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**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**  
**(HANSARD)**

# **HOUSE OF LORDS**

## **WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS**

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<b>Earl Howe</b>	Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
<b>Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon</b>	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
<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
<b>Earl of Courtown</b>	Deputy Chief Whip
<b>Lord Davies of Gower</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Goldie</b>	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
<b>Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park</b>	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
<b>Lord Harlech</b>	Whip
<b>Lord Johnson of Lainston</b>	Minister of State, Department for International Trade
<b>Lord Markham</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
<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
<b>Lord Sharpe of Epsom</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office
<b>Baroness Stedman-Scott</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Department for Work and Pensions
<b>Lord Stewart of Dirleton</b>	Advocate-General for Scotland
<b>Baroness Vere of Norbiton</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
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# Written Statements

Tuesday, 20 December 2022

## Annual Negotiations for 2023 Fishing Opportunities

[HLWS464]

**Lord Benyon:** My Right Honourable friend the Minister of State for Food, Farming and Fisheries (Mark Spencer) has made the following statement:

Each year, the UK negotiates with the EU, Norway, other coastal States in the Northeast Atlantic and via Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) to agree catch opportunities and sustainable management measures for shared stocks, including in international waters.

*Successful annual negotiations for 2023 fishing opportunities*

The UK has now concluded these negotiations and reached agreement with the EU, Norway and other coastal States in the North-East Atlantic on catch opportunities for 2023. Across these negotiations, the UK has secured agreement on 86 Total Allowable Catches (TACs), providing £750 million of potential fishing opportunities.

The UK has also concluded an agreement with Norway for continued access to each other's waters for 2023, as well an exchange of fishing quota.

The UK Government has worked closely with the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Northern Ireland Executive, and the outcomes secured will enable us to improve the sustainable management of our fish stocks and support the whole of the UK fishing industry.

### *UK-EU Agreement*

As a result of quota share uplifts agreed in the Trade and Cooperation Agreement, the UK has around 30,000 tonnes more quota from these negotiations than it would have received with its previous shares as an EU Member State. The UK has agreed 69 TACs and arrangements for non-quota stocks with the EU for 2023, providing fishing opportunities of more than 140,000 tonnes. In total, this is worth around £282 million, based on historic landing prices.

An initial estimate suggests the number of TACs that align with scientific advice from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) has increased by 13% compared to last year. This is the largest increase since 2020 when the UK first started using this metric. The Government will publish shortly a full assessment of the number of TACs set consistent with ICES advice across all annual negotiations.

For 2023, we have also agreed access arrangements on albacore tuna and spurdog in the North Sea for the first time through the UK-EU written record.

For non-quota stocks (NQS), we agreed a roll-over of access arrangements for 2023 to ensure continued access

for the UK fleet to fish NQS worth around £25 million per year in EU waters. This is alongside further flexibility for seabass management measures within the ICES advice.

### *UK-EU-Norway Trilateral Negotiations*

The UK has also reached agreement with Norway and the EU on catch limits for 2023 for six stocks, worth over £202 million to the UK fishing industry in the North Sea and a further £11 million in other waters around the UK, based on historic landing prices.

The Parties have agreed increases in TACs for five of the six stocks, including North Sea cod. They have agreed to a cut in North Sea Herring. All TACs are at or below the level advised by ICES. For two stocks (haddock and whiting), the Parties have agreed to take a more precautionary approach than the scientific advice to avoid risks to the recovery of North Sea cod given the close interactions between the stocks, and set a 30% increase on each.

The Parties renewed their commitment to deliver Long Term Management Plans for their shared stocks, and have agreed to develop new and more effective management measures for the North Sea herring fishery, focusing on stability for industry and sustainability.

The Parties have also agreed to continue building on the work undertaken this year on Monitoring, Control and Surveillance of their shared stocks.

### *UK-Norway Bilateral Negotiations*

The UK has agreed with Norway on continuing to allow vessels to access our respective waters for demersal fisheries, as well as exchanges of quota worth around £5 million to the UK fleet. UK vessels will be able to fish their North Sea whitefish quotas, such as hake and cod, in Norwegian waters, up to a total of 30,000 tonnes. We have also agreed to reciprocal access for herring, up to 20,000 tonnes. On exchanges, we secured around £3 million worth of North Sea quota from Norway (including valuable stocks such as monkfish), together with around £2 million worth of stocks in Arctic waters. This complements over 5,200 tonnes of cod in waters around Svalbard, worth an estimated £10 million, that Norway has allocated to the UK under a separate arrangement.

The mutual access will also allow respective fleets more flexibility to target the stocks in the best condition throughout the fishing year, supporting a more sustainable and economically viable fishing industry.

### *Multilateral 'coastal State' negotiations*

The UK has agreed TACs at the level advised by ICES on the three stocks we share with other coastal States in the North-East Atlantic: mackerel, blue whiting and Atlanto-Scandian herring (ASH). The opportunities will be worth over £250 million to the UK fleet in 2023.

The UK has also chaired negotiations throughout 2022 on a new quota-sharing arrangement for mackerel. These negotiations are making steady progress, and the UK remains committed to securing a fair, sustainable and comprehensive sharing arrangement. Negotiations will

resume in early 2023, with an aim of concluding them by 31 March, alongside parallel discussions to agree new quota-sharing arrangements for blue whiting and ASH.

## Canada and Gulf Cooperation Council

[HLWS463]

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

The Department for International Trade (DIT) has made progress on two key trade negotiations. This statement provides Parliament with an update on the United Kingdom's (UK) trade negotiations with Canada and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

### *UK-Canada Trade Negotiations*

The fourth round of the UK-Canada Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations commenced on 28 November and concluded on 2 December. The negotiations were hosted in Ottawa and conducted in a hybrid format with technical discussions held across 32 policy areas over 73 separate sessions.

This round saw the first full chapter agreed in principle, Transparency, and we provisionally identified candidates for closure in the next rounds. We continued to make steady progress and agree text where there was clear alignment, including in Innovation, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, Technical Barriers to Trade, Anti-Corruption and Financial Services.

Discussions were largely constructive, but key differences remain and there is more work to be done towards acceptable landing zones in important areas such as Services, Investment and Procurement. Both negotiation teams took actions to consider each other's priorities and identify opportunities to move closer together ahead of the next round.

As always, we closely monitored the interdependencies between the bilateral and Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) negotiations, particularly considering CPTPP members were meeting in London the following week.

We expect to hold the fifth round of negotiations in London in March 2023.

### *UK-Gulf Cooperation Council Trade Negotiations*

The second round of negotiations for an FTA between the UK and the GCC took place between 5 and 9 December.

The second round was hosted in London and held in a hybrid fashion. More than 100 GCC officials travelled to London for in-person discussions, with others attending virtually. Technical discussions were held across 29 policy areas over 36 sessions. In total, more than 100 UK negotiators from across Government took part in this round of negotiations.

During the round, the UK set out its policy positions having exchanged draft chapter text with the GCC across most policy areas before the round. A key objective at this stage was to continue to build a firm understanding of the GCC's policy positions and priorities. Both negotiation teams took actions to further consider each other's positions and identify opportunities to move closer together ahead of round three.

Both sides remain committed to securing an ambitious, comprehensive and modern agreement fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

An FTA will be a substantial economic opportunity, and a significant moment in the UK-GCC relationship. Government analysis shows that, in the long run, a deal with the GCC is expected to increase trade by at least 16%, add at least £1.6 billion a year to the UK economy and contribute an additional £600 million or more to UK workers' annual wages.

We expect the third round of negotiations to take place in Riyadh next year.

His Majesty's Government remains clear that any deal 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, 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 National Health Service and the services it provides is not on the table.

His Majesty's Government will keep Parliament updated as these negotiations progress.

## Intergovernmental Relations Quarterly Report: Quarter 3 2022

[HLWS461]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (Felicity Buchan MP), has today made the following written statement:

Today, the Government published the report of our engagement with the devolved governments in quarter three of 2022 on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

The report covers a period where we have seen unprecedented events, and gives an insight into the extensive engagement between the UK Government, Scottish Government, Welsh Government, and Northern Ireland Executive between 1 July to 30 September 2022. During this reporting period the governments collaborated on a number of areas, not least in organising the commemoration of the sad passing of Her Majesty The Queen.

The report is part of the Government's ongoing commitment to transparency of intergovernmental relations to Parliament and the public. The Government will continue with publications to demonstrate transparency in intergovernmental relations.

## Mortgage Guarantee Scheme Extension: Contingent Liability

[HLWS462]

**Baroness Penn:** My honourable friend the Economic Secretary to the Treasury (Andrew Griffith) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

Today I can inform the House that the Mortgage Guarantee Scheme will be extended by an additional year to continue to support homebuyers and movers with smaller deposits. The scheme will now close to new accounts on 31 December 2023.

HM Treasury launched the Mortgage Guarantee Scheme in April 2021, which provides a guarantee to participating lenders across the UK who offer mortgages to first-time buyers and existing homeowners with a deposit as small as 5% on homes with a value of up to £600,000. Since its launch last year, the scheme has successfully restored the availability of 91-95% loan-to-value mortgage products, directly supporting over 24,000 households to buy their homes – 85% of which were by first-time buyers. Since 2010, more than 687,000 households have been helped into home ownership through government schemes.

While the Mortgage Guarantee Scheme was originally planned to close to new mortgage applications on 31 December 2022, HM Treasury has decided to extend the scheme by an additional year to continue to provide lenders with the confidence to offer low deposit mortgages to consumers.

Guarantees issued under the scheme are valid for up to seven years after the mortgage is originated. Participating lenders pay HM Treasury a fee for each mortgage entered into the scheme. This is set so that expected claims against the guarantee should be covered by revenue from the fee.

In order to ensure products remain available, HM Treasury will therefore be extending the duration of the government's contingent liability for an additional year beyond its planned closing date of 31 December 2022. The department is also reducing the maximum contingent liability cap from £3.9 billion to £3.2 billion, which remains set at a level so as not to constrain the ability of lenders to access the scheme. This liability would only materialise if the sum of commercial fees paid by lenders would not be sufficient to cover calls on the guarantee.

Authority for any expenditure required under this liability will be sought through the normal procedure. HM Treasury has approved this proposal.

## UK Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe: Appointments

[HLWS466]

**Lord True:** The Hon. Member for Stoke-on-Trent Central (Jo Gideon) has been appointed as a full member of the United Kingdom Delegation to the Parliamentary

Assembly of the Council of Europe in place of the Hon. Member for South West Hertfordshire (Gagan Mohindra).

The Hon. Member for Hastings and Rye (Sally-Ann Hart) has been appointed as a full member in place of the Rt. Hon. Member for Gainsborough (Sir Edward Leigh), who has been appointed as a substitute member in place of the Hon. Member for Meriden (Saqib Bhatti).

The Hon. Member for Morecambe and Lunesdale (David Morris) has been appointed as a full member in place of the Hon. Member for Sedgefield (Paul Howell).

The Hon. Member for Hartlepool (Jill Mortimer) has been appointed as a full member in place of the Hon. Member for Broadland (Jerome Mayhew).

The Hon. Member for Mid Derbyshire (Mrs Pauline Latham) has been appointed as a substitute member in place of the Hon. Member for Truro and Falmouth (Cherilyn Mackrory).

The Hon. Member for South East Cornwall (Mrs Sheryll Murray) has been appointed as a substitute member in place of the Hon. Member for Bolsover (Mark Fletcher).

The Hon. Member for West Worcestershire (Harriett Baldwin) has been appointed as a substitute member in place of the Hon. Member for North West Durham (Richard Holden).

The Hon. Member for Cities of London and Westminster (Nickie Aiken) has been appointed as a substitute member in place of the Hon. Member for Beaconsfield (Joy Morrissey).

## UK Electricity Generators: Tax on Extraordinary Returns

[HLWS465]

**Lord Harlech:** My honourable friend the Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury (James Cartlidge) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

Along with resurgent demand for energy following the pandemic, Russia's invasion of Ukraine and weaponisation of gas supplies has driven UK wholesale gas prices to record highs. Due to the composition and structure of the UK electricity market, higher wholesale gas prices are in turn driving higher wholesale electricity prices and leading to exceptional returns arising to some electricity generators in the UK.

Consistent with action taken in other countries, from 1 January 2023 the government is introducing a temporary 45% tax on extraordinary returns made by some UK electricity generators. HM Treasury will today publish on GOV.UK draft legislation, along with an updated technical note explaining the policy in detail. The levy will be applied to a measure of extraordinary revenues, defined as revenues from selling periodic output at an average price above £75/MWh. That is approximately 1.5 times the average price of electricity over the last decade. It will apply to revenues from electricity generation in the UK from renewable (including biomass), nuclear, and energy from waste sources and will be focused on the

largest generators through a generation threshold of 50GWH of annual output and a £10 million allowance.

This temporary measure is not designed to penalise electricity generators. It is instead a response to the fact that, as a result of exceptional and unforeseen geopolitical events, some electricity generators are realising extraordinary returns from higher electricity prices – higher prices that have imposed substantial costs on households and business energy users and necessitated the government to take unprecedented action with £55 billion to directly help households and businesses with their energy bills. The government had previously considered a price cap in response to the current crisis. We have instead adopted this levy as a more proportionate approach. It leaves generators – whose continued investment in the industry is vital to our long-term energy security – with a share of the upside they receive at times of high wholesale prices.

The levy will end on 31 March 2028. This reflects the possibility that wholesale electricity prices remain elevated for a number of years and the need for businesses to have certainty around the measures the UK is taking in response. However, should the crisis abate and prices fall below the benchmark price, the revenue forecast from the levy will not materialise and consideration would be given to the tax's ongoing application.

Furthermore, responding to concerns that have been raised around the tax's duration and its impact on investment, the £75/MWh the benchmark price will be indexed to CPI inflation from April 2024, and relief will be provided for certain exceptional costs that are reducing the degree to which generators are benefitting from higher electricity prices.

#### *Support for investment in renewables*

The government is committed to decarbonising power systems by 2035 and reaching net zero emissions by 2050. Britain is a global leader in renewable energy. Last year, nearly 40% of our electricity came from offshore wind, solar and other renewables. Since 2010, our renewable energy production has grown faster than any

other large country in Europe. We are committed to ensuring that the UK remains one of the best places in the world to invest in clean energy and have set stretching deployment ambitions, including up to 50GW of offshore wind by 2030 and a fivefold increase in solar by 2035. As we move towards these ambitious goals, the government will seize the opportunities for growth through the transition, creating the right framework to crowd-in billions of pounds of new investment into the UK's economy. That includes:

- Our highly successful Contracts for Difference scheme continues to bring more and more generation online, with our most recent auction delivering a record capacity of almost 11GW. A consultation for the sixth Contracts for Difference round was published last week.
- The Offshore Coordination Support Scheme, which will provide up to £100m of grants to energy projects to develop coordinated options for offshore transmission infrastructure, was launched earlier this month.
- Government also continues to work with the Offshore Wind Acceleration Taskforce and other developers to identify and address barriers to deployment. This includes reforming the planning system, where government is acting to ensure that consents are secured faster, and the risk of delays are reduced.
- We have heard calls for the tax system to provide strengthened incentives for [long-term] investment in the low-carbon electricity generation sector, including investment in new capacity as well as investment needed to maintain and upgrade existing capacity. The government continues to recognise the value of capital allowances for supporting investment within a sustainable fiscal strategy, and any further changes will be set out at a future fiscal event in the usual way.
- Government is undertaking the Review of Electricity Market Arrangements (REMA) which will assess how our power markets can best deliver a low-cost, low-carbon and secure electricity system, whilst reducing our exposure to international oil and gas prices.



## Written Answers

Tuesday, 20 December 2022

### Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products

*Asked by Baroness Wheeler*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they have made an assessment of the case for publishing an externally facing national strategy for Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products to support patient access. [HL4187]

**Lord Markham:** No specific assessment has been made. However, NHS England is supporting companies to develop cost-effective value propositions Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products (ATMPs) for the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and the rapid introduction of all ATMPs recommended by NICE to date.

The Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult and the UK Strategic Stem Cell Forum have made recommendations to the Government on the adoption of gene therapy and ATMPs to ensure the United Kingdom maintains a global advantage. The Department is considering these recommendations.

### Asylum: Applications

*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask His Majesty's Government, with regard to the processing of asylum claims, what steps they are taking (1) to improve the quality of decision-making, (2) to prioritise the most vulnerable cases and those who have been waiting longest, and (3) to improve access to good quality legal advice for applicants. [HL4056]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** The Home Office have an asylum transformation programme that will speed up and simplify decision making, reduce the time people spend in the asylum system and decrease the number of people who are awaiting an interview or decision. These initiatives include conducting shorter, more focused interviews or omitting interviews where it is appropriate to do so; streamlining decision templates for grants and refusals; and focusing on improving quality to ensure decisions are right first time.

We are currently concentrating on deciding older claims, high harm cases, those cases with extreme vulnerability, children and new flow cases, whilst those in receipt of support are a priority for Legacy cases.

All asylum claimants have the opportunity to be legally represented during their asylum claim, and legal aid funding is provided to those who need it.

*Asked by Lord Rosser*

To ask His Majesty's Government how much they have spent each month since January 2019 on supporting asylum seekers in the UK who are waiting for their asylum applications to be processed. [HL4066]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** The United Kingdom has a statutory obligation to provide destitute asylum seekers with accommodation and other support whilst their application for asylum is being considered. The cost of supporting an asylum seeker is dependent on the level of support they receive.

Total expenditure on asylum including asylum support is published in the Home Office Annual Report and Accounts, available at Gov.UK.

### Aviation: Northern Ireland

*Asked by Lord Weir of Ballyholme*

To ask His Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with representatives of Northern Irish (1) airports, or (2) airlines, operating routes from Northern Ireland focused on increasing air connectivity between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK. [HL4318]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The number of flights between Northern Ireland (NI) and Great Britain (GB) is currently very strong with several competing services between Belfast and London, and routes from NI to several cities throughout the UK. The Government also continues to support the Public Service Obligation (PSO) from Derry/Londonderry to London.

### Belfast Agreement

*Asked by Lord Dodds of Duncairn*

To ask His Majesty's Government in what circumstances they involve the government of Ireland in matters relating to Strand 1 (democratic institutions in Northern Ireland) of the Multi-Party Agreement under the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. [HL4195]

**Lord Caine:** This Government remains fully committed to the long-established three-stranded approach to Northern Ireland affairs, dating back to the 1990s. This Government has always maintained that Strand One issues are for the UK Government and the Northern Ireland parties to determine.

The Agreement makes clear that the Northern Ireland Assembly is the prime source of authority in respect of all devolved responsibilities.

As set out in the Agreement, in recognition of the Irish Government's special interest in Northern Ireland and of the extent to which issues of mutual concern arise in relation to Northern Ireland, there are meetings of the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference concerned with non-devolved Northern Ireland matters, on which the Irish Government may put forward views and proposals.

### Bookmakers: Fines

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many fines were imposed against gambling companies by the Gambling Commission for failing to meet their social responsibility obligations in (1) 2016, (2) 2017, (3) 2018, (4) 2019, (5) 2020, and (6) 2021. [HL4115]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** The Gambling Commission can fine a gambling operator if a licence condition has been breached. In some circumstances, the Commission may decide to agree a regulatory settlement instead of issuing a fine. While fines are paid to the Exchequer, regulatory settlements are divested by the company to third parties. The following financial penalties were imposed against gambling companies for failing to meet their social responsibility obligations between 2016 and 2021:

Year	Monetary value	Details
2016/17	£1.7m	3 regulatory settlements
2017/18	£18.4m	2 fines and 7 regulatory settlements
2018/19	£19.6m	2 fines and 7 regulatory settlements
2019/20	£30.2m	2 fines and 10 regulatory settlements
2020/21	£32.1m	5 fines and 10 regulatory settlements
2021/22	£29.4m	9 fines and 5 regulatory settlements

### Brain Cancer: Health Services

*Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to roll out on the NHS the Minderoo Precision Brain Tumour Programme (MPBTP) introduced at Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge to improve care for brain cancer patients. [HL4294]

**Lord Markham:** The Minderoo Precision Brain Tumour Programme has recruited over 100 patients for whole genome sequencing in its first year and has returned results within three weeks of surgery on average. This has led to funding for a United Kingdom precision platform trial in brain cancer, which is anticipated to be available to patients at specific centres in 2023. The deployment dates and locations of these centres will be determined by a separate selection process.

### Brain Cancer: Research

*Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask His Majesty's Government what percentage of the funding they provide for cancer research is spent on brain tumours. [HL4292]

**Lord Markham:** The Department invests £1 billion per year in health research through the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR). The NIHR's research

expenditure for all cancers in 2020/21 was £73.5 million and 7.3% was spent on brain tumour research. Information on expenditure in 2021/22 will be available in 2023.

*Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to increase research into the (1) causes of, and (2) treatments for, brain tumours. [HL4293]

**Lord Markham:** In May 2018, the Government announced £40 million over five years for brain cancer research through the Tessa Jowell Brain Cancer Mission via the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR). While the NIHR requested funding applications on brain tumour research, this a difficult area with a relatively small research community. The NIHR will provide funding for research training elements of the Tessa Jowell Fellowships to train specialist brain tumour oncologists.

### Cancer: Radiotherapy

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to improve access to radiotherapy treatments for cancer patients. [HL4028]

**Lord Markham:** Since 2016, approximately £162 million has been invested to replace or upgrade 100 radiotherapy machines, in addition to existing investment made by National Health Service trusts to maintain infrastructure. In 2019/20, 11 radiotherapy networks were established in England to improve workforce resilience and increase access to specialist skills and knowledge.

NHS England is undertaking a review of external beam radiotherapy capacity in 2022/23. This will support local systems to plan radiotherapy provision and allocate capital allocations appropriately, based on an assessment of equipment age, capacity and demand, opportunities to improve access and service risk.

### Carers

*Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett*

To ask His Majesty's Government what recent assessment they have made of the progress of the Carers Action Plan 2018–20, published on 5 June 2018 and updated on 13 September 2018; and what plans they have to complete any outstanding actions. [HL3807]

**Lord Markham:** No recent assessment has been made. The Carers Action Plan concluded in December 2020 and there is no ongoing delivery plan.

### Charities: Rents and Utilities

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to help small charities with increases in (1) rent, and (2) utility, bills. [HL4269]



**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** His Majesty's Government is supporting small charities with their energy bills until March 2023, through the Energy Bill Relief Scheme. His Majesty's Treasury and the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy are currently undertaking a review to determine what support will be available for organisations from April 2023.

Charities and community amateur sports clubs can also apply for charitable rate relief of up to 80% if a property is used for charitable purposes (<https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-business-rate-relief/charitable-rate-relief>).

With Government support, small charities have shown significant resilience over the past few years, and will again be crucial in supporting communities and households through the winter. My Department will keep engaging constructively across the sector, and with colleagues across Government, to monitor the impact of rising costs.

### Children: Poverty

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of Durham*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether a reduction in (1) the number of, and (2) the proportion of, children living in (a) relative poverty, and (b) absolute poverty, in (i) every local authority, and (ii) across the UK, is an intended outcome of the levelling up agenda. [HL4051]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** While talent is spread equally across our country, opportunity is not. Levelling up means people everywhere living longer and more fulfilling lives, and benefitting from sustained rises in living standards and well-being.

Reducing the number and proportion of children living in poverty across the UK is a central part of this vision and that is why the Government set out 12 missions in the Levelling Up White Paper to not only specifically improve outcomes in the most left-behind places but also improve the lives of all people. In particular, one of the twelve missions is focused on boosting people's living standards, particularly where they are lagging (mission 1). Another mission aims to spread opportunities for children in part by boosting the proportion of children meeting the expected standards in the worst-performing areas (mission 5).

### Civil Service: Recruitment

*Asked by Lord Blunkett*

To ask His Majesty's Government what impact evaluation they have undertaken of the exclusion of disability from the eligibility criteria for entry and progress in the Civil Service Fast-Stream. [HL4142]

**Baroness Neville-Rolfe:** Fast Stream and Emerging Talent (FSET) have introduced a new Summer Internship Programme (SIP) and in doing so broadened the

eligibility criteria so that people from all backgrounds can now apply for internship opportunities - thus acknowledging a wider definition of diversity in line with the CS D&I Strategy. The separate eligibility strand for disabled applicants has been removed based on consistent performance evidence showing that disabled applicants have a higher success rate than non-disabled applicants for the Fast Stream. Nevertheless disabled applicants are still able and encouraged to apply to the SIP. Eligibility for the Fast Stream graduate programme is not affected in terms of disability.

This decision, in respect to disability, was based on a substantial internal review of disability outcomes for the Fast Stream graduate programme (for which the internship is a feeder scheme). An equality impact assessment was completed also based on the review. Due to changes to our selection process and associated performance of those with a disability and strong, inclusive brand we anticipate there will be minimal impact.

The review highlighted that disabled candidates at Fast Stream selection no longer demonstrated under-representation, as was previously the case. There has been strong disability representation at the Fast Stream appointment stage - at 25.5% in 2021 and 22.7% in 2022, against a higher education (HESA) university population benchmark of 17.1%.

In respect to consultation, we have liaised on this decision with Fast Stream scheme holders, SIP SPOCs, Government Legal and the CS Inclusive Practice team.

We previously removed the SDIP disability strand in 2011 when representation exceeded our benchmark.

We will continually monitor outcomes to ensure an inclusive, fair and evidence-based approach for all centrally coordinated early talent programmes.

### Civil Service: Unpaid Work

*Asked by Lord Blunkett*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they made of the impact of the change to the criteria for access to the Cabinet Office's Summer Diversity Internship Programme; and what consultation was undertaken. [HL4141]

**Baroness Neville-Rolfe:** Fast Stream and Emerging Talent (FSET) have introduced a new Summer Internship Programme (SIP) and in doing so broadened the eligibility criteria so that people from all backgrounds can now apply for internship opportunities - thus acknowledging a wider definition of diversity in line with the CS D&I Strategy. The separate eligibility strand for disabled applicants has been removed based on consistent performance evidence showing that disabled applicants have a higher success rate than non-disabled applicants for the Fast Stream. Nevertheless disabled applicants are still able and encouraged to apply to the SIP. Eligibility for the Fast Stream graduate programme is not affected in terms of disability.

This decision, in respect to disability, was based on a substantial internal review of disability outcomes for the Fast Stream graduate programme (for which the internship is a feeder scheme). An equality impact assessment was completed also based on the review. Due to changes to our selection process and associated performance of those with a disability and strong inclusive brand we anticipate there will be minimal impact.

The review highlighted that disabled candidates at Fast Stream selection no longer demonstrated under-representation, as was previously the case. There has been strong disability representation at the Fast Stream appointment stage - at 25.5% in 2021 and 22.7% in 2022, against a higher education (HESA) university population benchmark of 17.1%.

In respect to consultation, we have liaised on this decision with Fast Stream scheme holders, SIP SPOCs, Government Legal and the CS Inclusive Practice team.

We previously removed the SDIP disability strand in 2011 when representation exceeded our benchmark.

We will continually monitor outcomes to ensure an inclusive, fair and evidence-based approach for all centrally coordinated early talent programmes.

### Colombia: Peace Negotiations

*Asked by Baroness Coussins*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to their commitments in the Political Declaration of Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative (PSVI) Conference 2022, what support they will give to Colombia to develop its Women, Peace and Security 1325 National Action Plan. [HL3997]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** A significant delegation from Colombia attended the recent PSVI Conference in London, and I [Lord Ahmad] and the Minister for Development and Africa [Minister Mitchell] met with the delegation leader, Vice Foreign Minister, Laura Gil. The Minister for the Americas and Caribbean [Minister Rutley] also discussed PSVI with Foreign Minister Leyva on his recent visit to Colombia and met victims of sexual violence. The UK Government is committed to supporting the development of Women, Peace and Security National Action Plans across the world, including Colombia as they develop their first National Action Plan, given their track record of championing the meaningful participation of women in their own peace process. The UK is in discussions with the Colombian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on next steps.

*Asked by Baroness Coussins*

To ask His Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of Colombia to ensure that indigenous people and other civil society organisations are able to participate in the formulation of its Women, Peace and Security 1325 National Action Plan. [HL3998]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK consistently calls on the Colombian Government to ensure that all groups, including indigenous groups and civil society, are able to participate in the proper implementation of the Peace Process and their National Action Plan. Successive UK-drafted UN Security Council press statements have called for the Colombian Government to work closely with civil society. In the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State's (Americas and the Caribbean) high level dialogue with Foreign Minister Leyva during his visit to Colombia in November, he reiterated the UK's commitment to continuing to support the peace process.

To date, we have spent over £74 million through the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) to support the implementation of the peace agreement in Colombia and improve stability and security. We will continue to work with Colombia, including through the UNSC and encourage the Colombian Government to strengthen the institutions that can improve the security of all its citizens and investigate and prosecute the criminal actors responsible for violence.

*Asked by Baroness Coussins*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they have provided any experts to assist the government of Colombia and civil society organisations that are part of the Colombian National Commission on Security Guarantees on issues related to the dismantling of illegal armed groups. [HL4000]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Through our role as pen-holder at the UN Security Council, as well as through our Embassy in Colombia, the UK supports the Government of Colombia and civil society organisations on security issues, including the activities of illegal armed groups. To date, we have spent over £74 million through the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) to support the implementation of the peace agreement in Colombia and improve stability and security. We will continue to work with Colombia, including through the UNSC, and encourage the Colombian Government to strengthen the institutions that can improve the security of citizens and investigate and prosecute the criminal actors responsible for violence.

### Crimes of Violence: Crime Prevention

*Asked by Lord Brooke of Alverthorpe*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Home Office Introducing Public Health Measures Impact Assessment 2019, published on 4 July 2019, which found that the Cardiff Model for violence reduction would cut the costs of violence by £858 million over 10 years if five per cent of Community Service Partnerships implemented it, what plans they have to extend its use throughout (1) England, and (2) Wales. [HL4144]

**Lord Sharpe of Epsom:** The Cardiff Model is a multi-agency approach to violence prevention that relies on the strategic use of information and data from health and law

enforcement services to improve policing and community violence prevention initiatives. The Government recognises the benefits of using the Cardiff Model to tackle serious violence and have adopted the approach across a number of policies and projects.

For example, the Serious Violence Duty will commence on the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023 and will be rolled out across England and Wales. Introduced through the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, the Serious Violence Duty will require a range of specified authorities, such as the police, local government, youth offending teams, health and probation services, to work collaboratively, sharing data and information to analyse the local problem, and put in place a strategy to prevent and reduce serious violence within their local communities, through existing partnership structures where possible.

The proactive sharing of data between health and law enforcement, as set out in the Cardiff Model, has also been adopted and built upon by our Violence Reduction Units (VRUs) who also seek to incorporate data from wider multi-agency partners to generate new insights into violent crime trends and drivers. As of this financial year, we now have 20 VRUs operating in the 20 police force areas worst affected by serious violence. Effective data sharing is a key priority for VRUs, and the Home Office closely monitors progress against this.

The Government also encourages all Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) to meet the expectation to work with local hospitals to implement the sharing of appropriate health data to tackle serious violence, as detailed in the 2018 Serious Violence Strategy for England and Wales.

### **Cystic Fibrosis: Research**

*Asked by **Baroness Finlay of Llandaff***

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of additional market incentive options to encourage industry and others to fund research and trials for new antibiotics, including those used to treat chronic lung infections in people with cystic fibrosis. [[HL4223](#)]

**Lord Markham:** In July 2019, a pilot was launched to develop and test a 'subscription-style' evaluation and payment model for antibiotics in England, which would pay pharmaceutical companies for access to antibiotics based on the value to the National Health Service, rather than the volume used. This model aims to incentivise pharmaceutical companies to develop new, novel antimicrobials which can be used appropriately, including those to treat chronic lung disease in people with cystic fibrosis.

Payments from NHS England to two pharmaceutical companies involved in the pilot commenced on 1 July 2022. Officials are considering how the new frameworks for the evaluation and payment of new antimicrobials can

be developed, including through consultation with domestic and international stakeholders. The consultation process will continue until spring 2023.

Findings from the pilot have been shared online via the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence and at international conferences. The Government has also advocated for such models internationally, including during the United Kingdom's G7 Presidency in 2021, to jointly explore incentives to bring new antimicrobials to market.

### **Dental Health: Health Education**

*Asked by **Lord Kamall***

To ask His Majesty's Government, further the Local Government Association analysis identifying "dental deserts", how (1) they, and (2) NHS England, work with dental charities to deliver dental hygiene education in areas with relatively low numbers of NHS dentists. [[HL4065](#)]

**Lord Markham:** NHS England engages with dental charities, including on the promotion of existing services, seeking engagement from service users or the commissioning of services.

On 19 July 2022, we announced amendments to the National Health Service dentistry contract, including fairer remuneration for dentists to improve care for patients with more complex needs, supporting practices to deliver additional NHS care and improving information for patients. The Department and NHS England are working with the dental sector on further improvements to NHS dentistry to consider new payment models and encouraging dentists to work in areas of need. Further information on these measures will be available in 2023.

### **Dental Services**

*Asked by **Lord Kamall***

To ask His Majesty's Government how they and NHS England work with dental charities to deliver dental services in areas seen as 'dental deserts'. [[HL3938](#)]

**Lord Markham:** NHS England engages with dental charities, including on the promotion of existing services, seeking engagement from service users or the commissioning of services.

On 19 July 2022, we announced amendments to the National Health Service dentistry contract, including fairer remuneration for dentists to improve care for patients with more complex needs, supporting practices to deliver additional NHS care and improving information for patients. The Department and NHS England are working with the dental sector on further improvements to NHS dentistry to consider new payment models and encouraging dentists to work in areas of need. Further information on these measures will be available in 2023.

## Emergency Services: Sirens

*Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to remind emergency services not to use their sirens at night when the road is empty of traffic. [HL4169]

*Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch*

To ask His Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the cost to the economy of people being woken up by emergency service sirens at night who are consequently less productive the following day. [HL4170]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Department has not undertaken an estimate of the cost to the economy of emergency sirens being used at night.

The use of sirens and other equipment fitted to road vehicles used by the emergency services is a matter for the chief officers of those services in conjunction with the chief officer of police for that area.

## Epilepsy: Medical Treatments

*Asked by Baroness Kennedy of Cradley*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of new therapies for the treatment of epilepsy. [HL4155]

**Lord Markham:** No specific assessment has been made. However, in December 2021 the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) published *Cenobamate for treating focal onset seizures in epilepsy*, which recommends cenobamate as an option for treating focal onset seizures in adults with drug-resistant epilepsy. A copy of the guidance is attached.

In April 2022, NICE also published *Epilepsies in children, young people and adults*, which aims to improve diagnosis and treatment for different seizure types and epilepsy syndromes and includes recommendations on the principles of treatment, treating epileptic seizures and non-pharmacological treatments. It also includes information on the medications which should be used to treat various types of epileptic seizures. A copy of the guideline is attached. NICE's guidelines represent best practice and are expected to be taken into account by clinicians in the treatment of individual patients.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Cenobamate as an option for treating focal onset s [HL4155]  
Cenobamate for treating focal onset seizures in epilepsy.pdf]

Epilepsies in children, young people and adults [HL4155]  
Epilepsies in children, young people and adults.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:  
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-12-08/HL4155>

## Guided Weapons

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask His Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with their partners in the Missile Technology Control Regime; what those discussions entailed; and when such discussions last took place. [HL4114]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Informal discussions with partners in the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) are held throughout the year, with the most recent formal meeting of the MTCR taking place in October 2022. The discussions covered issues including ballistic missiles; regional issues and missile programmes of concern; proliferation trends, procurement activities; and national experiences and best practices. Updates to the technical control lists were also made. More detail can be found on the MTCR website: <https://mtcr.info/>. The UK takes a leading role in MTCR, including chairing the Technical Experts Meeting last year.

## Health Services: Waiting Lists

*Asked by Baroness Jolly*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the socio-economic impact of the NHS Backlog. [HL4329]

*Asked by Baroness Jolly*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the long-term impact on patients who are on NHS waiting lists for prolonged periods. [HL4330]

**Lord Markham:** No formal assessment has been made.

## HIV Infection

*Asked by Baroness Barker*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure that the HIV Action Plan being used to monitor, assess and benchmark health-related quality of life, uses a measurement that is (1) co-produced, and (2) agreed, with the HIV community. [HL3985]

**Lord Markham:** The UK Health Security Agency published the online only 'HIV Action Plan monitoring and evaluation framework' on 1 December 2022. This monitors the progress made towards the Plan's ambitions, which includes improving quality of life and reducing stigma.

The framework states that further work will be undertaken with the HIV Action Plan Implementation Steering Group and with professional groups, the HIV community and academic partners to develop indicators to monitor quality of life for those living with HIV. It is



anticipated that these indicators will be aligned with UNAIDS' 2025 AIDS Targets, which include an assessment of punitive laws and policies and targets of less than 10% of people living with HIV experiencing stigma and discrimination and less than 10% experiencing gender inequality and violence.

*Asked by **Baroness Barker***

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to expand monitoring efforts to understand the reality of HIV as a life-long condition. [HL3988]

**Lord Markham:** The UK Health Security Agency published the online only 'HIV Action Plan monitoring and evaluation framework' on 1 December 2022. This monitors the progress made towards the Plan's ambitions, which includes improving quality of life and reducing stigma.

The framework states that further work will be undertaken with the HIV Action Plan Implementation Steering Group and with professional groups, the HIV community and academic partners to develop indicators to monitor quality of life for those living with HIV. It is anticipated that these indicators will be aligned with UNAIDS' 2025 AIDS Targets, which include an assessment of punitive laws and policies and targets of less than 10% of people living with HIV experiencing stigma and discrimination and less than 10% experiencing gender inequality and violence.

### **HIV Infection: Discrimination**

*Asked by **Baroness Barker***

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have for the Equalities Office and Department of Health and Social Care to lead a cross-government effort to address the remaining areas of HIV-related discrimination. [HL3984]

**Lord Markham:** The Department continues to collaborate with cross-Government partners, NHS England and the voluntary and community sector to address HIV-related discrimination and reducing stigma. The Department and the UK Health Security Agency are monitoring experiences of stigma among people living with HIV through the Positive Voices survey, which will be available in 2023.

### **Hkalam Samson**

*Asked by **Baroness Cox***

To ask His Majesty's Government what representations they will make to the government of Myanmar regarding the release of the former President of the Kachin Baptist Convention (KBC), Reverend Dr Hkalam Samson, who was reportedly arrested at Mandalay International Airport on 5 December. [HL4048]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK is concerned by reports that Reverend Hkalam Samson has been arrested. British Embassy staff in Yangon are monitoring the situation closely.

Although the UK has had no political engagement with the military regime since the coup, it continues to call publicly for the military regime to release all those arbitrarily detained. On 27 July 2022, the UK secured a UN Security Council (UNSC) Press Statement calling for the release of all those in arbitrary detention. On 17 November 2022, the Foreign Secretary stated that all those unjustly imprisoned in Myanmar should be released. We will continue to use all available fora, including the UN Security Council (UNSC), to raise these concerns.

### **Home Office: Development Aid**

*Asked by **Baroness Sugg***

To ask His Majesty's Government how much the Home Office has allocated to Official Development Assistance for (1) actual costs for refugee and asylum seekers for the first six months of the calendar year, and (2) estimated costs for refugee and asylum seekers for the full calendar year. [HL4078]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** Given the complexity of factors involved in calculating ODA spend, the Home Office does not categorise data on ODA spend in a way that makes it possible to answer this question.

The next ODA expenditure is due at the end of the current financial year, which is April 2023

### **Hospitals: Waiting Lists**

*Asked by **Lord McCrea of Magherafelt and Cookstown***

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that all possible alternatives are considered across England to tackle NHS waiting lists. [HL4158]

**Lord Markham:** The use of surgical hubs and community diagnostics centres (CDCs) is being expanded to increase capacity in planned elective services, in addition to alternative capacity with independent providers and engaging with patients to understand choices made regarding their care. An Elective Recovery Taskforce has been established to determine how the National Health Service can use additional independent provider capacity to address waiting times.

We are investing in up to 160 CDCs which will deliver up to 17 million tests by March 2025. There are currently 91 CDCs operating, which have delivered more than 2.5 million additional tests as of November 2022. In England there are 89 elective surgical hubs focusing on providing high volume, low complexity surgery. The NHS has eliminated waiting times of two years or more for elective procedures. We aim to eliminate waiting times of eighteen months or more by April 2023 and waiting times of over 65 weeks by March 2024.



## Independent Reporting Commission

*Asked by Lord Dodds of Duncairn*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the latest report of the Independent Reporting Commission, published on 7 December. [HL4145]

**Lord Caine:** I refer the Noble Lord to the [written statement](#) made by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on 7 December with regard to the [fifth report](#) of the Independent Reporting Commission. As noted in that statement, the report highlights progress in a number of areas, including disruptions to paramilitary groups as a result of operations by the Paramilitary Crime Task Force, the downward trend in some aspects of paramilitary activity demonstrated by PSNI security statistics, and the reduction in the Northern Ireland-related Terrorism threat level from SEVERE to SUBSTANTIAL.

Yet the report also notes that the problem of paramilitarism is enduring. A number of incidents in recent weeks have demonstrated the callous disregard that paramilitary groups, or those who claim affiliation with them, have for public safety, and the harm and disruption they continue to cause to the communities they often claim to represent.

Paramilitarism was never justified in the past, and cannot be justified today. It needs to end for good. It is clear that a sustained effort is required here over the long term to tackle the enduring problem of paramilitarism. We remain committed to delivering our vision of a safer, more secure Northern Ireland and to working with partners to support efforts against the enduring threat and harms posed to communities by terrorist and paramilitary groups.

Political leadership from across the political spectrum in Northern Ireland is essential to ensure it remains clear there is no place for paramilitarism. The lack of a functioning Executive inhibits Northern Ireland Departments from taking a strategic, cross-cutting approach to tackling paramilitarism in partnership with the PSNI and the wider public sector. It remains the Northern Ireland Office's top priority to rectify the present situation.

## Jagtar Singh Johal

*Asked by Lord Tyrie*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to refer the case of Jagtar Singh Johal to the Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament, under the provisions of the Justice and Security Act 2013. [HL4185]

**Baroness Neville-Rolfe:** His Majesty's Government has no plans to refer the case of Jagtar Singh Johal to the Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament.

Under section 2(3)(b) of the Justice and Security Act 2013, the Prime Minister may ask the Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament to consider a matter

outside of the Committee's self-determined work plan, provided that the consideration of the matter is consistent with any principles set out in, or with any other provision made by, the agreed Memorandum of Understanding, as per section 2(4) of the Act. One such principle in the MoU is that careful consideration must be given to whether it is appropriate to investigate a matter which relates to criminal or civil legal proceedings, inquiries, or inquest proceedings.

As the subject of ongoing legal proceedings, it would not be appropriate to comment on the allegations brought against His Majesty's Government by Mr Johal. However, His Majesty's Government has consistently raised concerns about Mr Johal's case in India with all levels of the Indian Government. Ministers and officials have together raised Mr Johal's detention on over 100 occasions since 2017, and they will continue to do so.

## Listed Buildings: Solar Power

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of Exeter*

To ask His Majesty's Government what discussions they are having with amenity societies in relation to the installation of solar panels on listed buildings. [HL4248]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** In the Government's British Energy Security Strategy, published earlier this year, we committed to reviewing the practical planning barriers that households can face when installing energy efficiency measures, including solar panels on listed buildings. The review commenced during the summer and has involved extensive engagement with the heritage sector, including amenity societies. An announcement will be made on the outcomes of the review in due course.

## Low Traffic Neighbourhoods

*Asked by Baroness Deech*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 in regards to providing sufficiently for (1) consultation of the public before the implementation of low traffic neighbourhood schemes, and (2) post-implementation consultation. [HL4092]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** No such assessment has been made by the Department. Low traffic neighbourhood schemes may be implemented using standard traffic restrictions, which require a Traffic Regulation Order made following the Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. These already include a requirement for ongoing consultation and evaluation for 6-months following the making of an experimental TRO. For permanent TROs, the regulations require consultation on proposed orders, including with a range of statutory consultees.

The Department recommends as good practice that authorities carry out post implementation reviews for all permanent traffic orders.

## Marriage: Ceremonies

*Asked by Lord Pickles*

To ask His Majesty's Government when they will issue a full response to the Law Commission's weddings law report *Celebrating Marriage: A New Weddings Law*, published on 19 July. [HL4171]

**Lord Bellamy:** The Government is currently considering the Law Commission's report on weddings law and has a duty to consider the implications of any changes to the law in this area very carefully. The report proposes fundamental reform to weddings law in England and Wales and it is important that we take the time to fully consider the Law Commission's recommendations before publishing a response. We will publish our response to the report in due course.

*Asked by Lord Pickles*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Answer by Lord Bellamy on 29 November on humanist marriages (HL Deb col 1668), why they have committed to legislating for outdoor religious marriages outside of wholesale reform of marriage law. [HL4172]

**Lord Bellamy:** As part of the response to the Covid-19 pandemic, in which the circumstances were exceptional, the Government accelerated legislation to allow outdoor civil weddings and civil partnership registrations to take place within the grounds of existing approved premises. Following a recent consultation on these measures, the provisions were made permanent. In addition, respondents were overwhelmingly in favour of the proposal to permit outdoor religious ceremonies in the grounds of places of worship, as long as this is permitted by the respective religious bodies. The Government will therefore take these proposals forward in due course.

The Law Commission's report on weddings law was published in July and the Government is currently considering its recommendations. As has been set out in Parliament, marriage will always be one of our most important institutions and we must ensure that before publishing a response, we have considered the implications of any changes to the law very carefully.

## Medical Treatments: Innovation

*Asked by Baroness Wheeler*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the likely number of products that will be eligible for inclusion in the Innovative Medicines Fund in 2022–23 and 2023–24. [HL4210]

*Asked by Baroness Wheeler*

To ask His Majesty's Government why they are yet to add any products to the Innovative Medicines Fund. [HL4211]

**Lord Markham:** The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) makes recommendations for any suitable medicine for inclusion in the Innovative

Medicines Fund (IMF). The IMF is a managed access fund, which provides a route for earlier patient access for the most promising new medicines while further evidence is collected to inform a long-term commissioning recommendation.

NICE's independent committee may consider managed access, if a recommendation for routine commissioning cannot be made and where collection of further evidence during a period of managed access will sufficiently support the case for such a recommendation in the future. To date, NICE has not recommended any medicines into the IMF. NICE and NHS England continually monitor for potential products for inclusion in the IMF and NICE provides guidance on whether a managed access proposal would be feasible.

## Mental Health Services: Children in Care

*Asked by Baroness Merron*

To ask His Majesty's Government what, if any, mandatory training is provided to frontline professionals who work with care-experienced children and young people to help them identify, understand and respond to mental health needs. [HL4015]

**Lord Markham:** There is no specific training nationally for frontline health and care staff. Local authorities are responsible for the development of the children's social care workforce and the Department for Education has developed post qualifying standards for child and family social work, which set out the skills and knowledge required for social workers to protect vulnerable children, including mental health needs.

## Migrants: Detainees

*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many persons were held in immigration detention for (1) removal from the UK, and (2) assessment purposes, for the most recent date that data are available; and whether the Manston immigration centre is still overcrowded and therefore potentially a risk to health. [HL4057]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** The Home Office publishes data on people held in detention in the quarterly Immigration Statistics release.

Data on those in detention relate to those in detention on the last day of the quarter. Reasons for detention are not published in the data.

## Motor Neurone Disease: Health Services

*Asked by Lord Rogan*

To ask His Majesty's Government what progress they have made towards releasing the £50 million they pledged in November 2021 to fund Motor Neurone Disease; and what are the reasons for the delay. [HL4031]

**Lord Markham:** Funding for Motor Neurone Disease research has always been available via open competition. In 2021/22, NIHR spent £3.8 million on MND research, and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), through the Medical Research Council (MRC), spent around £10.8 million. On 12 December 2022 the Government announced how at least £50 million of committed funds for Motor Neurone Disease (MND) research would be allocated over the next five years:

£8 million to early phase clinical research for MND via the National Institute for Health and Social Care Research (NIHR) Biomedical Research Centres.

£2 million to the MND Collaborative Partnership, for the research community to coordinate efforts, adding £1 million already contributed by government.

£12.5 million to MND research in the UK Dementia Research Institute (UKDRI), where seven of its fifty research programmes are focused on MND.

£6 million connect the UK DRI to the Francis Crick Institute Laboratory of Molecular Biology, the MND collaborative partnership, and the UK Dementias Platform.

The remainder (at least £21.5 million) is available via an NIHR and the Medical Research Council (MRC) rolling call for MND research supported by a joint Highlight Notice.

### **National Heritage Memorial Fund: Stonehenge**

*Asked by **Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb***

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay on 2 November (HL2760 and HL2728), whether the trustees of the National Heritage Memorial Fund considered the possibility of the land being compulsorily acquired by National Highways as part of the A303 scheme, prior to the award of the grant. [HL4099]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** It was clear at the time of the grant award that, should the Development Consent Order be approved by the Secretary of State for Transport, approximately 4.54 hectares of the total 168 hectare area to be acquired would be the subject of permanent compulsory acquisition by National Highways. The National Heritage Memorial Fund's grant was in response to a time-limited opportunity to secure multiple archaeological sites across this much larger area of land in the World Heritage Site. This included a substantial portion of Stonehenge Avenue. Without the National Heritage Memorial Fund's grant the opportunity to safeguard and conserve a significant area of internationally important archaeology would have been lost.

The National Heritage Memorial Fund Board was aware of the potential for compulsory purchase and took the decision that, since the area to be affected by potential

compulsory purchase was a very small proportion of the overall site, this did not outweigh the benefits of safeguarding a much larger area through the time-limited opportunity presented.

### **National Institute for Health and Care Excellence: Public Consultation**

*Asked by **Baroness Wheeler***

To ask His Majesty's Government what public engagement they carried out in 2022 for the NICE Listens programme; what topics NICE Listens will cover in 2023; and whether NICE Listens will include rare diseases in 2023. [HL4212]

**Lord Markham:** The 2022 NICE Listens project is examining the public's views on action for the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) on the environmental sustainability of healthcare. NICE commissioned a research agency to conduct three online workshops on this topic in autumn 2022 and the project report will be published early in 2023. While the topic for the 2023 NICE Listens project has not yet been selected, NICE's approach to rare diseases is one of several topics under consideration.

### **Navy: Defence Equipment**

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

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking, additional to the purchase of the Naval Strike Missile, to increase the Royal Navy's offensive firepower capacity. [HL4082]

**Baroness Goldie:** The Royal Navy is committed to improving lethality across the Fleet. This requirement is brought into sharp focus by conflict in Europe and Russia's unacceptable invasion of Ukraine.

In addition to the purchase of the Naval Strike Missile, there has also been investment to ensure the Royal Navy is capable of offensive strike against our most capable adversaries.

### **NHS: Sick Leave**

*Asked by **Baroness Finlay of Llandaff***

To ask His Majesty's Government what was the percentage of NHS staff on long term sick leave in NHS trusts in (1) 2020, (2) 2021, and (3) 2022; and for each year, what was the proportion of each kind of illness that prompted the leave. [HL4198]

**Lord Markham:** This information is not held in the format requested. NHS Digital publishes online only data on monthly sickness absence rates for staff working in hospitals and integrated care systems and the reason for the absence, collected via the Electronic Staff Record. However, data on the duration of the absence and the proportion of staff absent due to a specific illness is not currently centrally validated.

## Northern Ireland Protocol

*Asked by Lord Dodds of Duncairn*

To ask His Majesty's Government how much it has cost so far to defend the legal case brought against them that argue that the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland breaches the Acts of Union. [[HL4146](#)]

**Lord Caine:** As at 15 December 2022, the Government has spent £114,691.00 on fees associated with the legal challenges of Clifford Peeples and Jim Allister and others. This does not include the work done in relation to the Supreme Court process, as these fees have not yet been processed.

## Northern Ireland: Domestic Visits

*Asked by Lord Dodds of Duncairn*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many times the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has stayed overnight in Northern Ireland since his appointment. [[HL4193](#)]

**Lord Caine:** Since his appointment by the Prime Minister in October, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has undertaken eight official overnight visits to Northern Ireland. My Noble Friend will be pleased to note that my Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State travels frequently on official business.

## Pancreatic Cancer: Health Services

*Asked by Baroness Redfern*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they will take to speed up referrals for people diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, given the pace at which the disease progresses and the need for treatment to begin quickly. [[HL4111](#)]

**Lord Markham:** The National Health Service is implementing non-specific symptom (NSS) pathways for patients presenting with vague and non-site specific symptoms which do not clearly align to a tumour type, such as pancreatic cancer. As of November 2022, there were 98 NSS pathways and approximately 60,000 referrals have been made. By March 2024, we expect these NSS pathways to be available throughout England. This will also support the NHS to meet the Faster Diagnosis Standard for all patients referred for the investigation of suspected cancer to receive an outcome within 28 days.

NHS England's 'Help Us, Help You' campaign addresses the barriers to patients seeking advice for symptoms for all cancer types. The current campaign focuses on abdominal and urological symptoms, which can be related to pancreatic cancer.

## Prison and Probation Service: Equality

*Asked by Lord Blencathra*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bellamy on 7 December (HL3687) concerning guidance issued by a staff network in the HM Prison and Probation Service, whether that guidance has now been withdrawn; and what steps they are taking to ensure guidance is not issued which does not comply with departmental policies and legal responsibilities. [[HL4138](#)]

**Lord Bellamy:** The document in question was produced by a staff network. It was not Government guidance. The content was not cleared by the Ministry of Justice, does not reflect departmental policy and should not have been shared. It will not be further disseminated.

His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) is reviewing its Employee Networks Protocol. This review will strengthen the process for ensuring that all information and materials communicated comply with our policies and legal responsibilities. This will include a review of sign-off procedures for nationally distributed employee network communications. HMPPS will also provide further communications training for its network leads. We remain committed to promoting diversity and awareness and maintaining robust professional standards.

## Prison Sentences

*Asked by Lord Moylan*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many people received an indeterminate sentence of Imprisonment for Public Protection in total; and of those, how many were sentenced under (1) the original provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 unamended by any subsequent Act, and (2) the provisions of the 2003 Act as amended by the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008. [[HL4203](#)]

*Asked by Lord Moylan*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many people currently in prison serving an indeterminate sentence of Imprisonment for Public Protection (1) have never been released, and (2) have been recalled; and for each of those groups, how many were sentenced under (a) the original provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 unamended by any subsequent Act, and (b) the provisions of the 2003 Act as amended by the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008. [[HL4204](#)]

**Lord Bellamy:** The Government is committed to the protection of the public and the effective management of offenders. By law, prisoners serving indeterminate sentences who have completed their tariff will be released only when the Parole Board concludes that it is no longer necessary on the grounds of public protection for them to remain confined.



The amendment to the provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 (the 2003 Act) in relation to sentencing a person convicted of a relevant specified offence to Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP), by the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 (the 2008 Act), commenced on 14 July 2008. It is not possible to split the sentencing data provided below by that specific date, as it can be extracted from all data only within a single month. A separate figure has been provided for July 2008 alone as this may include cases where individuals were sentenced under either the original provisions of the 2003 Act or as amended by the 2008 Act.

The following table shows the total number of offenders who received an IPP sentence, on a principal offence basis, between the commencement and abolishment of the sentence, in England and Wales [1] [2] [3]:

Year	Count	Total
2005	426	426
2006	1445	1445
2007	1707	1707
2008*	947 (January to June)	1538
	122 (July)	
	469 (August to December)	
2009	1001	1001
2010	1019	1019
2011	819	819
2012	747	747
2013	9	9

Source: Court Proceedings Database

\* The Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 amendments commenced on 14 July 2008.

The following table shows the number of people currently in prison serving an IPP sentence who (1) have never been released, and (2) have been recalled; and for each of those groups, how many were sentenced under (a) the original provisions of the 2003 Act unamended by any subsequent Act, and (b) the provisions of the 2003 Act as amended by the 2008 Act [1]:

Sentenced under CJA 2003 unamended (before 14 July 2008)				
Status	Yes	No	Unknown**	Total
Recalled IPP***	897	556	-	1,453
Unreleased IPP***	553	883	1	1,437
Total	1,450	1,439	1	2,890

\*\* Date of sentence could not be located.

\*\*\* Figures as of 30 September 2022.

Notes:

1) Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that this data has been extracted from

large administrative data systems generated by the courts or prison service. Consequently, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations are taken into account when those data are used.

2) The figures given in the tables relate to defendants for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with. When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences it is the offence for which the heaviest penalty is imposed. Where the same disposal is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the statutory maximum penalty is the most severe.

3) Data are given on a principal disposal basis - i.e. reporting the most severe sentence for the principal offence.

## Radiotherapy: Finance

Asked by **Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick**

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the investment of resources in radiotherapy services in England. [HL4024]

Asked by **Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick**

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they will take to increase the level of investment in radiotherapy services within the NHS. [HL4025]

**Lord Markham:** Since 2016, approximately £162 million has been invested to replace or upgrade 100 radiotherapy machines, in addition to existing investment made by National Health Service trusts to maintain infrastructure.

During 2022/23, new financial arrangements have been established to support recovery, which apply to external beam radiotherapy and ensure that any activity over or under the nationally set target elective baseline will be reimbursed or recovered at a 75% marginal rate. This is calculated on a patient count basis and ensures providers are not penalised for reducing the average number of fractions per patient. For 2023/24 onwards, we are reviewing how activity is counted and coded to ensure it is clinically meaningful, consistent across providers and can be used for benchmarking and supporting local decisions.

## Rare Diseases: Diagnosis

Asked by **Baroness Wheeler**

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the England Rare Diseases Action Plan 2022, published on 28 February, what progress has been made in testing new approaches to diagnosing individuals with rare diseases. [HL4191]

**Lord Markham:** In England, the NHS Genomic Medicine Service is provided by a national genomic testing network of seven NHS Genomic Laboratory Hubs. The Hubs deliver testing as directed by the National



Genomic Test Directory, which outlines genomic testing offered by the National Health Service, including tests for 3,200 rare diseases and over 200 cancers. The Test Directory is regularly updated to reflect the latest scientific and technological developments, including new clinical indications for rare disease.

NHS England is developing a proposal for a 'syndrome without a name' pilot, which aims to reduce the time to diagnosis for patients with undiagnosed rare diseases. Genomics England and the NHS will deliver a study to explore the effectiveness of using whole genome sequencing to find and treat rare genetic diseases in newborn babies. Genomics England has engaged with parents, the public, people with lived experience of rare disease, researchers and healthcare professionals on the practical, ethical and societal issues raised by the study and how it can be delivered. The study will commence in 2023 and will sequence the genomes of 100,000 babies and will gather evidence to consider whether this technology could be deployed in England in the future.

### Rare Diseases: Drugs

*Asked by Baroness Merron*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to their England Rare Diseases Action Plan 2022, published on 28 February, what progress they have made to support rapid access to drugs for patients with rare diseases; and when they plan to publish the report on whether or not there is access at the point of anticipated delivery. [[HL4231](#)]

**Lord Markham:** The Innovative Licensing and Access Pathway is enabling the rapid review and approval of promising new medicines. The Innovative Medicines Fund will also allow patients with rare diseases to benefit from early access to innovative treatments, where the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) considers there is insufficient evidence to make a positive recommendation and where the collection of further evidence is required. NHS England will produce an annual report by the end of 2022/23 on access to drugs for patients with rare diseases. This report will also include an analysis of overall uptake and geographical equity for those drugs recommended in NICE's highly specialised technology programme. NHS England is working with pharmaceutical companies and providers to assess the commissioning model to ensure access can be provided at the point of delivery.

### Rare Diseases: Education and Training

*Asked by Baroness Merron*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to their England Rare Diseases Action Plan 2022, published on 28 February, whether the percentage of education frameworks that include sufficient rare disease content has increased since the publication of the Action Plan; and whether they plan to take any further steps to increase this percentage. [[HL4229](#)]

**Lord Markham:** Health Education England (HEE) has adapted its approach to the development of healthcare competencies to deliver high quality care for patients and families with a rare disease. HEE has collaborated with the Academy of Royal Colleges to evaluate medical curricula and ensure an increase in the content for genomic and rare diseases. However, the information requested on the percentage increase is not held in the format requested.

We are developing role and profession specific frameworks through the introduction of the clinical pathway initiative; competency frameworks for the leaders of genomic medicine; and nursing and midwifery specific competency frameworks. HEE will evaluate uptake, acceptability and efficacy using a case study method, quantitative scoring and qualitative thematic analysis.

### Rare Diseases: Health Services

*Asked by Baroness Wheeler*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the England Rare Diseases Action Plan 2022, published on 28 February, whether they will publish a list of services where inequitable access has been identified. [[HL4190](#)]

**Lord Markham:** There are no specific plans to do so. NHS England has committed to discuss inequities with all highly specialised services to explore how this can be considered in all provider selection exercises and to record improvements which have been secured following specific interventions.

*Asked by Baroness Merron*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to their England Rare Diseases Action Plan 2022, published on 28 February, when they will publish the toolkit currently being developed for virtual consultations; and what will be included in this toolkit. [[HL4230](#)]

**Lord Markham:** The toolkit will be published as soon as possible. It aims to provide acute hospital teams with principles for improving digital and phone clinics for patients with rare, complex and multi-system disorders, where these are in addition to or instead of face-to-face outpatient appointments. The toolkit may also support the initial assessment of new patients or service users.

### Resettlement: Hong Kong

*Asked by Lord Rosser*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many British National (Overseas) nationals from Hong Kong have accessed Welcome Programme support since April 2021; and what has been the cost of this support from then to date. [[HL4068](#)]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** The UK-wide Welcome Programme was launched in April 2021, providing a comprehensive support package with an easily accessible

universal offer as its foundation, progressing to targeted support for those most in need. The universal offer is open to all BN(O) visa holders in the UK and includes a network of 12 virtual Welcome Hubs across the UK, funding for VCSE organisations to deliver national and regional projects and a comprehensive Welcome Pack on GOV.UK, at a combined cost of £12.1 million to date. The Programme also funds targeted support provided by local authorities on a demand-led basis for individuals requiring additional assistance. Through this, over 2000 BN(O)s have been supported with English language provision at up to £850 per person, at a cost of approximately £1.5 million to date. There have been no claims for destitution support to date.

## Respiratory System: Infectious Diseases

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what funding they have provided to hospitals to conduct (1) PCR, and (2) Lateral Flow, testing for respiratory viruses this winter; and whether any such funding will be made available for future winter seasons. [HL3912]

**Lord Markham:** This information is not collected in the format requested.

Whilst UK Health Security Agency provide polymerase chain reaction (PCR) & lateral flow testing (LFT) testing specifically for COVID-19, such fundings are not allocated for all respiratory virus testing in hospitals.

PCR testing is used in some hospital settings based on clinical, infection prevention and control needs. However, funding for this testing is drawn from National Health Service budgets and not specifically identifiable. LFT's are not used for other respiratory viruses.

Funding for ongoing respiratory testing in hospitals will be confirmed in due course for future winter seasons.

## Road Traffic Control

*Asked by Baroness Deech*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the (1) necessity, and (2) sufficiency, of consultation of the public at the conclusion of a period of experimental traffic orders made under section 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. [HL4090]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** No assessment has been made by the Department. However, LTN and traffic filter restrictions require traffic regulation orders (TROs), that must be made following the procedures set out in the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. These already include a requirement for ongoing consultation and evaluation for six-months following the making of an experimental TRO.

If an authority wishes to make an experimental TRO permanent, there are additional consultation requirements

as part of the process for making a permanent traffic order under section 1 of the 1984 Act.

*Asked by Baroness Deech*

To ask His Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to introducing a right for local businesses to require a public inquiry in relation to traffic restrictions imposed under the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. [HL4091]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** LTN and traffic filter restrictions require traffic regulation orders (TROs), which must be made following the procedures set out in the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. These already include a requirement for ongoing consultation and evaluation for 6-months following the making of an experimental TRO. If an authority wishes to make an experimental TRO permanent, there are additional consultation requirements as part of the process for making a permanent traffic order under section 1 of the 1984 Act.

The regulations also require a public inquiry to be held into objections to proposed permanent orders in certain circumstances. The Department has no plans to amend legislation with respect to public inquiries.

*Asked by Baroness Deech*

To ask His Majesty's Government what guidance they have given to local authorities which are considering traffic restriction schemes of the changes in traffic patterns resulting from (1) the COVID-19 lockdowns, and (2) increased working from home. [HL4093]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** It is for local authorities to gather relevant data as part of the development of traffic management schemes, which may include local traffic count and travel demand data.

The Department has published the Active Travel Toolkit which provides advice to local authorities on developing walking and cycling schemes, including advice on travel demand management plans. The Department has also published additional Network Management Duty guidance for local authorities on managing their road networks to provide measures to support active travel. Both are available free on the Department's website.

## Road Traffic Control: Urban Areas

*Asked by Baroness Deech*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact on (1) businesses, and (2) cultural activities, as a result of the installation of city traffic filters. [HL4089]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** Local authorities are responsible for managing their road networks, including decisions on introducing traffic management measures such as traffic filters.

It is for them to consider the possible impacts on communities as part of scheme developments, both positive and negative, and potential mitigations.

### **Russia: Propaganda**

*Asked by Lord Foulkes of Cumnock*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the use of social media platforms accessible in the UK, such as Telegram, for disseminating Russian propaganda; and what plans they have, if any, to ask those companies to remove material which may be in breach of sanctions. [HL4152]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** The DCMS-led Counter Disinformation Unit works to identify and counter Russian disinformation targeted at UK audiences. The Counter Disinformation Unit works closely with the major social media platforms to encourage them to take appropriate action on disinformation and co-ordinated inauthentic or manipulated behaviour, as per their terms of service.

We are also strengthening our new internet safety protections in the Online Safety Bill to make sure that social media firms identify and root out state-backed disinformation. Along with the National Security Bill, this Bill provides the legislative tools to ensure that service providers are forced to take proactive action against attempts by foreign actors to manipulate the online environment to interfere in our society and democracy.

Following Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine, His Majesty's Government quickly announced sanctions against Russian state media organisations, targeting the Kremlin-funded TV-Novosti which owns RT (formerly Russia Today), and Rossiya Segodnya which controls the news agency Sputnik.

More broadly, we are countering Russian disinformation through our unprecedented package of sanctions against Russia: we have already targeted peddlers of Russian disinformation, including President Putin's key political allies, regime spokespeople including Press Secretary Dmitry Peskov and Foreign Affairs spokeswoman Maria Zakharova, and Kremlin-backed disinformation agencies.

We have also taken specific action to ban Russian propaganda online, on social media platforms, and on app stores. Our regulator, Ofcom, oversees the obligation on all UK-based entities to prevent access to propaganda services provided under the umbrella of state-owned entities Rossiya Segodnya and ANO TV Novosti.

### **Schools: Sanitary Protection**

*Asked by Baroness Sugg*

To ask His Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to providing free period products to schools in England. [HL4079]

**Baroness Barran:** In January 2020, the department launched a new scheme which makes free period products

available for state-funded primary schools, secondary schools, and colleges in England. This scheme was extended in July 2022 for a further two years.

Since the scheme launched, 97% of secondary schools have accessed the scheme, as have 92% of post-16 organisations and 68% of primary schools.

### **Special Advisers**

*Asked by Lord Lexden*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many special advisers were appointed to assist ministers on (1) 1 January 1997, (2) 1 January 1998, (3) 1 January 2010, (4) 1 January 2011, (5) 1 January 2016, and (6) 1 December 2022. [HL4254]

**Baroness Neville-Rolfe:** The data relating to 1997 and 1998 pre-dates the requirement of the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010 (CRAG) for the Government to prepare an annual report on the numbers and costs of Special Advisers. Therefore, this information has been taken from data that is publicly available in Hansard [1]:

- In the year 1997/8, Hansard reports that there were 70 Special Advisers employed in Government.
- In the year 1998/9, Hansard reports that there were 72 Special Advisers employed in Government.

Since 2010, as per the requirements of CRAG, the Cabinet Office has published an annual report on Special Adviser numbers and costs. Therefore, the information requested in relation to 2010 - 2022 has been taken from the relevant report on Gov.uk:

- In the Annual Report on Special Advisers published in 2010, there were 61 special advisers employed in Government as at 10 June 2010. [2]
- In the Annual Report on Special Advisers published in 2011, there were 72 special advisers employed in Government as at 10 March 2011. [3]
- In the Annual Report on Special Advisers published in 2016, there were 83 Special Advisers employed in Government as at 21 December 2016. [4]
- Following the centralisation of all Special Advisers onto the Cabinet Office payroll in 2019, internal data is also available as at the requested date for 2022. As at 1 December 2022, there were 102 special advisers employed in Government.

[1] <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/1999-11-11/debates/a5ac908d-ba91-443b-81ee-0b3a84b75393/SpecialAdvisers>

[2]

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/62377/special-advisers-in-post-June-2010.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/62377/special-advisers-in-post-June-2010.pdf)

[3]

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/62374/spads-in-post100311\\_0.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/62374/spads-in-post100311_0.pdf)

[4]

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/579892/List\\_of\\_special\\_advisers\\_in\\_post\\_as\\_at\\_21\\_December\\_2016.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/579892/List_of_special_advisers_in_post_as_at_21_December_2016.pdf)

The Answer includes the following attached material:

SpAds in post 2010 [special-advisers-in-post-June-2010.pdf]

SpAds in post 2011 [spads-in-post100311\_0.pdf]

SpAds in post 2016

[List\_of\_special\_advisers\_in\_post\_as\_at\_21\_December\_2016.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-12-13/HL4254>

### Stonehenge: A303

*Asked by Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the compatibility of using a substantial part of Bow Tie field for road and tunnelling purposes with the (1) protection of archaeology, and (2) grassland restoration, as specified in the National Heritage Memorial Fund (NHMF) grant to the National Trust for that purpose. [HL4100]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** The National Heritage Memorial Fund's grant to the National Trust was awarded to safeguard and protect a significant number of archaeological sites and monuments, and to enable extensive grassland restoration of approximately 168 hectares of land. It was clear at the time of the award that, if the A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down scheme were to be consented to by the Secretary of State, approximately 4.54 hectares of land within Bow Tie Field would be subject to compulsory acquisition by National Highways. However, the positive impact of the grant benefits a much larger area of land containing internationally important monuments which were at risk. As a result of the National Trust taking ownership and management of this land all of these monuments have been safeguarded from destruction and, should the A303 scheme proceed, would remain unaffected.

National Highways will work with the National Trust to minimise impact to heritage (the archaeology and grassland) at Bow Tie Field which may be affected by future compulsory acquisition as part of implementation of the scheme. The scheme is currently with the Secretary of State for Transport for re-determination.

A comprehensive archaeological assessment has been undertaken on all areas affected by the scheme, including part of Bow Tie Field. An overview of the fieldwork can be found in Section 3 (from page 13) of the Detailed Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and further details of Eastern portal from 3.3.80 (page 28), which can be [viewed here](#).

### Sugar: Consumption

*Asked by Lord Brooke of Alverthorpe*

To ask His Majesty's Government when they will publish the fourth and final report from their Sugar Reduction Programme. [HL3839]

**Lord Markham:** The fourth progress report, *Sugar reduction – industry progress 2015 to 2020: Including the final report for foods included in the programme and the latest data for drinks included in the Soft Drinks Industry Levy and juices and milk based drinks on the sugar reduction programme* was published on 1 December. A copy of the report is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Sugar reduction programme report [Sugar-reduction-and-reformulation-progress-report-2015-to-2020.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-11-29/HL3839>

### Swimming Pools: Energy

*Asked by Lord Storey*

To ask His Majesty's Government what additional support they have provided to (1) local authority, and (2) private sector, swimming pools to help them manage energy bills. [HL4119]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** The Government recognises the importance of ensuring public access to swimming pools. It is the responsibility of local authorities to manage provision of swimming pools in their areas, taking into account the facilities which may be provided by private operators.

We understand that the rise in utility costs is having an impact on organisations of all sizes, including swimming pools. In September, the Government announced the Energy Bill Relief Scheme, under which businesses and other non-domestic energy users are offered support. The scheme is currently under review to ensure support can be provided to the most vulnerable sectors.

The Government provided £100 million to the National Leisure Recovery Fund, which supported the reopening of local authority leisure centres and facilities throughout the country after the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Telemedicine: Digital Technology

*Asked by Lord Kamall*

To ask His Majesty's Government what discussions the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has had with the Department of Health and Social Care about ensuring that analogue telecare devices continue to work safely after the digital switchover has been completed in 2025. [HL4064]



**Lord Markham:** The Department of Health and Social Care has had frequent discussions with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on this issue. On 7 September 2022, the Department of Health and Social Care chaired a meeting on the switchover and on 24 November, we wrote to telecare service providers and device manufacturers to request the results of testing of analogue devices on digital telephone networks. On 5 December, the Department of Health and Social Care published the online only ‘Telecare stakeholder action plan: preparations for the analogue to digital switchover’ which co-ordinates actions to support telecare service providers and encourages further testing.

### **Ukraine: Armed Forces**

*Asked by **Baroness Helic***

To ask His Majesty's Government how many Ukrainian soldiers have been trained by His Majesty's Armed Forces (1) since 2014, and (2) since 24 February 2022; and how many of these soldiers have received human security training, in particular on (a) Women, Peace and Security, and (b) conflict related sexual violence. [HL4055]

**Baroness Goldie:** Over 22,000 members of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) were trained under Operation ORBITAL between 2015 and its suspension in February 2022. More than 9,500 Ukrainian personnel have been trained under Operation INTERFLEX since June 2022, with an ambition for up to 19,000 in 2023.

With reference to Operation INTERFLEX, over 9,300 Ukrainian personnel have received human security training. The UK provides trainees from the AFU with reading material to help them understand issues relating to human security, including aspects of WPS and CRSV and how to respond.

The UK's wider training package focusses on the Law of Armed Conflict, including legal obligations for protection of civilians.

### **Visas**

*Asked by **Lord Rosser***

To ask His Majesty's Government what is the administrative cost of processing each visa compared to its application fee. [HL4071]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** The current fee-setting criteria are set out in Section 68(9) of the Immigration Act 2014.

### **Water Companies: Fines**

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

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the announcement that water company fines will be re-invested in schemes that benefit the natural environment, what will be the operative date of this scheme; and whether previously polluted environments will qualify for payments under the new scheme. [HL4061]

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

To ask His Majesty's Government whether the full revenue from water company pollution fines will be passed to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for environmental improvements. [HL4062]

**Lord Benyon:** Further details on our announcement can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/water-company-fines-to-be-channelled-into-environmental-improvements>. A copy is attached to this answer.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Water company fines [Water company fines to be channelled into environmental improvements.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-12-06/HL4061>



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