops.

While growing crops for the biofuel sector offers farmers more routes to market for their harvest and flexibility in their crop rotations, consideration must also be given to land biodiversity or carbon-store value.

HM Government's Food Strategy aims to broadly maintain the current level of food that we produce domestically and to boost production in sectors where there are the biggest opportunities. We announced in the Food Strategy the intention to publish a Land Use Framework for England in 2023, which will set out land-use change principles to ensure food production is

balanced alongside climate, environment and infrastructure outcomes.

### Eggs: Marketing

*Asked by Baroness Redfern*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to review the 16 week protection period for the marketing of free range eggs on occasions when mandatory housing measures are imposed for poultry and other captive birds. [HL3477]

**Lord Benyon:** Egg Marketing Standards provides a 16-week derogation period during which the free-range description can be retained on eggs even if hens have been housed.

Defra currently has no plans to review this derogation period. However, in recognition of the pressures the egg sector is currently facing, particularly rising input costs alongside the impacts of Avian Influenza, Defra has granted a concession which will apply if the housing orders that are currently in place in England exceed the 16 week derogation period. This concession will allow producers and packers, on a one-off basis, the option to use either direct print to pack or an affixed label on free-range boxes. Accompanying clear and transparent point of sale signage should also be in place to ensure consumers are not misled and to avoid undermining consumer confidence in the free-range industry.

### Electric Vehicles: Charging Points

*Asked by Baroness Kennedy of Cradley*

To ask His Majesty's Government what recent assessment they have made of the roll out of electric car charging points on streets in England. [HL3653]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Department for Transport monitors the progress of the installation of chargepoints and it publishes data, broken down to local authority areas, on a quarterly basis, the latest of which was published on 1st October 2022.

The Government wants to ensure that the right chargepoints are installed in the right places. This spring we published our electric vehicle infrastructure strategy, which defines our vision for the continued roll-out of a world-leading network. In the strategy, the Government set out that it expected at least ten times more public chargepoints by the end of the decade, bringing the number to around 300,000 by 2030.

The Local EV Infrastructure (LEVI) fund will support local authorities to work with industry and transform the availability of charging for drivers without off-street parking in England. In addition, the Department's On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme is available to all UK local authorities to provide chargepoints for residents without access to private parking.

### Energy Bills Rebate: Northern Ireland

*Asked by Lord Hay of Ballyore*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to ensure that payments due to Northern Ireland consumers under the Energy Bills Support Scheme will be made before Christmas. [HL3462]

**Lord Callanan:** Households in Northern Ireland will receive a £400 discount on their energy bills through the Northern Ireland Energy Bills Support Scheme (NI EBSS) this winter. The Government is working intensively with electricity suppliers to deliver a solution and to provide the support as soon as possible.

### Energy Charter Treaty

*Asked by Baroness Sheehan*

To ask His Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to their continuing participation in the Energy Charter Treaty in light of the recent withdrawals by other signatories. [HL3483]

**Lord Callanan:** The Government is closely monitoring the positions of other Contracting Parties to the Energy Charter Treaty and takes into account these positions in its own interaction with the modernisation process of the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT).

### Forestry

*Asked by Earl Cathcart*

To ask His Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to creating a plan for both (1) new, and (2) existing, forests, and all tree species, that enables the UK forestry industry to (a) measure, and (b) value, carbon for owners, in order to (i) enhance and develop management of existing forestry, and (ii) encourage and incentivise the planting of new trees; and what assessment they have made of whether this could reduce the need for state support in the form of planting grants. [HL3459]

**Lord Benyon:** The Government recognises the need to unlock more private sector investment as set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan and HMG Green Finance Strategy. We have committed to raising at least £500 million in private finance every year by 2027 to support nature recovery in England, which will finance projects including woodland creation. The Government also supports the use of blended finance models to mobilise private investment alongside Government grants. This month, the Government launched the Big Nature Impact Fund which blends Defra grants with private investment finance for nature-based projects selling ecosystem services, including woodland creation and peatland restoration.

The Government supported the development of the Woodland Carbon Code, launched in 2011, to create a mechanism to allow landowners to sell woodland carbon.

A total of 1,640 projects were registered under the Woodland Carbon Code across the UK by the end of June 2022, covering around 61 thousand hectares of woodland and projected to sequester 19.3 million tonnes of carbon dioxide over their lifetime. The Code provides a project and carbon registry, as well as carbon projection tools and protocols for measuring carbon in all types of woodland.

In March 2022, the UK Emissions Trading Scheme Authority published a call for evidence on the role of the UK Emissions Trading Scheme as a potential long-term market for both engineered and nature-based greenhouse gas removals. The call for evidence included questions regarding what impacts or opportunities this might present for the Woodland Carbon Code. The UK Emissions Trading Scheme Authority will publish a response in due course.

## Great British Railways

*Asked by Lord Berkeley*

To ask His Majesty's Government what are the official objectives for the Great British Railways Transition Team; who directs its activities; how many staff it employs, including secondments; and how much funding it will receive in (1) the 2022–23, and (2) 2023–24, financial years. [HL3682]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** GBRTT has been set up to design and mobilise the new guiding mind for the railway and create a simpler, better railway today through near-term improvements that benefit customers, communities and taxpayers.

GBRTT's activity is directed by their Board, chaired by Keith Williams CBE, tasked with overseeing delivery of priorities set by the Secretary of State for Transport.

DfT's future spending plans are under review following the 2022 Autumn Fiscal Statement.

## Guide Dogs

*Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to educate the public about the legal status of guide dogs for the blind and other assistance dogs; and what steps they plan to take to penalise businesses which have failed to educate their staff about their legal status. [HL3445]

**Baroness Stedman-Scott:** The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) provides for protection of disabled people, including those needing assistance dogs, in employment and the supply of goods, services, public functions and in clubs and associations. It does not have universal application to the public, or in other settings, and general public education campaigns about it would not be proportionate. However, the Government runs under contract the Equality Advisory and Support Service (EASS), an equalities and human rights helpline, which receives about 35,000 customer contacts a year, more than 60% of which concern disability issues. The EASS can intervene

directly with or assist the complainant to take the problem up with the relevant service provider in many cases, including those involving assistance dogs.

It is the responsibility of all businesses to ensure that they are aware of their obligations to their customers and employees under the Act. To help them in this, Government and relevant independent bodies offer a range of technical guidance and statutory codes of practice that clearly explain what businesses should and should not do to ensure that their conduct is lawful and not discriminatory.

The Act places a duty on businesses and service providers to make reasonable adjustments to improve disabled people's access to goods and services so they are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to non-disabled people. This reasonable adjustment duty is an anticipatory duty therefore those who provide goods, facilities and services to members of the public are expected to anticipate the reasonable adjustments that disabled customers may require, including auxiliary aids.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is the public body responsible for enforcing the Act. In 2017, the EHRC published two pieces of guidance - a guide to help businesses understand what they can do to meet their legal duties to assistance dog owners, and a guide to help tourism businesses welcome people with access requirements. The EHRC supports disabled individuals who have experienced discrimination to take their cases to court.

In recent years, case law has strengthened the equalities law for people with assistance dogs. There have been a number of significant cases brought under the Equality Act involving assistance dogs, which have been successfully litigated, for example, Bloch v Kassim (assistance dogs in taxis); Clutton and Williams v Pen-y-Bryn Group (assistance dogs in restaurants); and McCafferty v Miah (assistance dogs in shops).

## Healthcare Assistants: Migrant Workers

*Asked by Baroness Thomas of Winchester*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the shortage of health care assistants for working age disabled people; and to address any such shortage, what plans they have (1) to review the criteria for the sponsorship of overseas workers, and (2) to adjust the criteria so that disabled people are able to directly employ personal carers. [HL3731]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** Following a recommendation by the independent Migration Advisory Committee in their most recent annual report, the Government has made care worker, care assistant and home care worker roles (Standard Occupation Classification code 6145) eligible for the Health and Social Care Visa and added them to the Shortage Occupation List.

However, the sponsorship system is designed to strike the balance between enabling UK employers to recruit

overseas workers, while ensuring employers only sponsor workers who are eligible for visas, that those they do sponsor will comply with the conditions of their visa and that the safety and wellbeing of those workers is safeguarded. This approach ensures the integrity of the immigration system and provides important safeguards for those who migrate to the UK and for individuals requiring care.

The Government has no plans change this position.

### Legal Profession: Voluntary Work

*Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the value to (1) individuals, and (2) families, of pro bono legal work undertaken by lawyers. [HL3560]

**Lord Bellamy:** The Ministry of Justice has not specifically assessed the value of pro bono work to either family or individuals. However, research conducted by KPMG in 2017 indicates that the pro bono time dedicated by legal professionals was worth approximately £439 million in 2017. Additionally, the Bar Council suggest that 4,618 barristers have done pro bono work in the last year.

The Government highly values the legal sector's contributions through pro bono work and the benefits this work provides.

### Marine Protected Areas: Carbon Emissions

*Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to expand seagrass and seaweed marine protected sites to contribute to the UK's net zero carbon target. [HL3467]

**Lord Benyon:** The UK recognises the important role that nature-based solutions, including blue carbon habitats such as seagrass can play in preventing biodiversity loss and in supporting healthy ecosystems and adaptation to climate change. Although set up primarily to conserve marine biodiversity, some features of the UK's network of Marine Protected Areas (MPA) can also provide climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience benefits. The MPA network already contains the majority of saltmarsh and seagrass habitats in the UK and our focus is now on ensuring these areas are effectively protected.

In addition, Natural England is leading a four-year £2.5 million EU-funded LIFE Recreation ReMEDIES project running to October 2023, which aims to restore seagrass and maerl habitat in five Special Areas of Conservation and the Environment Agency's Restoring Meadow, Marsh and Reef (ReMeMaRe) initiative is working to restore our estuarine and coastal habitats to benefit people and nature. The EA's restoration handbooks are a key tool to support restoration of coastal blue carbon habitats, including seagrass, in the UK and beyond. Furthermore,

in April 2022, the UK Government launched its £140 million Natural Capital and Ecosystem Assessment (NCEA) programme, a flagship three-year R&D programme, spanning England's land, coast and sea. Part of the marine arm of the programme is monitoring and mapping carbon storage and cycling capacity across coastal and sea ecosystems, including seagrass, kelp and the seabed, to inform better management of our natural carbon sinks and sources for climate change mitigation.

### Marine Protected Areas: Fisheries

*Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to allow fishing to take place in highly protected marine areas. [HL3465]

**Lord Benyon:** Highly Protected Marine Areas (HPMAs) would prohibit extractive, destructive and depositional uses and this would include all commercial and recreational fisheries. Defra's 12-week consultation for five candidate HPMAs in English Waters closed in September. Defra officials are analysing all the responses to our consultation and will shortly publish a summary of these responses. Any pilot HPMAs will be designated by 6 July 2023. The Marine and Coastal Access Act states any designation order must be within a year of the consultation starting which is 6 July 2023.

### Medical Equipment: Power Failures

*Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they plan to take to support local councils in the protection of individuals who are dependent on life-critical support machines during power blackouts. [HL3449]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** I refer the Noble Baroness to the answer to Question UIN 77488 (attached) on 11 November 2022.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

UIN 77488 [Written questions and answers - Written questions, answers and statements - UIN77488.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:  
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-11-16/HL3449>

### Parking: Solar Power

*Asked by Baroness Randerson*

To ask His Majesty's Government, in light of recent French legislation requiring car parks of 80 spaces or more to install solar panels within five years, whether similar UK legislation is being considered; if so, how such a scheme would be funded; and if it is not being considered, why not. [HL3476]

**Lord Callanan:** Solar power is a key part of the energy mix, and the Government will continue to support its deployment to meet energy security and net zero goals.

The Government is pleased to see examples of solar installations in UK car parks such as in York, Glasgow and Leeds and is considering how to encourage more.

### Ports: Energy

Asked by **Baroness Whitaker**

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 8 November (HL2795), whether their plans to develop the Electricity Networks Strategic Framework for ports will include projects to use wave energy. [HL3488]

**Lord Callanan:** Wave energy technologies show promise but remain at a pre-commercial stage and cannot displace better established renewables in our energy mix. The Government monitors the situation and will consider how best to integrate wave with the Electricity Networks Strategic Framework.

### Prisoners

Asked by **Lord Bradley**

To ask His Majesty's Government how many (1) people in total, and (2) foreign nationals, are currently in prison, broken down by offence category. [HL3586]

**Lord Bellamy:** The table below provides the information requested in relation to all prisoners in England and Wales, and to foreign nationals held in prison in England and Wales, by offence group as of 30 September 2022, the latest date for which information is available.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Table [2022-12-05 HL3586 data.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:  
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-11-21/HL3586>

### Prisoners' Release: Parole Board

Asked by **Lord Bradley**

To ask His Majesty's Government how many people serving an extended determinate sentence have been released from prison; and of those, how many were released after their first Parole Board hearing in each of the last five years. [HL3458]

**Lord Bellamy:** The table below sets out the number of releases of prisoners serving an extended determinate sentence (EDS) who are eligible for release via parole as part of their EDS in each of the last five years in which full data are available.

| <i>Year of Release</i> | <i>Total EDS First-Time Releases</i> | <i>Total EDS Releases at First Hearing</i> |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| 2017                   | 143                                  | 55   |
| 2018                   | 243                                  | 116  |

| <i>Year of Release</i> | <i>Total EDS First-Time Releases</i> | <i>Total EDS Releases at First Hearing</i> |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| 2019                   | 352                                  | 137  |
| 2020                   | 506                                  | 226  |
| 2021                   | 533                                  | 220  |

*Data sources and quality:*

1. Some prisoners were released without accessing the parole process because they were deported or, exceptionally, left prison following early release on compassionate grounds.

2. Some parole hearings were not completed as a result of the prisoner receiving a new sentence or being transferred to secure hospital under the Mental Health Act 1983.

3. Total figures in the table do not match published total releases for EDS offenders, as some EDS offenders are not eligible for release via parole as part of their EDS.

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

### Prisoners: Ethnic Groups

Asked by **Lord Bradley**

To ask His Majesty's Government how many people are currently in prison aged (1) 18 to 24, and (2) 25 to 29, broken down by ethnicity. [HL3456]

**Lord Bellamy:** Relevant data are provided in the statistical publication *Ethnicity and the Criminal Justice System*. The most recent publication includes a snapshot of data for 30 June 2020. The relevant figures can be found in Table 6.01, which is reproduced in the attachment.

Data for 30 June 2021 and 30 June 2022 will be included in the next publication, which is scheduled for November 2023.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Table [2022-11-30 HL3456 - ethnicity data.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:  
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-11-16/HL3456>

### Prisoners: Self-harm

Asked by **Baroness Fox of Buckley**

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the success of HMP Peterborough's scheme to reduce self-harm incidents in their female prisoner; and whether such a scheme could be implemented across England and Wales. [HL3594]

**Lord Bellamy:** We welcome the work HMP Peterborough is doing to reduce self-harm amongst female prisoners. We continue to do everything we can to

address self-harm across the estate. In 2020, we established a multi-disciplinary Women's Self-Harm Taskforce to address the high levels of self-harm. The aim of the taskforce is to focus on work, research and interventions that improve prisoner outcomes. The taskforce is trialling and formally evaluating a range of initiatives for women in prison and will use the formal evaluations of the work at Peterborough, and the similar work across the women's prison estate, to inform our approaches to reducing self-harm amongst female prisoners going forward.

## Public Expenditure

*Asked by Lord Macpherson of Earl's Court*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the answer of Lord Bates on 5 February 2018 (HL4939), whether they will publish an updated table including (1) pensions, (2) health, and (3) total managed expenditure, for 2021–22. [HL3608]

**Baroness Penn:** The requested information is in the table:

|   | 1978-79 | 1996-97 | 2009-10 | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2021-22  |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| (1) National insurance-funded pensions (£billion) (1) | 7.6     | 32      | 66.8    | 89.3    | 91.5    | 104.5    |
| as a percentage of Total Managed Expenditure          | 9.48%   | 9.78 %  | 9.26 %  | 11.23%  | 11.24%  | 9.86 %   |
| (2) UK Health Expenditure (£billion) (2)              | 7.8     | 42.8    | 116.9   | 138.5   | 142.6   | 216.8    |
| as a percentage of Total Managed Expenditure          | 9.79%   | 13.08%  | 16.19%  | 17.42%  | 17.52%  | 20.45%   |
| Total Managed Expenditure (£billion) (3)              | 79.7    | 327.3   | 721.9   | 794.9   | 813.8   | 1,060.30 |

### Data Sources:

(1) Figures up to 2016-17 taken from benefit expenditure and caseload tables published by the Department of Work and Pensions. The figure for 2021-22 taken from the DWP Annual Report and Accounts. Figures for National insurance-funded pensions have been provided in line with the request in the initial PQ referred to.

(2) Data from 2009-10 onwards taken from table 4.2 of the Public Expenditure Statistical Analysis (PESA) 2022. Data for 1996-97 are as at PESA 2020. 1978-79 data taken from HoC Briefing Paper on NHS Funding and expenditure.

(3) Data published by the Office for National Statistics consistent with PESA 2022.

## Reoffenders: Sentencing

*Asked by Lord Bradley*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many (1) male, and (2) female, prisoners are currently in prison having been recalled, and are serving a custodial sentence of (a) less than 12 months, (b) between 12 months and two years, (c) between two and four years, (d) between four and five years, (e) between five and seven years, (f) between seven and 10 years, (g) between 10 and 14 years, and (h) 14 years or more. [HL3589]

**Lord Bellamy:** The answer is given in the table below. In order to protect the public, offenders on licence are liable to be recalled to prison at any time if they breach their licence conditions in such a way as to demonstrate increased risk, such that the risk may no longer be effectively managed in the community.

*Table 1: Recall prison population, by recorded sentence length (1) and sex, as at 30 Sep 2022; England & Wales*

|                                | Total  | Male   | Female |
|--------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Total                          | 10,448 | 10,053 | 395    |
| Less than 12 months            | 680    | 621    | 59     |
| 12 months to less than 2 years | 911    | 857    | 54     |
| 2 years to less than 4 years   | 2,206  | 2,091  | 115    |
| 4 years to less than 5 years   | 954    | 914    | 40     |
| 5 years to less than 7 years   | 1,315  | 1,281  | 34     |
| 7 years to less than 10 years  | 1,247  | 1,215  | 32     |
| 10 years to less than 14 years | 639    | 627    | 12     |
| 14 years or over               | 243    | 239    | 4      |

|                       | <i>Total</i> | <i>Male</i> | <i>Female</i> |
|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|
| Other/Not Recorded(2) | 2,253        | 2,208       | 45            |

**NOTES**

(1) For recalled prisoners this should correspond with the original sentence length, but there may be cases for which this instead reflects the 'length of recall'.

(2) This includes those recalled from indeterminate sentences who do not have a recorded sentence length.

*Date Sources and Quality*

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

Source: prison-NOMIS (ref. PQ HL3589)

**Right to Buy Scheme: Disability**

*Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many homes which were adapted for disabled users have been sold under the right to buy programme in the last 20 years; and what was the rate of replacement of these homes, either by (1) construction, or (2) adaptation. [HL3446]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** The Government does not collect statistics on this particular area.

**Shrubland Hall: Conservation**

*Asked by Lord Marlesford*

To ask His Majesty's Government what progress they have made regarding the conservation of Shrubland Hall in Suffolk, including ensuring that the listed structures are intact, since that property was put on the Heritage at Risk Register by Historic England in November 2021. [HL3472]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** Shrubland Hall, associated structures and parkland remain on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register. Historic England is continuing to work with the owners and the local authority, with the ambition of improving the condition of the buildings and parkland and putting in place appropriate conservation management planning, so that the site can be removed from the Register in due course.

**Small Businesses: Billing**

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact on small businesses of early payment schemes. [HL3485]

**Lord Callanan:** The Government has not made an assessment of the impact on small businesses of early payment schemes.

In July 2021, the Government published an independent review by Nigel Boardman into the development and use of Supply Chain Finance in government.

The Small Business Commissioner, Liz Barclay, has drawn awareness to the potential benefits of how technology can play a key role in managing cashflow and accelerating payments to small suppliers.

**Tax Yields**

*Asked by Baroness Sherlock*

To ask His Majesty's Government, relative to the caseload in financial year 2022–23, what estimate they have made of the additional tax revenue that will be raised from individuals who are both in employment and receiving benefits as a result of freezing the personal tax allowance in the financial years (1) 2023–24, (2) 2024–25, (3) 2025–26, (4) 2026–27, and (5) 2027–8. [HL3621]

**Baroness Penn:** An estimate of the revenue raised from individuals who are both in employment and receiving benefits could only be answered at disproportionate cost.

The estimated Exchequer impacts of changes to tax thresholds are set out in respective Policy Costing documents. Impacts of Autumn Statement 2022 policies can be found in the Autumn Statement 2022 Policy Costing document.

**Timber: Construction**

*Asked by Earl Cathcart*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the finding in the Forestry Commission report Sustainable construction timber: sourcing and specifying local timber, published in 2016, that “timber-framed construction currently accounts for 75 per cent of new housing in Scotland, while the comparable figure for the UK as a whole is 25 per cent”; and what steps they intend to take in response. [HL3460]

**Lord Benyon:** No such assessment has been made.

The Net Zero Strategy and England Trees Action Plan committed to increase the use of timber in construction, and we encourage the use of timber in construction when safe to do so, as it can reduce the embodied carbon of a building. In the England Trees Action Plan, we committed to supporting timber in construction by providing up to £1.5m of support to develop innovative timber products through the Forestry Innovation Fund. We are also working to increase public demand for sustainably sourced domestic timber through timber procurement policies and encouraging research into barriers to uptake of timber, including looking at timber strength grades and the fire resistance of engineered timber structures.

## Trade Agreements: Australia

Asked by *Baroness Jones of Whitchurch*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by the former Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Rt Hon George Eustice MP, on 14 November (HC Deb, cols 424–6), what plans they have, if any, to review the terms of the trade agreement with the government of Australia. [[HL3464](#)]

**Lord Johnson of Lainston:** The UK-Australia Free Trade Agreement gives British companies unprecedented access to the Australian market. It is expected to increase trade with Australia by 53% and grow our economy by up to £2.3 billion in the long run.

The Government is taking the necessary steps to bring this agreement into force as soon as possible so businesses can reap the many benefits. The Trade (Australia and New Zealand) Bill is currently proceeding through Parliament.

## Type 26 Frigates

Asked by *Lord West of Spithead*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Goldie on 17 November (HL3222), whether the delivery rate of Type 26 frigates to initial operating capability, after HMS Glasgow, will be once every 12 months. [[HL3533](#)]

**Baroness Goldie:** Initial Operating Capability (IOC) is only declared once for ship classes. The Type 26 Class's IOC is forecast to be October 2028.

While delivery rates for the following hulls 2-8 may vary, all ships are expected to enter service between 2028 and 2035.

## Ukraine: Guided Weapons

Asked by *Lord Blencathra*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the need to supply Ukraine with long-range weapons to neutralise missile sites inside Russia. [[HL3455](#)]

**Baroness Goldie:** We have provided Ukraine with military aid on the understanding that it will be used in accordance with international humanitarian law. We liaise on a daily basis with the Ukrainian Government, and they are clear that equipment provided by the UK is intended for the defence of Ukraine.

## Ukraine: Military Aid

Asked by *Lord Blencathra*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to work with NATO allies to send all available winter warfare clothing to the Ukrainian military. [[HL3454](#)]

**Baroness Goldie:** On 9 November, we announced that the UK would provide Armed Forces of Ukraine recruits with extreme cold weather kits, including 25,000 sets of extreme cold weather clothing and 20,000 sleeping bags. The UK has been a leading advocate for the provision of winter equipment and has supported the delivery of tens of thousands of additional sets through the International Donors Coordination Cell.

## Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

Asked by *Lord Hylton*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the Public and Commercial Services Union and Care4Calais Safe passage for refugees: humane alternative to the Rwanda policy, published on 16 November; and in particular their proposal for a visa system designed to prevent crossings in small boats across the English channel. [[HL3463](#)]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** The UK has a proud record of providing protection for people who need it, in accordance with our obligations under the Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights. However, there is no provision within our Immigration Rules for someone to be allowed to travel to the UK to seek asylum or temporary refuge, as proposed in the report by the Public and Commercial Services Union and Care4Calais.

The UK provides safe and legal routes through the UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS), Mandate Resettlement Scheme, Community Sponsorship and the Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme. Following the Ukraine crisis, we also introduced the Ukraine Family Scheme (UFS), and the Homes for Ukraine (HFU) Scheme. We also have additional safe and legal routes for people to come to the UK should they wish to join family members here, work or study. This commitment, alongside a fair and firm asylum system, will ensure we continue to offer safe and legal routes to the UK for those in need of protection. Our focus will remain on helping individuals directly from regions of conflict and instability.

## Undocumented Migrants: Northern Ireland

Asked by *Baroness Hoey*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to prevent migrants coming to the UK illegally by travelling from the Republic of Ireland and then to mainland Great Britain. [[HL3542](#)]

Asked by *Baroness Hoey*

To ask His Majesty's Government what discussions they have held with the government of Ireland concerning the number of illegal migrants who have travelled via ferry from France to Dublin, and then travelled by bus to Northern Ireland followed by travel by ferry to Great Britain; and in any such discussions,

whether the number of migrants taking this route in each of the last two years was confirmed and, if so, what is this number. [HL3545]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** There is a high level of cooperation on border security between both the UK and Irish Governments to ensure we are taking all the necessary measures to protect and secure the Common Travel Area (CTA).

As now, there will be no routine immigration controls on CTA journeys and none whatsoever on the land border between Ireland and Northern Ireland.

However, intelligence-led operations to target potential abuse of CTA routes continues. Anyone identified attempting to circumvent UK border controls is liable to be removed, if they are not lawfully present in the UK.

### **Wagner Group: Sanctions**

*Asked by Lord Marlesford*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to permanently exclude any person who is identified as (1) being, or (2) having been, a member of the Russian Wagner Group from entry to the UK. [HL3473]

**Lord Sharpe of Epsom:** The Home Office does not comment on individual cases.

Travel bans restrict the movement of identified individuals associated with regimes or groups whose behaviour is considered unacceptable by the international community. A person who is the subject of a travel ban is an excluded person under section 8B of the Immigration Act 1971 and cannot lawfully enter or remain in the UK.

The Home Secretary can exclude a foreign national, where it is conducive to the public good. The Immigration Rules also provide for the refusal of entry clearance or permission to enter at the border if a person's presence in the UK is not conducive to the public good because of their conduct, character, associations or other reasons.

### **Women's Centres**

*Asked by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Women in Prison report The value of Women's Centres, published in September. [HL3539]

*Asked by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether investing in women's centres (1) gives a good return on the investment, (2) offers better value and outcomes, and (3) reduces reoffending rates, by comparison with sending women to prison. [HL3540]

*Asked by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether more funding for women's centres could be achieved by a cross departmental fund; and what plans they have, if any, to introduce such a fund. [HL3541]

**Lord Bellamy:** The Government understands the vital role that women's centres play in supporting women in the community with complex needs to address the underlying causes of their offending behaviour, which the report, the Value of Women's Centres', sets out. The MoJ is investing up to £24 million in women's community services through grant competitions that aim to both support the sector in delivering vital services and to promote better local integration in how those services are delivered. The effectiveness of our funding for women's community services will be evaluated and inform future funding decisions, including whether to establish a cross departmental fund.

It also remains our intention to publish a Delivery Plan for the Female Offender Strategy in the coming months. The Delivery Plan will be accompanied by an Impact Assessment that will include an estimate of the number of women that could be supported through women's services as a result of our funding, based on the number of interventions that could be provided.

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